

Contest Soapbox

2003 ARRL June VHF QSO Party

50 Soapbox entries available

KI5DR/R -- Nov 19, 2003 16:42 ET

Pictures Posted here - <http://www.ki5dr.com/Junevhf2003/default.htm>

Had a good time, nice scenery in West Texas...over 1,000 miles traveled, and no major glitches with the minivan or equipment!

Until next time, 73! Scott -- *KI5DR*

KF0M/R -- Oct 29, 2003 22:14 ET



Kf0M/R 144/222/432/1296 beams on PVC rack. June 2003

It has been about 10 yrs from the last time I did a rover operation. This one was a lot of fun and combined with a vacation trip. My XYL KB0TZZ was the pilot for this trip and I did the navigator and radio operator duties. We covered 8 grids starting from EM17 and ending in EN32. The most interesting operating location was a cemetery in EN20 where the XYL read head stones while I operated.

Equipment for the Rover station consisted of 144 MHz: Kenwood TR751 into an RFC 170W amp, Ant was a 12 element Jr boomer. 222 Mhz Yeasu FT736 KLM 120W amp, and 6 el Quagi.

432 Mhz: Yeasu FT 736 and TE 200W amp and 11 el quagi. 1296 Mhz was Yeasu FT736 and 45 el Loop yagi. All antennas were mounted on a PVC rack.

The highlight of the rover operation actually came the day before the contest Friday evening when I completed a 222 Mhz e-skip QSO from the mobile station EM17 to N6RMJ DM14 running barefoot. I wonder if there have been any other "Mobile" 222 Mhz E- skip QSO's.

-- *KF0M*

KE4KVV -- Oct 18, 2003 19:56 ET

Boy was this "FUN"! I had a GREAT time with my "FIRST" VHF QSO PARTY. Conditions

were pretty good here in EM80 on 6 meters for most of the contest and for a short while on 2 meters. I was VERY HAPPY with my score(92,120)for a FIRST time attempt while only working two bands. I worked several NEW grids and lots of multipliers to make the score respectable with just 100 watts on both bands with just a single M2 6M5X(55ft)on 6 meters and a single 215WB(61ft) on 2 meters. I am glad the scores held up and I placed well in my category(SOLP)and division (NFL). I am HAPPY with my FINAL score and looking forward to some more GREAT contesting SOON! Thanks to all for the points and the multipliers! Catch you NEXT contest. If you have never tried contesting give it a shot you may even have a GREAT time and make some GREAT contacts all at the same time! God bless!

Clayton -- *KE4KVW*

KA1MDA -- Sep 11, 2003 08:43 ET



3 hours into contest, this tree took out power to my entire street!



I operated from home QTH in FN32(450' elevation). I used to do quite a bit of VHF contesting in the early 1980's, but was out of it for quite a while. This was my third VHF contest since finally getting antennas and tower set up last year.

Antennas consist of Hy-Gain 6 element beam on 50 Mhz, KLM 16 element beam on 144 Mhz, and K1FO 25 element antenna for 432 Mhz on 35 foot tower.

Had lots of fun working 6 meter openings, but 2 meter band appeared to be very flat. FM mode participation was non-existent here in Western MA. Not like the 1980's, when I remember working lots of stations on 2 meter FM!

Three hours into contest, a large tree about a mile down my street snapped, taking power lines down and plunging entire street into darkness until Midnight! Luckily, I have a 5.5 KVA sinewave inverter and a 39 KWH battery bank for back-up power, so I operated 7 hours on emergency power.

More details on UPS, station, etc. can be seen at www.ka1mda.org. -- *KA1MDA*

Thanks to this UPS, ran next 7 hours on emergency power.

NN5DX -- Aug 16, 2003 10:55 ET



Top to bottom: 3 elt 6m, 10 elt 222, M2 432-13WL, Cushcraft 4218XL. 2m J-Pole at lower right is my APRS IGATE station.

First major effort from the home QTH here in West Texas. I've pretty much determined I'm the only station on VHF/UHF SSB/CW in my grid (DM80), which made for lots of fun during the 6m opening Saturday night.

Kudos to N5RZ/R who gave me many local grids which I would not have worked otherwise.

Final wrap was around 84K points, which appears to be good for a new Section record on SOLP.

C U all in September.

....de Ron DM80nv -- *NN5DX*



IC-706 for 6m, FT-736R for 2/222/432. PC is for logging and APRS IGATE. Added 2x8930 amplifier in back for Perseids, had Mirage brick previously.

WB2FKO/R -- Aug 12, 2003 01:05 ET

Quiet before the storm on Saturday night. Less than an hour after this photo was taken, a massive 6-meter opening to the west, southeast, and then northwest USA resulted in many,



WB2FKO/R in grid DM74. Nearest traffic light is almost 100 miles away!

many QSOs from this nearly uninhabited grid (DM74) in central New Mexico. Using just 6- and 2-meters, I set a new personal contest best of 15,624 points. Working 80 different grids on 6-meters - mostly from this QTH - made the difference. -- *WB2FKO*

W8PAT -- Aug 4, 2003 22:40 ET



Windmill tower with 144, 222, 432, 1296 antennas.

Super six meter conditions on Saturday. Never even listened to higher bands till 0330 UTC Sunday. 12 countries worked on six meters was outstanding, including V31MD for country #104. I used IC-746 on six meters and FT-736 on 144, 222, and 432 and IC-1271 on 1296. Antennas are 7 elements on 50 Mhz, 16 elements on 144, 17 elements on 222, 96 elements on 432 minus those elements which have fallen off in the last 20 years. A 55 element looper is used on 1296. Pictures show 144 and up tower and the 50 Mhz tower. -- *W8PAT*



Six meter antenna at 52 feet. N1DPM design

N6ZE/R -- Jul 22, 2003 08:39 ET



Pete, N6ZE/R, operated from a 27th floor hotel room loated just 2 blocks west of Times Square, NYC, (FN-30)to make a few QSOs just after the beginning of the June VHF QSO Party. 2 watts and a 1/4 wave whip radios were used on both 6 & 2 meters. (Bruce Cowee photos)

For the second time in 10 years, I completed a "Coast to Coast Rover" effort. I am employed as an airline pilot so I often miss contests due to work commitments. However my work duties and the June VHF QSO Party combined to permit me to operate for the start of the contest period in FN-20 (NNJ) from a park bench overlooking the Hudson River; I made several 6 & 2m QSOs including one 6m Sporadic E QSO in EL-86. I then traveled by bus back to my 27th floor hotel room located just 2 blocks west of Times Square (FN-30) (NYCLI) and made a few more QSOs. I flew from JFK airport to Salt Lake City, UT for an extended stay. Salt Lake City lies very close to the junction of 4 grids so I rented a car and activated DN-30, 31, 40, & 41. I made some contacts from my DN-40 7th floor hotel room and from a hillside overlooking the Mormon Tabernacle. Some contacts were also made from an Interstate Highway 80 overpass just over the line in DN-30. I made other QSOs from a hillside near Farmington, UT (DN-41). I also operated from an Antelope Island State Park hilltop (DN-31) for a 'sweep' of the Salt Lake area grids. On Sunday evening, I deadheaded on a flight to Seattle and had a scheduled arrival time of 8:04 PM PDT. For once, "Murphy" was with me and I arrived early at the SEA-TAC airport gate at 7:52PM PDT. I quickly took my 2 meter rig and made 2 QSOs from CN-87



Pete, N6ZE/R made 9 QSOs from the Antelope Island State Park, UT (DN-31). A bison sculpture supervised the operation from a hilltop. (The island is actually home to a large herd of bison and is not home to any antelope.) The temperature was 98 degrees in the shade!

'locals' in 3 different divisions.

A special thanks to the Salt Lake VHFers who helped my locate suitable roving QTHes.

Pete, N6ZE -- N6ZE/R

VE3HHT -- Jul 21, 2003 17:48 ET



(WWA) in the last 4 minutes of the contest.

