

# Contest Soapbox

## 2003 ARRL UHF Contest

9 Soapbox entries available

### K4EJQ -- Aug 20, 2003 17:38 ET

Interesting conditions for the UHF contest. Activity was good at the start of the contest, but conditions were overall poor. Even from our site at +6600 asl, which is the highest point east of the mississippi there were times when no signals were present even on SSB 2m band. Of course there were times with high winds and rain that we were not checking to closely! Meals Included! -- *WB4WEN*

### NØURW -- Aug 10, 2003 03:07 ET

2ØØ3.... ARRL.... UHF.... Contest,, Greetings everyone, from NØURW..EN41go (ô¿ø) Being this was only my 2nd time in this UHF Contest. Not alot history to compare.... Last year I ran with 222 & 432 only & had a blast.. This year I added 1296 to the arsenal... Plus I upgraded my 222/432 antennas from 2 to 4 yagi's on each band...The improvment was well worth it...Im still in the low power single operator section untill I come up with some big power amps. My goal this year was to simply break my last years score & have fun in the process.. Both goals were met & then some :)

Get ready,... get set,... go!... A whole 9 minutes of calling cq contest before hearing any signals in return . I was beginning to worry... A very slow start is not what I expected... After having my best year in the June & July Vhf contests, I was hoping for some of that luck to rub off on this Uhf contest.. Some of it did as I found NØDQS/R clear up on the en14 & 24 borders.. Definitely a sign of good things to come.. I managed to work him again in 8 different grids :)... In this part of the country ,, without any major band enhancements,,,rovers make up the majority of contacts. So you better keep the rotor in tip top condition... And know when & where the rovers will be at next... Or you will miss out big time...A BIG thanks goes out to all rovers... You are greatly appreciated...Best 222 contact this time goes to Bill, KØAWU en37, 400+ miles... Both days I had spotty thunder showers going all around me.. Sometimes coming within 1 mile. This kept me busy looking outside to see if I needed to unhook everything & run for cover.. Overall I would say we had much better band conditions here sunday morning than on saturday afternoon/night..... Mostly to the north & south..... not much to the east or west..... I tried to divide my time up equally on 222 & 432, then move contacts up to 1296... This worked out well... It was a very fun contest... Now its time to look towards Sept., Hope to hear all of you then.... 73's All... NØURW... (×¿Ö) -- *NØURW*

### AA2UK -- Aug 9, 2003 20:28 ET

I started the contest not knowing if I would be able to hang in there for the whole contest. I had just returned 2 days prior from the doctor's office with a fever and infection from a brown recluse spider bite. I felt bad. The contest started off great and I have to thank W3IY/R. I worked Bill through 10ghz from 8 of his 10 grids and I worked him in 9 of the 10 grids. Highlights of the contest were working K1WHS at 525km through 10ghz. We finished the 5.7 & 10ghz contacts on phone! I also worked K2UOP running to his deck in FM09 on 5.7 & 10ghz where he was only using barefoot DB6NT transverters! Another great set of contacts was with Steve KB8VAO/P in FN00 I worked Steve on 2.3, 3.4, 5.7 & 10ghz. He was only running 1 watt on 2.3! All in all my best UHF contest to date. My score ended up over 295K. Look for everyone in the September Contest. 73 Bill -- AA2UK

### **K1WHS -- Aug 9, 2003 11:32 ET**



**The just completed 8 X 25 element yagis at 106 ft. The tower and antennas were all new this summer.**

It seems I am always doing antenna work! I was desperately trying to get the 432 antenna back up Saturday morning, and finally finished enough of it so I could listen and talk just 10 minutes before the contest began. Talk about cutting it close! My location is in Maine, FN43MJ. First station heard was W3IY in FM15 as the contest began. I did not have the big rig running yet, so missed that contact. Darn! I had to QRT Saturday afternoon and evening, but was up at the crack of dawn Sunday on 222 thru 10 GHz, and hit the bands until 2 PM. I was interested in trying out the new 432 X 8 yagi array at 106 ft as well as the new 3456 4 X 112 element Blowtorch array at 138 ft. Both seemed to work pretty well, but condx were down, especially later in the morning, and activity was poor. I had some help from Steve, W1SD and Al, WA1T who showed up and we all got on and worked stuff Sunday morning. Al grabbed the 432 position. I think he was very curious to see how the eight yagis would play. He helped to haul em up! No real great DX worked, but we could tell everything was working well. FM28 and FM18 & 19 were all easily worked on 432. We even had a number of FN20 1296 QSOs. Grid totals were pretty OK considering the eight hours of operating time. 89 grids total and 189 QSOS. 432 activity seemed good from here with 70 QSOs in 21 grids,



mostly on Sunday morning. It sure was fun to fire up all the rigs! Thanks to all who got on! Look for us in September. -- *K1WHS*

What happens when someone runs amok with loop yagis. Quad arrays on 903 thru 3456 MHz. The top array is the 4 X 112 el Blowtorch array. (New this summer) It works like a six ft dish at 138 ft. Don't ask how I got it up there!