I activated 7 Grids: FN-20, FN-30, DN-30, DN-31, DN-40, DN-41, & CN-87 and 3 Divisions: Hudson, Rocky Mt., & Northwestern.

As usual I utilized "2 watt and a 1/4 wave whip" rigs for both 6 meters (FT-690) & for 2 meters (IC-202). I also had 24 spare "C" cell batteries along as well.

My total score of 960 points is not large, but I may hold the record for miles traveled by a VHF Rover: 9951 miles. I flew 3170 miles from my Los Angeles, CA area home to NYC via Orlando, FL; I rode 5 miles on a NJ Transit bus; I flew 1960 miles from NYC to Salt Lake City; I deadheaded 689 miles for Salt Lake to Seattle; I flew 4027 miles from Seattle to my home via Atlanta, GA

As usual, I had fun and got to talk with the

This was my third (warm weather) VHF contest operating portable from my friend John's balcony, 30 floors up in downtown Toronto. John supplies a great location, amazing view, food and photography.

I have an FT-817 and use a compromise dipole for 6 and 2 and a 7-element yagi for 432. For this year I built a W1GHZ transverter and a 3-element WA5VJB yagi for 222.

I had a lot of fun and made 40 contacts during

Saturday afternoon and evening, about 10 more than my previous best. My 222 building efforts resulted in only 1 contact, but I was happy because the stuff worked.

I did have a northward contact or two. As the balcony faces south, I'm not sure what propagation mode was involved. The antennas were pointed at the office buildings in downtown, so perhaps it was building scatter!

73 - Keith -- *VE3HHT*

KC2GOW -- Jul 16, 2003 12:40 ET



**Me at my operating station from FN20wo
Staten Island, New York**

I'm very glad that six meters opened up Saturday and parts of Sunday. With 100w on 6/2 and 30w on 220/70cm I managed to reach the 5g point level by contest end. Hope to hear more people on 2m in September.

73's Andy KC2GOW FN20wo Staten Island, NY
-- *KC2GOW*

KC4PX -- Jul 15, 2003 12:07 ET

The June VHF Contest from EL98QG in Florida reminded me of my Contest Days in New Jersey, the VHF Alley of the North East. During the first four (4) hours of the contest, 6 meter contacts resulted in a run rate of 100+ per hour. Florida was open to the entire North East, Mid-West, then West Coast. In fact, up until Midnight, the first 10 hours of the contest was all 6 meter activity. Sunday continued to be a 6 meter contest with the band open to the North East at noon, followed by open conditions the rest of the contest to Mid-West and West Coast. Final tally on 6 was 950 Q's and 263 Grids.



Tower: Mosley Pro67-C3, M2 6M7, M2 222-7WL, M2 440-21ATV, M2 2M12; Rotatable Mast: 1296 45EI Loop, 2304 45EI Loop, 903 18EI Loop



6Meters= ICOM756Pro + VHF-1200; 2Meters = IC-275H + Henry 2002A; 222 = TS2000X + DEMI transverter + TE Systems 300w Amp; 432Mhz = IC-475A + D1010; 903Mhz = IC-275A + DEMI Transverter; 1296Mhz = TS2000X; 2304Mhz = TS2000X + DEMI Transverter + 10 watt amp

Looks like Florida is now competitive with the North East.

More and more HAMS in Florida are getting on the VHF, UHF and SHF bands. I had a blast competing with NW5E in Orlando. Lost total points to him by 10k, However I believe we both are in the top 10 in North America for Single Op High Power. This is my BEST effort in any VHF contest, thanks to the 6 Meter E's.

All bands up to 2304 were active from my QTH, however the 903 Transverter could not transmit so no QSO's. In September I will have 903 active.

Band Totals: Total Points 338,148

(6Meters 950/263) (2Meters 54/17) (222Mhz 8/4) (432Mhz 24/11) (903Mhz -) (1296Mhz 8/4) (2304Mhz 6/4)

73's Ivars, KC4PX -- *KC4PX*



Another View of my station.

K7CW -- Jul 14, 2003 00:48 ET



Eric, N7EPD, manning the 2m station.

Pretty windy up on Table Mountain (Elev. 6350, CN97), but it's a good location for VHF contesting. We'll be going back next year.
-- *K7CW*



View to the northwest with Mount Stewart in the distance. The 2304 MHz horn is aimed at K7NQ (We made the Q!)

WA9TKK -- Jul 12, 2003 14:16 ET



WA9TKK on top of Humphreys Peak with some of the other high mountains in the San Francisco Peaks, six of which top

11,000 ft. Geologists estimate that the original volcano of the San Francisco peaks topped 16,000 ft amsl.



Operated from DM45 on top of Humphrey's Peak near Flagstaff at 12,633 feet, the highest point in Arizona. This has

always been a very challenging hike due to the altitude, exposure, and severe weather. Several years ago, I had to

abandon the VHF contest when a hail and lightning storm erupted on my way up when I was only about 1/4 mile from the

top. Other years, the Forest Service had closed the hiking trails due to fire danger. This weekend, the weather was

clear and warm, but I still packed my severe weather gear just in case. The previous 2 weekends there was hail and

lightning on top as I attempted to hike to the top to get in shape for the contest weekend. The main discomfort was

being continuously covered by flying gnats which plague hikers on top. The hike is about 11 miles roundtrip with about

3600 feet of elevation gain. So I desired to keep my pack weight down. So I left the FT-690 6m all mode rig at home

which was a mistake due to the good 6m conditions. I also didn't want to be a lightning rod so I also did not pack the

WA9TKK operating in one of the rock shelters on Humphrey's Peak. Just above my head on the wall is the FT-290 with

part of the telescoping half-wave 2m antenna visible, to my right is the T-81A with 6m whip, and the far right on the

wall is the Arrow 3 element 70cm yagi.



View along the hiking trail showing snow in AZ in mid June.



View of the inner basin of the San Francisco Peaks from the Humphreys-Agassiz saddle. Hundreds of dormant volcanoes

in the San Francisco volcanic field surround the Flagstaff area on the Colorado Plateau.

big yagis and masts. My total pack weight was about 32 lbs which included 3 quarts of water. But my total score was my

best ever for a VHF contest due to not only my location, but the number of other hams operating at remote locations in

the state. Hope to be able to operate up here again. Hiking time to the top was about 5 hours; return trip about 3-1/2

hours. Radios: Yaesu FT-290RII 10W on 2m, Alinco DJ-280 3W on 220, and Icom T-81A 5W on 52, 4W on 446 and 0.8W on 1294. Antennas: 6m: Yaesu telescoping whip, 2m: Larsen telescoping 1/2 wave, 220: standard Alinco rubber ducky, 446: Arrow

3-ele yagi, 1294: Comet 5 ele-yagi. Power source: 12V-2AH gel cell for FT-290; standard battery packs for Alinco and Icom HTs. 50 TOTAL QSO POINTS, 27 TOTAL GRIDS.

73, Mike -- WA9TKK



Hikers taking a break at the Humphreys-Agassiz saddle at 11,800 ft (the big hump in the middle of photo #6). Many

hikers go no further than this point as it is extremely difficult just getting to this point due to the steepness of the

trail and the high altitude. This is as far as I got 2 weekends before the contest when a hail and thunderstorm erupted

while I was having lunch. My hands were frozen as I attempted to tighten my hiking boots after getting my rain pants on.



View from US 180 north of Flagstaff of the San Francisco Peaks with 12,633 ft Humphreys Peak on the left and 12,356 ft

Agassiz Peak on the right. Agassiz is home to the Arizona Snow Bowl ski area with the chairlift going up to 11,500 ft.

One of the other contesters operated from here. Unfortunately the Forest Service does not permit hiking past the

chairlift due to fragile tundra. Otherwise, this would be a great way to bypass lots of trail and elevation gain and

make the hike to the top of Arizona a lot easier.

WA9TKK -- Jul 12, 2003 14:12 ET

Operated from DM45 on top of Humphrey's Peak near Flagstaff at 12,633 feet, the highest point in Arizona. This has

always been a very challenging hike due to the altitude, exposure, and severe weather. Several years ago, I had to

abandon the VHF contest when a hail and lightning storm erupted on my way up when I was only about 1/4 mile from the

top. Other years, the Forest Service had closed the hiking trails due to fire danger. This weekend, the weather was

clear and warm, but I still packed my severe weather gear just in case. The previous 2 weekends there was hail and

lightning on top as I attempted to hike to the top to get in shape for the contest weekend. The main discomfort was

being continuously covered by flying gnats which plague hikers on top. The hike is about 11 miles roundtrip with about

3600 feet of elevation gain. So I desired to keep my pack weight down. So I left the FT-690 6m all mode rig at home

which was a mistake due to the good 6m conditions. I also didn't want to be a lightning rod so I also did not pack the

big yagis and masts. My total pack weight was about 32 lbs which included 3 quarts of water. But my total score was my

best ever for a VHF contest due to not only my location, but the number of other hams operating at remote locations in

the state. Hope to be able to operate up here again. Hiking time to the top was about 5 hours; return trip about 3-1/2

hours. Radios: Yaesu FT-290RII 10W on 2m, Alinco DJ-280 3W on 220, and Icom T-81A 5W on 52, 4W on 446 and 0.8W on 1294. Antennas: 6m: Yaesu telescoping whip, 2m: Larsen telescoping 1/2 wave, 220: standard Alinco rubber ducky, 446: Arrow

3-ele yagi, 1294: Comet 5 ele-yagi. Power source: 12V-2AH gel cell for FT-290; standard battery packs for Alinco and Icom HTs. 50 TOTAL QSO POINTS, 27 TOTAL GRIDS.

73, Mike

Key to photos:

All of the attached photos were shot during the June VHF contest weekend of June 14-15, 2003. Camera used was an Olympus

Infinity Mini 35mm film type pocket camera with a fixed 35mm lens. Photos were scanned to digitize. All photos were

taken by WA9TKK except for #1 and #2 which were taken by other hikers that were nearby at the time.

1) WA9TKK on top of Humphreys Peak with some of the other high mountains in the San Francisco Peaks, six of which top

11,000 ft. Geologists estimate that the original volcano of the San Francisco peaks topped 16,000 ft amsl.

2) WA9TKK operating in one of the rock shelters on Humphrey's Peak. Just above my head on the wall is the FT-290 with

part of the telescoping half-wave 2m antenna visible, to my right is the T-81A with 6m whip, and the far right on the

wall is the Arrow 3 element 70cm yagi.

3) View along the hiking trail showing snow in AZ in mid June.

4) View of the inner basin of the San Francisco Peaks from the Humphreys-Agassiz saddle. Hundreds of dormant volcanoes

in the San Francisco volcanic field surround the Flagstaff area on the Colorado Plateau.

5) Hikers taking a break at the Humphreys-Agassiz saddle at 11,800 ft (the big hump in the middle of photo #6). Many

hikers go no further than this point as it is extremely difficult just getting to this point due to the steepness of the

trail and the high altitude. This is as far as I got 2 weekends before the contest when a hail and thunderstorm erupted

while I was having lunch. My hands were frozen as I attempted to tighten my hiking boots after getting my rain pants on.

6) View from US 180 north of Flagstaff of the San Francisco Peaks with 12,633 ft Humphreys Peak on the left and 12,356 ft

Agassiz Peak on the right. Agassiz is home to the Arizona Snow Bowl ski area with the chairlift going up to 11,500 ft.

One of the other contesters operated from here. Unfortunately the Forest Service does not permit hiking past the

chairlift due to fragile tundra. Otherwise, this would be a great way to bypass lots of trail and elevation gain and

make the hike to the top of Arizona a lot easier. -- WA9TKK



K7MWD wrestling with the six meter beam...



K0CAO busy on six meters...

Good weather, lots of E, and plenty of activity!

My brother K0CAO and I teamed up for an excellent weekend of pine trees and great signals. We struggled with the six meter beam for the first few hours of the contest. A metal roof made it quite challenging to get the SWR below a 2:1. After some rearranging of the driven elements (older KLM beam w/4 driven elements) a functional combination was found. Fortunately we packed a 6 meter halo which really came in handy as the opening unexpectedly shifted from Southeast to Midwest and Northwest West.

While Chris was busy on six (well into the early morning hours I should add) I managed to work a few stations on 144 and 432. I had hoped for more activity on 2 but the Southwest is a tough place for tropo. It was fun testing the AM-912 (single 250b amplifier) - no sparks or arcs this time but did manage to wear out the t/r relay. Next year I will be better prepared with spares...

We are lucky to have such an excellent group of VHF'ers in the Southwest. Many locals packed up and operated from rare grids and tall peaks. Most being line-of-sight from each other yet considerate - minimizing QRM. Activity and band conditions were significantly better this year. We worked ~140 grids on 6, 15 grids on 2, and a few on 220 and 432. More pictures and information can be found at Chris's web site - www.qsl.net/k0cao under contests.

A special note of thanks to the many people who helped us gather gear, debug problems, and find a place to operate (N1BUG, K1WHS, KB0CIM, K5KWA, and especially Darrell B.). We would not have been so well equipped without your help. I could not think of a better way to spend a weekend in June. Thanks to all!!!

K8FK -- Jul 9, 2003 20:58 ET



6 Meter M2 Array at QTH of K8FK.

Wow! This was my first VHF/UHF contest since the 1960's. This was a lot of fun--and I will do it again. My strategy was to plan my attack very carefully and to test my equipment prior to the contest. Due to some complications (Murphy!) I ended up with a 6 meter antenna I could not trust. I ordered a new one ASAP. It arrived and I was able to erect it 30 minutes before the contest started! So much for testing as I had to set up my logging program for this contest format. Oh well, I enjoyed making a few DX contacts, several states/grids. Photo is of the massive, M2 array I put up at 12 feet, just before the contest started! -- K8FK

K9ILT/R K0PG/R -- Jul 8, 2003 21:14 ET



K0PG & K9ILT "Rovairs Extraordinaires" photo by Park Ranger

We were disappointed that we had to scrap our plans for a 14 grid effort into some new territory for us. We wound up activating 8 grids, but thanks to 6 meters we had lots of fun and posted a decent score.

A highlight of the event was the activation of a new "Mt. Trashmore" in EN51. It is probably the highest landfill in Chicagoland and offers great possibilities for the higher bands. We were too busy with 6 (Aww!) to do much on the higher bands but we have visions of lots of good stuff in the contests to come, provided it doesn't get too crowded!

We had some 2 meter RX problems, now solved. The six meter amp blew up, but in all, a good time. It's great to work old friends and make some new ones too! See you in September. 73, Tim & Pat -- K0PG/R & K9ILT/R



Activating a grid on this hilltop proved to qualify as a "Special Use."

N2MH/R -- Jul 5, 2003 15:35 ET



The Lighthouse Rover at Montauk Point Lighthouse (ARLHS USA-512) on Long Island. The Rover covers HF through 70 cm. And, yes, there is an HF antenna on the vehicle. Can you find it?

The Lighthouse Rover embarked on another adventure for the June contest. True to its name, we operated from at least one lighthouse. This time, Karen and I started the contest at the Montauk Point Light (ARLHS USA-512) on Long Island. Our route took us west through Long Island and finally to a local overlook near home in NNJ on Saturday night. Sunday morning, we started the day at the same local overlook, headed up to High Point, NJ and then followed I-81 north to FN14/FN24 stopping at several locations along the way.

We had our best contest ever, with a final score 56,160. The 6m band opening at the beginning of the contest was a welcome surprise. And, we had a chance to work many of the same skip stations again on Sunday night when 6m opened

up again, this time to northern NY. (It was fun explaining to some of them that they could work us again because we had gone to a new grid square. I guess some stations never get to work a rover!) Along our route we returned to some previous sites that we've operated from in the past and visited some new sites that we scoped out in the weeks before the contest. All in all, we had a great time.