**K1DS/R -- Aug 9, 2003 11:37 ET**



Spent only 6 hrs on the air in 3 grids but managed to have a lot of fun making Q's on all bands thru 10G. As always, easy to work AA2UK and K1TEO thru all bands, but multiops only on 222 and 432 as their micro stations backed up. New sine wave inverter and additional ferrites cleaned out the rcvr noise floor. Rover-to-rover Q's with W3IY/R always exciting. Got the XYL to accompany me in the "Great White" to FM19 since we were on the way to visit grandkids Sunday. 73, Rick, K1DS/R -- *K1DS*

FM19 in parking lot of the Army Reserve. 5/10G dishes unmounted as lots of trees in this spot. Attracted troops interested in what was happening and my brochure on ham radio and roving was useful.



**The Weather was beautiful in Southern Minnesota on Saturday afternoon**



**The EN33 cornfields**



**The view towards Bill, K0AWU in Grand Rapids**

The UHF contest is my favorite of the big 4 contests each year. John, KCOLBT and I had a great time. Thanks to all the stations that pointed our way when we were out in the cornfields of rural Minnesota. We were right on schedule all day Saturday and about an hour behind at the end on Sunday. It was worth the delay.

We had plenty of time to find a good spot to the East from EN24, unfortunately we didn't find a good spot till after the contest had started. At the start we worked W0ZQ on 222 and 432 ssb but had to use cw for 1296, shades of things to come. After that we moved about 1000 feet down the road and had much better signals, worked W0GHZ on 222, 432 and 1296 ssb. I am sure we could of worked Jon on 1296 ssb from there. About 1835 we drove about a mile north and worked a bunch of contacts from EN25 with good signals, all contacts made on ssb. We got going toward EN23 right on time and on the way down through EN24 we worked KM0T on three bands.

After a drive that didn't take as long as I expected we found an ok spot in EN23 and worked several contacts. We then found a nice spot in EN33 with good views to the North-East and South-West. The weather was beautiful at our location in EN33 and we stayed there for a while hoping to work more contacts. We departed EN33 having missed KM0T, we finally hooked up about 10 miles north of the grid line inside EN34, We worked Mike in EN34 and drove back to EN33 and worked him again

We stopped for a sandwich in Mankato and then headed back home. We worked several stations



**Our friends in Law Enforcement. This is what the trees are like in all directions**

along the way North while mobile. We worked the KC0LMS / KC0QHW / KC0QHX family station on 432 from EN34 and EN35 and then again in EN35 on 223.500 FM. Nice job Russ,

We departed the cities Sunday morning about 1020, very foggy start. Along the way north in EN35 worked K0AWU in EN37, three bands, 70 miles an hour, you just have to wait till the roads turn slightly West of North. We arrived in EN36, Hinckley on schedule and worked several contacts on three bands, We worked KM0T on 222 and 432 but the signals on 1296 just were not there. We departed Hinckley on

schedule.

We worked K0AWU and W0ZQ on 1296 from EN46!! We found a hill with a clear shot to Grand Rapids and worked Bill on three bands, the other side of that same hill was all trees toward the cities. We worked several stations on 222 with good signals. We worked most of those same stations on 432 ssb but the contacts were on the weak side. At this point we had a friendly visit from a Wisconsin State Police officer and a Washburn County Sheriff, after a 20 minute delay getting the truck pointed on the proper heading we hooked up again with Jon and worked on 1296 cw, signals were weak but readable. 115 miles through some pretty thick foilage, very cool.

We departed EN46 about 45 minutes late and worked 3 contacts while mobile in EN45, sorry we didn't get a chance to work more stations in EN45. We wanted to finish the contest in EN35 with a good shot into the cities. We stopped on top of the hill in Saint Croix Falls and worked many stations till the contest was over.