For a full description of the contest for us, please visit our web page at

73, Mark, N2MH and Karen The Lighthouse Rover -- *N2MH*

W0IS/R & KC00IA/R -- Jul 8, 2003 00:30 ET



220 mag mount in the foreground; plunger-duct-tape antenna mount in the background. The disheveled individual in the background is W0IS, as he contemplates how to remove the antenna at the end of the contest.



The original PVC mount in its better days, from the January VHF SS. KC00IA in the foreground.

The OM/XYL Team of W0IS and KC00IA activated twelve grids in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Illinois, using an FT-817, running into dipoles for 6, 2, and 432 on a PVC mast on top of the car. We also had 2M FM into a 5/8 wave on the trunk, and a 220 handheld into a quarter-wave mag mount.

We suffered a catastrophic antenna failure early in the contest, as the PVC mast couldn't quite handle the wind resistance. We stopped at the nearest Home Depot for inspiration on how to effect a repair, and left the store with a small toilet plunger and a large roll of duct tape.

We stopped at home, cut the mast down to about two feet to avoid further wind problems, and firmly duct taped it to the plunger. This we attached to the roof, "like a mag mount," as one contact queried us, and then firmly duct taped the plunger to the car top carrier. This held quite well for the approximately 1000 mile rove.

The next contest will probably see us using a PVC pyramid holding the antennas, but the plunger and duct tape will probably be loaded in the trunk just in case. -- *W0IS*

K3TV -- Jul 5, 2003 15:01 ET



The Contest Culprit !

My 2m effort was going at a record pace, (240Q 38G) on Saturday when the line noise went to "full power". It went on for days. Here is a photo of the only transmitter I could hear on contest Sunday.
-- *K3TV*

VA6AN -- Jul 4, 2003 00:07 ET

Thought it would be nice to see a Cdn comment. Had a great time but as usual packed to many antennas. Activated 6M 2M 70cm from DO42, that's right the middle of Alberta. App 260 contacts on 6M with 101 grids. Nice to be in a rare one. Score 30K+ not to bad for single op low power north of the 51st. Picture says it all 8-) 73 AL -- *VA6AN*

K6KLY -- Jul 3, 2003 16:20 ET



Russ K6KLY of the Pacific Division

One of the best contests on 6 meters in the past 30 years, and I have been in all of them. Russ
-- *K6KLY*

K9AKS -- Jul 2, 2003 14:27 ET



Here I am in 1959 at the same site near Reno, Minnesota (EN43, although we did not know it at the time!). The G-50 was singing!



Here I am in 2003 at the Reno location. Great views in all directions, especially south through east.

Another fun contest. This year I went back to an old favorite site on a bluff above the Mississippi River near Reno, Minnesota. Our "old" multiop groups had used the site in the 1970s (W0OHU) and 1980s (W9UD); but our first time there was in 1959 (W9YCR/0)! I operated QRP portable again. Six meters on Saturday was great. I managed to pick off quite a few grids. Unfortunately, when the band opened again Sunday evening, it did so with the same geographic pattern and I found only two new stations to work. The other bands were average at best. Weather was excellent, the corn around me was growing fast, and the cows broke into the field only once during the contest. -- *K9AKS*

KQ6EE -- Jul 2, 2003 10:45 ET

KQ6EE in California: I did the ROVER this time because my wife liked to get away from the house. So I packed all my gears: dual band beam antenna, ft-100, ICOM 4 bander handheld and one car battery. I put the band beam, 220, 6m, 2m vertical on the top of my Ford Explorer, and drove to Palomar Mountain in San Diego. On the way to San Diego, people stare at my antenna farm Explorer. People are curious what these guys are doing. My wife enjoyed visiting Palomar Observatory, and I enjoyed the ham contest. I did not do much on contest on Saturday. I only did no more than 20 contests in San Diego County and part of Orange County. Sometime, we have to spend time with family. On Sunday, I went up to San Gabriel Peak which is near Mountain Wilson at the top of Pasadena. I had the ball at San Gabriel Peak which is 6000+ feet above sea level. I had most of the contests on San Gabriel Peak. I had a lot of luck at San

Gabriel Peak and Mt. Disappointment. I don't think I will be the top ten or not even top 100!!!! on Rover HA HA. That is why I like to do QRP when vhf and uhf contests. I have fun on every vhf and uhf contests. GO HIKING AND PLAY WITH HAM RADIO AT THE PEAK. 73 , MEET YOU AT NEXT CONTEST (SEPT CONTEST). -- *KQ6EE*

K6OWL -- Jul 2, 2003 00:08 ET



Max, son of K6OWL, poised to contest.

First time in a VHF Contest. Grabbed FT-817 and an Arrow yagi with a tripod and hiked to the peak of Mount Davidson (the highest point in the City and County of San Francisco at about 900 feet) on a beautiful day with one of my sons. Had a great time for as long as the battery lasted and learned a lot. Already planning how to do it better next time. -- *K6OWL*



K6OWL juggles log, radio, and mic while trying to keep antenna from blowing over.



Intermod can be a problem in urban environments (Sutro Tower in the background -- home to 10 TV stations, 4 FM stations, and dozens and dozens of land mobile and commercial mobile radio service providers). I've been to the top of the tower in 1989 on a fact-finding mission as one of its telecom attorneys.

V25XX -- Jun 30, 2003 10:08 ET



Here is the antenna mounted to a dish laying on it's face, nothing else holding it down.

First I have to say I had a great time in V2 Antigua. I enjoyed passing out a new country on 6M for so many. I stayed at the Royal Antiguan Hotel, the room was on the (8th) top floor. I had the antenna mounted on the roof of the Hotel. Grid: FK97

On Saturday at the start of the contest 6M was wide open, single/double hop. I had to stop working the pile-up to get laptop set-up for the contest. During the first day I had one 3 hop opening to California, and that ending the evening at 0220z with a total of 229 contacts. On Sunday I wasn't so lucky, the band only opened a couple of times. I hope to do it again in the future from the same location.

Equipment: Icom IC-756Pro, M² 6M5 5-element ant. TE Systems amp. which the T/R relay was stuck.



This was antenna the last 3 hr. of the contest, with the reflector just a couple inches from the wall.

I like Jon N0JK wish the DX contacts also counted for the DX operators. Total for the Contest 294 Q's 116 Grids with the DX Q's included.

More details and pictures on my trip at <http://v25xx.wb8xx.com> 73 Kevin WB8XX, V25XX -- WB8XX

N3JFM -- Jun 30, 2003 03:26 ET



Did someone say thunderstorm???

An Elmer once told me "if you have a dollar to spend on your station and don't know what to buy with it, you'll get the most bang for your buck if you buy antennas. I took his advice. Been slowly upgrading the antennas and getting some real feedline. Things are still too low, nothing is above 60 feet. No knock at the door this time, (see Jan 2003 soapbox for details) even with Doug-N3JXB the TVI king firmly entrenched at the 6 meter station with his Quadra, and no adult supervision at times. Worked a few new grids on 222 and 432 so that work is paying off, with more to come. Had 2 new op's here this time, Lou-AB2OO, who

looked like he was a bit overwhelmed as it was his first contest experience. It was either that or my neighbor threatening him with a golf club for turning in the wrong driveway, and Hoagie-KB3IDU. Kent-WA3IEM was back and made some good contacts on 432. Bill-N3OJ was a little intimidated when 6 was open but he definitely has contesting potential. Joe-NM3N helped with setup and teardown, and even made some good qso's. And of course, last but not least Wilby-W1LBY, who's constant barrage of wit and wisdom, kept us all in stitches all weekend long. Thanks guys, and thanks everyone who took the time to listen for little ol'us between the big guns. We'll work you in September.....73 Dave -- N3JFM

NØURW -- Jun 29, 2003 03:22 ET

NØURW....EN41GO...Iowa...SOLP....(Ø¿ø)....

Saturday:

The contest started out Saturday with 6 meters wide open to several locations in DM land. (Utah, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico) An Hour later everything had shifted to the east coast. Stations in Florida, Virginia, & as far north as New Hampshire were logged.. (very spotty) This lasted about 3 hours. Then we had a breif opening into DO Land (approx 30 minutes) When I turned the beams back to the south I had found 6 open into Florida again,, (for about an hour) then it shifted to the west, from Texas EM00 ,all the way to Southern California. DM04.. 5 to 6 hours worth. This was great as I was able to work rovers out west in different grid sqs. While all of this was going on I was also logging the regulars on 6 that I would normally take the time to run the other bands with. I decided to wait & try later as to not miss any 6 meter contacts & new grids.. This proved to be a mistake as I never heard a peep out of some of them again... When 6 meters started dieing out, I knew it was time to log a few on 2 & up , This was not to be...With below average numbers in the log on some of the bands at the end of the day, shows most were still huddled around the 6 meter band waiting for something to happen...

Sunday:

2 & 222 & 432 started out rather well ,in the morning the bands were alive & well to the east , southeast & south ,,6 was dead here in all directions, With the exception of a few of the big gun stations out east that make it into the log every contest...It wasn't until 00:10 utc that 6 meters re-opened here to the west / southwest... It was pretty much the same area as what we had worked on saturday , but this time it stretched out a little farther north to DN31& west to CN90. ,,Towards the last hour of the contest we had aurora on 6 ,, It was a frantic ending with everyone trying for those last few very valuable points...

Hope you all had as much fun as I did this year. And a big thanks to the rovers who keep this contest a rotor twister... :) If you missed me this time or would like to work again,,I will be on again in the July CQ VHF Contest (July 19/20) ... 73's..Å££...(Ø¿ô)..ÑØÛRW..(æ¿ð).. Sorry no pics to show. I spent my \$\$ on new antennas instead of a digital camera.... -- NØURW

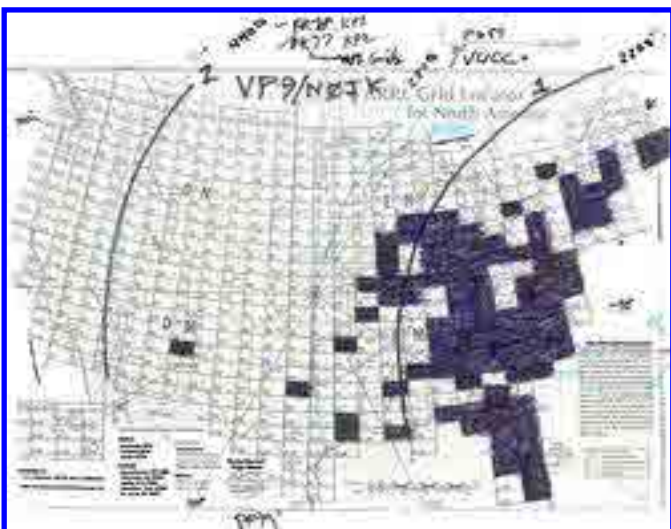
K5AM -- Jun 28, 2003 18:31 ET

Location: K5AM Horse Mountain contest site. DM54wa, New Mexico. -- K5AM



K5AM Horse Mountain contest site. DM54wa, New Mexico. 7900 ft elev. Powered by a Honda propane generator. This view bears 210. Horse Peak, at 11,000 ft, is to the south. To the northeast, one looks down onto the VLA radio telescope, 30 miles away at 6500 ft. www.zianet.com/k5am

VP9/NØJK -- Jun 27, 2003 10:46 ET



Grid map I used during the contest from VP9. It may not be complete.

Too bad the contest didn't include Friday evening - had a great Es opening all the way to the west coast. I worked W7UT, W6KK and WA7JTM while running only 10 watts! 2003 would have rivaled 1987 as one of the all time best June VHF QSO Party contest if the contest had been June 13 - 15...

At the start of the contest I had weak Es to 8, 9, and the Missouri at the edge of single hop Es out to the "Es void" (between single and double hop Es). Gave Jeff K1MOD en40 his #100 country on 6M for DXCC. Worked K5AM DM54 Saturday evening for my best DX(that I can count) for the contest.

Most of Saturday evening was an exercise in frustration as I could hear many 4s and 5s(K5TR - I heard you), but most had their antennas pointed away from me or were working strong single hop stations that covered me up.



The 6M5X at VP9/NØJK



My operating position and a picture of my antenna at sunset Saturday evening.



It was hot when I put the 6M5X up. It worked well, even worked "Mr. M2" Mike K6MYC with it on 6M>

Sunday morning I had only 9K points and no Es. Noted good scatter signals from K1TEO, N2PA, K3EAR, W2SZ/1, K8GP, etc peaking around 1100 - 1200 utc. Sounded just what I usually hear from Kansas, except pointing west. :-)
Sunday afternoon Es started to Florida, Virgin Is. (worked both grids there) and W1, and VE1. Highlight of the contest was catching a 1/2 hour 6M opening to Europe at 2020 utc Sunday and logging a dozen Gs and ONs. Sadly... the ARRL says none of these will count for my score. Chatted several times with Kevin, V25XX, on Es when conditions slow to the states. He did a great job from Antigua. Sunday evening finally got a solid Es opening to the "mother lode" (1, 2, 3, 4, and 8 land) and ran off nearly 200 contacts. Big signals from Bernie, W3UR, K2AXX, and Dave K8CC. Es began dying out around 0100 and last station heard was K8GP CQing on 50.143 CW 'til 0130 utc June 16.

So ... considering how the contest started I feel I finished with a respectable score from Bermuda. I monitored and called CQ on 144.200 MHz often, but no signals were heard on 2 Meters. Note the grid map may not be complete, but gives an idea of what I worked from VP9 in the contest. Only "complaint" is I wish DX stations could work each other as well as W/VE.

Station: 6M IC-706MII, 5 el M2 at 20 feet. 2M same radio, CC Jr. Boomer at 20 feet.

QTH FM72 at VP9GE's(tnx Ed for your help) I plan to be back in September in VP9.

more comments, pictures, link to audio files at:
<http://www.wb8xx.com/n0jk/> -- *NØJK*

W3XO/5 -- Jun 25, 2003 15:34 ET

The contest was a mixed bag here in EM00. Six meters was wonderful on Saturday but dead most of Sunday until the final hour. A highspot was working 8 countries: US, VE, HI8, V3, HK, V2, XE and TG9.

Condition on 2 and up were below normal for the entire time. What saved the Contest for those bands were the Rovers. Special thanks to KI5DR, N5RZ and ND2X for activating grids not normally available.

Breakdown:

6 336 in 144, 2 50 in 21, 222 18 in 12, 432 28 in 13, 1296 3 in 2 and 2304 3 in 3 for a claimed score of 97,110.

Unfortunately my 902 transverter up on the tower could hear but not be heard, so no QSOs on that band. -- W3XO

N3EG -- Jun 22, 2003 17:55 ET



QRP portable means you use a mini-van instead of a full size van, right?

Another single-op-portable (aka QRP portable, aka Fixed Rover) operation from CN86, Northwest Oregon. Had all bands 6 through 1296 ready, but found that Nicolai Mountain is too flat on top for the higher bands (903 / 1296) and made no contacts there. Six meters made up the difference, with 50 grids (EL98 Florida with 10 watts!)

Full information and pictures at:

<http://home.thegrid.net/~cn86/vq2k3.htm>

-- N3EG

W1BQ -- Jun 22, 2003 12:38 ET

Returning to Mt. Agamenticus in York Maine, for my third June VHF contest, from this picturest 700 foot elevation location, saw a rainy setup morning. Conditions for 6 Mtrs was exceptional for several hours after the begining QSO. Dispite a hard drive crash early on Sunday AM and an early departure, we were able to put in a respectable 459 QSO's operating on 7

bands, 50MHz through 2304MHz. Sunday Q
rate seemed to drag on. -- *W1BQ*





W3IY/R -- Jun 21, 2003 10:55 ET



One of many winged visitors in FM28be...this one checking our our 903 Yagi.

We had a great time in the 2003 June VHF QSO Party. Conditions were great on 6m Saturday, when we worked 56 grids on 6m Es. My rover partner, ON1CFX did a great job on 6m passing out FM15 & 25, etc. to hungry 6m ops. Tropo condx were rather poor, however, especially to the activity centers to the New England area. A cold front had invaded the north, but we were still stuck in humid summer wx in the NC, VA areas. Apparently the propagation through the wx barrier was well below average. We still seemed to experience good local conditions, however, and the microwave activity was pretty good. We had lots of 10-band runs with W4RX, K3EAR, K1RZ, and KC3WD/R. Also some great runs with N3UW/R (ex KD4DSX/R).



A new pullover was found in FM26ai providing enhanced coverage from this grid.



A great rover spot in FM15vx with a fantastic radio horizon.

Signals locally were better than normal thru 10GHz.

Many of the usual stations were not found, however to the NE. Lots of Packrats always head up to W3CCX, and other usual stations in FM29 & FN20 were not around when we were looking.

The stop in FM28be was very productive, despite being assaulted by hoards of hungry tiger-mosquitoes. These striped-bastards are ferocious, and sting like a small bee as they insert their hypodermic needle into your body (even thru the clothes!). We doused ourselves with Deet, but that just made them more tenacious. They invaded the rover, and we were getting bit for the rest of the rove!

Many good runs on microwaves from this beautiful swamp site. We lucked out here with W3CCX, running all 10 bands...even tried 24GHz, but propagation wasn't quite that good, and the humidity ate all the RF.

The dirt road here gave the rover a real vibration test, which apparently shook off our main exhaust system hangar (we didn't know it at the time).

We overstayed our allotted time in FM15,25,16,17 & 28 and got several hours behind schedule. This caused us to pick a closer-but-compromised site in FM18, and we skipped FM29 all together to save time. We found W2SZ from FM18, but the signals were well below average on 1296, continuing the tropo draught.

We had some fun on 903-3456 mobile with W4RX, K1RZ, & K3DNE en route to FM19ha. Somewhere on the capital beltway, a loud truck was heard, and I looked out the window, but could see nothing except passenger cars. Yipes, it was the rovermobile exhaust system coming unglued. We sounded like a Mack truck! Upon arrival in FM19ha, ON1CFX used some spare guy-wire to patch things together so we could continue the rove. Dropping everything behind the catalytic converter could be disastrous on the highway.

FM19ha was quite productive, with more 10-band runs with guys on the bands. I always like this site, since it's close to my QTH, and usually accessible. We lucked into WA2FGK agn here thru 3.4GHz, which was great. WA3ZKR, K1RZ, & K3EAR were very loud on 10 bands here...schweet! Tnx, guys!

We decided time was too short for looping through FM09, and set sail for one last stop on a great VA mountain.

Onward to our high-altitude site in FM08us (Hogback Mtn). The ride up was good, although the rover was emitting loud acoustic noise in addition to radio noise. Being sleepless, we stopped for some food in Front Royal, and took a short break on skyline drive to unwind, clean up, etc. It was fun, but difficult, working guys on the ride up the mtn, dodging low-hanging trees, and trying to save the loopers for one final battle from the last grid. (There seem to be more low-hanging trees up here every time we come up).

We had the pleasure of meeting W3HMS/R and WA3PTV/R up here, and having a nice eyeball QSO. Also met W3CQH and K3JAY on their way back from FM07. We continued to erect the 20ft mast, and erect all guns for the last chance from our only high site on the trip. It was really fun working a bunch of new grids, and running microwave bands again with many stations in the radio-listening area. K8GP and W4IY were pounding the receiver to the west, but we still managed to squeak out a few grids to the west from 3360ft. Worked a few VE3s and some 8-landers. A nice highlight was running into W2KV and K2UYH on 10GHz SSB. W2KV had just gotten on the band, and had a great signal, as did Al. Also QSOed K3EAR on 24GHz!!(about 156Km). All-in-all, we had a great time. We managed to avoid the rain all weekend, which was somewhat amazing considering that it was all around us. All our gear survived, except the exhaust, and even that looks fixable.

Many thanks to all the stations who got on the air, and gave out some points & grids. The June contest holds a special spot in the hearts of many, giving us a great chance to get some good activity after a long winter of snow, rain, ice, and white noise on the bands. This one was really fun for us. Many tnx to ON1CFX, coming all the way from Belgium to help me out, and make our roving-journey so succesful. Christophe is an active microwave operator in Belgium, and spent 2 years in the US passing out rover-grids, before moving back home. I hope he will join us many times in the future.

.----- TOTALS 761 1536 165 + 10 = 175

Claimed score = 268,800 It was a real gas!

Don't forget about the July microwave activity days, and the upcoming August UHF contest. Listen for the weak ones... 73, Bill W3IY. -- W3IY



The stacked 11el 6M2.5WL antennas really play well. Nothing like 100' of boom on 6M!



This gives you a feel for the size of the array.

Had a killer June VHF 'test this year. 6M Es all day Saturday well into the night. It was variously open to FL, the SW and the NE, and occasionally the Q rate exceeded 200/hour for short 10 - 20 minute bursts. I was glad that I had two independent 6M antennas (I also have a 5 el up at 18') since I had to switch directions several times to follow the E clouds and sometimes it was coming in from multiple areas at once!

On Saturday, calls on 2M were met with mostly silence since everyone was hanging around 6M. Daytime absorption was high and there seemed to be a brick wall between 903 and 1296 with stations more than one or two grids away. 6M kept moving around to the same areas over and over again. By the time I finally got to sleep a little after 3 AM I'd worked VUCC and to spare on 6M and had almost 100K points, but had very few 2M and higher QSO's in the log.

Sunday morning 6M was dead, but 2M was really quiet so I played catch up on 2M and above and racked up a fairly respectable total by 10AM, already closing in on my previous best LP score for a June Contest. When 2M slowed down I went to 6 and called CQ, hoping that the Es would make a sudden reappearance at any time; but it was not to be. Sunday afternoon, calls on 2M went practically unanswered but calling on 6M was working out pretty well for me. Everyone seemed to be waiting there for something to happen during the doldrums, so I stuck with it. I encountered a few familiar rovers and followed them around, working them in several new grids. It was like Sunday afternoon during a January contest, except with a lot more background noise. The noise level got higher and higher as the day progressed, and was particularly bad to the North and West.



Later on during the evening 2M kept getting better and better as more stations got back on the air to finish the contest. Propagation was average with no real surprises as it got cooler and the band stretched out a bit. Six was still working well locally and occasionally I'd catch a small e-cloud, but with the notable exception of a few Caribbean DX and a handful of West Coast stations it was only open in short bursts and mainly to the same areas in FL and the Southwest that I'd beat to death the previous day. I was closing in on 275K in the last minutes of the contest when the aurora hit and the band went crazy. I didn't quite make it to 275K, but it was close.

After several rounds with winter storm damage and antenna problems, I recently revamped my entire tower and antenna system. I now rotate 50' of 45G on top of 80' of 55G with two K0XG rotating guy rings. Bigger, higher, stronger! And its a lot more stable too.

Bob -- *K2DRH EN41vr*

KØIP / N7IJ -- Jun 23, 2003 19:12 ET



Ah' the VHF contest, and another year on top of a high mountain. This year's location Sedgwick, 9100 feet up a rocky dirt path, some tense spots for a 2 wheel drive VW camper bus. But the VW did it again, its like a pack mule, Up hill and through the rocks. Sedgwick is just south of Lava Hot Springs Idaho in DN42. We had hoped for another location, but the road still had a 6 x 20 foot snow drift blocking our route. So, plan B. Which turned out better, because DN42 is a rare one, and the qsl cards are flooding in. I guess like everywhere else, Saturday was HOT, Sunday was a bust. 401 contacts on 6, 2, and 432.. Another good one.. John.. -- *KOIP*

loaded and ready to go... Click on the pictures, for a better view.



Rocks, we could see Utah, Wyoming, from our spot in Idaho.



N7IJ Mel, hard at it !!



KØIP





The Mighty K4SCH Antenna Array.

This is the first time I have worked a VHF/UHF contest and I must say it was a blast! Myself (Jim K4SCH) along with my father Larry W4LJS worked the contest from Clingmans Peak on top of Mount. Mitchell North Carolina EM85. Elevation there is about 6,600 feet and some change. We worked 6m SSB, 2m SSB and FM, and also 70cm SSB and FM. For antennas we had 1 KB6KQ loop on 6m, 2 KB6KQ loops stacked on 2m, and a small 2m/70cm Vertical. Needless to say we didn't have much in the way of big antennas but we were pleasantly surprised with the wonderful performance we got out of the loop antennas. For equipment we had a Yaesu FT-100D running on 6m, and an Icom 706MkIIg running on 2m/70cm. We arrived on Mitchell at about 1345EST on Saturday and were on the air by 1415EST we worked until about 2130EST that evening.

Operations started up again on Sunday at about 0830EST and continued until about 1530EST. Saturday brought some great openings to Florida the Midwest and also all the way to California on 6m. On Sunday band enhancements on 6m seemed to dry up but there was still a good amount of local activity. We also had ok luck on 2m on Saturday with some slight enhancements to the north of us and a fairly decent amount of local activity. On Sunday 2m did not do well at all activity was sporadic at best. 70cm was our worst band because we lacked the antennas to appropriately exploit it. The final rundown looked like this:

6m: 140 Q's with 37 multipliers

2m: 70 Q's with 17 multipliers

70cm: 19 Q's With 8 multipliers

For a total score of 15376 Not to bad for a first time out! 73! to everyone and I can only say I hope you enjoyed the contest as much as we did! We already have plans in the works to come back bigger and better next year. -- *K4SCH*

June roving is a more casual pace for us, starting in FM28, FM18 and FM19 on Saturday. Didn't expect to do much on 6m, remaining focused instead on the higher bands. That was a



**FT736 for ABCD with 100-160W bricks
FT100D IF for DEMI and DB6NT xvtrs for
9EFGHIJ with 2-100W bricks**

troublesome strategy, as most of the rest of you were pounding the heck out of the Es on 6m. Traffic, lightning and thunder with a downpour kept us off the air for some prime time, and coupled with the 700+ miles covered over the weekend limited operating time. My son, N1XKT joined me for Sunday as we drove through FN20, 30, 21, 11 and 10. Excitement was our first 24GHz QSOs, in preparation for the August UHF. 73, Rick & Leon -- *KIDS*

K2QO/R -- Jun 21, 2003 20:27 ET



W2TAU Adjusts the Equipment in FN12au

Had a nice laid back contest operating from 7 Grids, driving about 400 miles and amassing 24K points. RoverLog (best VHF contest program money cannot buy as it is FREE) provides the summary:

RoverLog QSOs by Activated Grid: Grid QSOs

FN13 12

FN01 18

EN91 14

FN02 67

EN92 30

FN12 38

FN03 18

RoverLog Score Summary, Using new rover



FT817 and Transverters

rules:

Band QSOs Value QSOpts Mults

50 56 1 56 24

144 68 1 68 22

222 24 2 48 13

432 33 2 66 12

1.2 15 3 45 5

10 1 4 4 1

Grids activated: 7

Totals: 197 287 84

Claimed Score: 24108

The equipment was an FT100D for 6, 2 and 432. 222, 1.2G and 10G were XVTRS driven by an FT817. Antennas were all HB yagis save for the dish on 10G.

Tiger Woods says the the Buick Rendezvous is the perfect marriage of an SUV, minivan and a luxury car. Well, FWIW, he is not quite right. One has to add that it is a fine Rover Wagon!

73 and CU in September! -- *K2QO/R*

KIOSK/R -- Jun 21, 2003 01:57 ET

Roving can be fun even with rather simple gear. Dan (N0BAF) and I had a 100 watt amp. on two meters, but ran the FT 817 barefoot on 50 and 432 MHZ. Antennas were a Moxon for six meters, six elements on two meters and 11 elements on 70 cm. All were home brewed out of wood and heavy wire. Used a painting pole that extends to 18 feet for a mast. It is held up with a simple wood tripod. Everything stows easily and can be set up in about three minutes. The only problem is we can only have one antenna in the air at a time.

On Saturday we worked from DN80, DM89, DM88, DM78 and DM79. Sunday we started with DN70, DN71 and DN81. On a lark, we headed north to DN82. Heard a few stations just above



KI0SK/R operating in DN81 with N0BAF's home built six meter Moxon.

the noise on two. Could have worked them if antennas had been pointed our way, but everyone knew there were no stations in our direction. With six meters closed down we did not make one contact from DN82. Next time we will make a sked or two before heading that far away. Driving back home, we managed one contact in DN72. A few miles into DN71 six opened up again. With a bit of persistence, we worked almost every station heard from that grid. Even had a small pileup for a while.

So many empty grids, so little time.

Erich -- *KI0SK*

N3FTI -- Jun 20, 2003 12:13 ET



VHF & Microwave Towers

This year I operated from a retired AT&T point to point microwave site now owned by Brian Aucker, W3JYD. The site is in grid FN10vh and is located west of Reading Pennsylvania. Sitting at 1320'ASL this private site provides excellent coverage in all directions.

The construction of my contest trailer has come along nicely and sure has made it easier to move, set up, and operate a portable single operator 10 band station from the mountain top. The 16' utility trailer has been fitted with an operating desk, two 19" equipment racks, an on board UPS system, and all my radio gear. The trailer is also large enough to transport two AB577 crank up portable towers, all my antennas and a 6.5KW Honda generator. Although not ready for this June, construction is underway on rack mounted 1.5KW GS35B amplifiers for 50, 144, 222, and 432 MHz. This year power on the lower four was limited to 160W.

As many have mentioned, 6 meters was a blast on Saturday adding many multipliers to the tally.



N3FTI Portable Contest Trailer

In fact the conditions on 50Mhz - 432Mhz seemed above normal from my location for the entire weekend. The microwave bands (903 - 10368 MHz) provided many contacts, but were up and down as mother nature provided me with a mix of nasty rain and hot humid conditions all weekend. Another factor could have been that my microwave antennas may not have completely cleared the tree line in all directions. I'll work on getting the antennas higher and having antenna mounted preamplifiers for next year!



The Microwave Rack

Thanks to all that worked me, especially for taking the time on the microwaves when 6M was so active this year! I'm already looking forward to next years contest, lets see only 358 more days to get ready...

73

Steven Kerns, N3FTI -- *N3FTI*



The VHF Amp Rack (Lots of room for more power!)



A look at the operating position (during tear down, after the contest)

KG4BMH -- Jun 20, 2003 00:05 ET

I had a fun time operating this contest. Even though 50MHz was hot I didn't linger very long on that band, because I had a very mediocre antenna.

144MHz was down from last year in participation. Saturday 2 meters saw a little enhancement to the Mid-West. I went to bed late Saturday night with 38 Grids under my belt knowing full well that Sunday would provide me with an outstanding score on 144MHz. As it worked out it never happened as conditions Sunday was quite flat on 2 Meters.



The Cushcraft DX-120 Collinear Array with Andrews 1/2" Superflex feedline.

I missed hearing some of the stations and multipliers that I normally work during the contests { like EM39, EM48, EM47, EM35, EM53, EN41, and EN71 }, this also marks the first contest in quite some time that I didn't work any VE {Canada} stations on 144MHz.

I was very glad to hear John N8UM and other rovers activate EM87, maybe next year someone will operate with a fairly well equipped station from EM97 {EM97 is a very rare one that a lot of people still need on 144MHz and above}..

I must give Kudos to a Multi-op group that was a new comer on the block, as I heard K9NS EN52 in EM76 for the majority of the contest on 144MHz. Those guys worked a lot of people and should rank well, right up there with such limited multi-op big guns as K8CC, AA4ZZ, W4IY, W7XU and others.

Ok here is my final breakdown:.....

KG4BMH EM76 SOLP

.....QSOs....Mults.....

50MHz .. 10 9

144MHz .. 98 41

Total: 5,400 Pts.....

Thanks for all the contacts and participation, I had a blast.....

Jason Wilborn..... -- *KG4BMH*

K7BEN -- Jun 18, 2003 22:31 ET

This was my first contest where I flew solo. It was very exciting. I was portable at my grandfather's house in south Georgia. I brought only 6 meter wire dipole and a 4 element 2 meter Yagi. I did bring coax but no way to mount either of them. With my grandfathers help I was able to come up with some PVC pipe and string. If there is any thing that Ham radio has taught me, it's how to improvise. Thanks to N1ZZZ for showing me the ropes of contesting and KG4UPZ

for the loaner Icom 706. 73 to all. -- *K7BEN*

N7EME -- Jun 18, 2003 23:57 ET



Portable setup looking South-West with POPUP trailer to keep the XYL very happy during the contest.

This is the second time I participated in a VHF contest, and was this one a whopper. 6 Meters was amazing Saturday June 14th all day. I operated from just East of Holbrook Arizona, in DM44xx, which is where our property is located. Here are a couple of pictures of the station used during the contest. I operated 6,2,and 432 using a FT-847. The 220 radio was a homebrew 45 watt transverter running on an old FT-480 as an IF. The 1296 radio was a DEMI transverter running into the same FT-480 IF. Power was Solar during the day, and a gas generator during the evening. Thanks to everyone that I worked, and hope I gave some of you a new Grid Square.
-- *N7EME*



Portable setup looking South with generator about 100 feet away from station.



Station inside the sunshade. Radio on the left is an FT-847, and the radio on the right is an FT-480 used as an IF for the 220 transverter on the floor to the left, and the 1296 transverter on the right. Under the FT-480 is an IF switch box used to select the 220 or the 1296 transverters for quick band changing. On top of the FT-847 is a 45 Amp AC power supply and then the rotor controller. Laptop to the left for keeping score.

N6VMO -- Jun 18, 2003 23:08 ET



Contest arrays.

This my second June VHF/UHF Contest and my fourth overall contest. Had a blast during the 6 meter openings. Racked up my best overall score.

Just recently started to operate 6 meters and threw up my portable 3 element 6M yagi on contest morning. W9EC assisted in mounting my 6M yagi.

Antennas: 22 element loop yagi on 1.2GHz 22 element yagi on 70cM 3 element yagi on 6M 11 element yagi on 2M (All at approx. 35')

Equipment: Kenwood TS-790A
2M/70cM/1.2GHz transceiver ICOM IC-718 and
Ten-Tec 1208 6M transverter Mirage B-5016G



W9EC assisting with 6M yagi installation

2M amp Mirage B-3010 70cm amp Mirage A-1015G 6M amp Pyramid PS-35K and Astron RS-35A power supplies

Operating location: Home QTH in Lompoc, Ca.
Grid: CM94

-- *N6VMO*



W9EC assisting with 6M yagi installation.



Shack and equipment rack.

N2YEV -- Jun 18, 2003 21:27 ET



Air one...not quite meager and not quite fomidable. GOD Bless America!



There...my little corner of the world!

Things are looking up...this marks my 3rd June VHF contest and it just gets better every year. It seems that more of my amateur brothers are getting on the air up here. Of course the fact we had a bit of an opening on 6M really helped boost the activity level. From the home QTH near the great white north (FN34gs) a modest station and meager antenna system I managed to eek out a fine score, meet some new contesters and talk with a few friends. Well September should bring a better time of it when I get the 48 footer up in the back yard. Just got a pair of homebrewed FO15's for 432, and a pair of FO12's for 2M and in the UPS system is my 6M7JHV for 6M, a might better than the one I have now. Maybe then I'll try my hand at QRP?!? Thanks to all who returned my call, it sure was a fun one this year! -- N2YEV

KF4DVG -- Jun 18, 2003 20:45 ET

Thanks to ALL of the awesome operators that pulled my call out of the mud during the contest! I operated from my QTH on the gulf coast of EM60oj with a MFJ-9406 and a full size copper tube 6m j-pole @20' and fed with over 100' of coax. Saturday started off with a BLAST and I operated until 2230L and backed up my log on the computer when I saw lightning, then we lost power two minutes later! The band was dead for the rest of the evening and I managed only a couple of QSO's on Sunday so I was able to catch up on some honey-do's. THANKS to everyone for allowing me to operate along with the BEST and be able to give out some points. See yall when the band opens up again! 73s Bob -- KF4DVG



Mighty full size copper tube 6m J-pole @20'

K0BJ -- Jun 18, 2003 15:43 ET



The sunroom "shack" is a pleasant diversion for this weekend. Worst part is night operating when the patio door opening that allows coax passthru also allows miller moths to turn this into a multiop shack.....

I've operated this contest 3 years with different rigs each time -- Ten Tec transverter, old FT-620 with intermittent rx, and now an FT-847. The antennas aren't permanent so I just put them on a 10' mast for the weekend and run the rig from our sunroom. This is a nice, casual location (good to have scenery while tuning a dead band hoping for E-skip) with 25-step access to the Armstrong rotator. Hmmm..... the ambiance is almost a precursor to Field Day. Logging is on an old 486 laptop with CT v9. Running C2A and importing to WriteLog/DX4WIN on my real computer generates a Cabrillo file and makes for easy QSLing. With renowned VHFers N0LL and N0KQY each in an adjacent grid, DM99 is still rather rare unless someone has logged WA0GBN or K0GBZ. I own a 90' light-duty self-supporting tower (horizontally polarized). MAYBE my antennas will be (up) on it next year.....

From the center of the US, June's contest seems to have settled into a pattern-- nice openings at start and finish with a couple in between, but the preponderance of propagation occurring to the west. The closing foray was a little weak this



K0BJ's 2-band "Death Array" at a breathtaking 10' AGL. I've gotta get that 90' tower up for next E season.....

year; the cloud just wasn't strong and not much fresh meat was around at that point.

Most welcome were the large number of cw stations this year, apparent low clouds that provided many all-time new, close-in grids for me both west and southeast, and fun eavesdropping on 2M. This was my first time on 2 and while I had just 3 Qs in 2 grids, I SWL'd both sides of N0LL's QSO (for an all-time new grid for Larry) with western CA on 2M Es.

Three bummers were hearing 7s working the Caribbean but no propagation here, hearing but not working W1XE 240 miles away on both bands, and spending an hour after a lunchtime thunderstorm tuning for signalsany signals.....to finally discover openings are much more likely with an antenna connected.

6M 105 Qs 62 grids 2M 3 Qs 2 grids 69 SSB 39 CW DX VE/XE 6912 points SOLP DM99 nw KS Thomas County -- *K0BJ*

K1MMH -- Jun 18, 2003 14:27 ET



The Mighty K1MMH tree antenna

This was my first foray into contesting. In fact, this is my first solo operating effort. My thanks to N1RL for the loan of a 2 element Raibeam antenna and coax and to K7BV for his tramping about in the rain to erect the "monster" that closely resembles a crucifix. After a test contact with K7BV, I was on the air. I tuned up and down the band a couple of times on Sat afternoon with no activity. But later in the evening I made my first contacts... a total of 8 in all, mostly in FN31, with one in FN42. Thanks to these two "elmers" for all their help. -- *K1MMH*



-- K8FH

Battery powered QRP station in the back of the van



Hill top overlooking Cleveland, Ohio

Responsibility for content of all posted material rests exclusively with the item author. ARRL staff assumes no responsibility for errors, omissions, and accuracy of items appearing on this page. All questions and comments should be directed to the item author.