And I was worried that it would be a slow contest. -- *WOAMT*

### **KQ6EE -- Aug 8, 2003 12:17 ET**

I did Rover this time. On Saturday, I hiked up to Mt. Disappointment above Pasadena in Southern California (DM04). I brought my dual band beam antenna, Yaesu Ft-817, Icom 4 bander ht and Alinco 220 ht. I also brought my homebrew verticle antenna because at that day was 10-10 Internation Contest (just for fun). I only did low power. I did most of the contest in Mt D because of my elavation (6000+ ft). Around 1 o'clock, I came down from Mt D., and drove on Angeles Crest Highway (DM14). I was planning to go to the Orange County Fair on Sunday because the Catalina Repeater Association setted up a boot and showed HAM RADIO. I was thinking to go to the Fair, and did contesting at DM13. But my son was sick at that day;



**From the trailhead (Eaton Saddle) to Mt. Disappointment**

too bad. But I enjoyed the contest anyway. I am planning my contest in Sept. I might go camping in Catalina Island so my wife can enjoy the sunshine, my son can go swimming and old man Chu can hike up to one of the mountain top and enjoy the HAM Contest. 73 and welcome to look at my web site at [www.geocities.com/kq6ee55/tryit.html](http://www.geocities.com/kq6ee55/tryit.html)  
-- *KQ6EE*



**Mt. Disappointment is on the way**



**Hon-kq6ee hiked up to Mt. Disappointment carrying all the antennas and radios**



**beautiful view from the top of Mt.D.**



**My radios and antennas setup at MT. D.**

**W3IY/R -- Aug 7, 2003 19:23 ET**



**View to NW from FM15vx**

Things were looking good as we set-up stuff in FM15vx. We were hearing the 432 beacon from WA4PGI and the 222 beacon from W3CCX. This beautiful view over the Albemarle sound in NC is always site to behold. We found Dave, W2KV about an hour before contest time, and easily worked him on 10GHz from FN20 (522Km). We were psyched. As the contest unfolded, activity was OK, but conditions seemed a little down from earlier. We were able to QSO W3MHS & W4SW on skyline drive thru 3.4/2.3, but a storm chased them off the mountain before we could work them on the higher bands. 1296 seemed to be a little too quiet, and we later excorcised a few drops of water from the bulkhead feedthru, to gain about 20dB of signal. We QSOed AA2UK & K1RZ from here thru 10G...vy FB.

The bands were pretty quiet on the drive to FM25, but we did see a passing rover going the other way. He didn't seem to have his ears on,





**W3IY Doing a Roof Dance in FM15vx**



**The Grid Grinders Comtemplating the Universe**



**Sunrise in FM28be (Awaiting the arrival of signals)**

so we weren't sure who it was. We didn't work any rovers from here, so whoever it was didn't make it into the logs. It would have been nice to work our own grid for a change...hi. We can usually work some stuff from the bridges over the Alligator River and the inland waterways, but the UHF contest is much more quiet than June or Sept.

FM25 seemed to be an RF-black hole for us. The beach plants keep getting higher, and the signal strengths really seemed to suffer. I think we need a new site in this grid. Our best QSO was AA2UK on 3456, and we couldn't make it any higher. This is a bad sign, as Bill is loud from all other grids. We did work K1RZ on 2304 from here, as well, but everyone seemed much weaker in FM25ev. Some construction near our site will make this one obsolete very soon. We scouted a better location which we will try next trip.

FM26ai was a bit brighter for us. Working AA2UK thru 10GHz with good signals was encouraging. K1TEO was about normal strength, and we worked Jeff through 2304 from here. This confirmed our suspicions that condx were about average with little or no enhancement. The site we used doesn't see NW or W very well, but we had already figured out that activity in those directions was slim to none. It's just not possible to work 8-landers from here without some big help from the propagation gods.

The Bay Bridge Tunnel is always an impressive site, with near-360 degree views, and 0-degree take-off angles. 26 QSOs from FM16 in about 90 minutes isn't anything to hollar about, and we were starting to suspect that activity was down. Again, we found AA2UK on all bands, easily, and K1TEO thru 2304 agn. W2SZ was worked

on 432 but disappeared as we were waiting for a 903 try. It seems to be hard to work much inland dx from this coastal area in the middle of the Chesapeake Bay. We had similar results from FM27 & 27, all on the bridge, but activity was really dropping off as the hour got late.

A couple hours rest in FM28 was a good idea before the short drive to the mosquito capital of North America at Deal Island, FM28be. Fortunately the wind was blowing hard enough to make it difficult for the skeeters to land on us, but they were there trying hard. Unfortunately, wind in the morning doesn't usually indicate good band condx. Nevertheless, we were hearing the CCX beacons really well thru 1296. The bands were totally quiet until 0600, when K2SMN broke the silence for us. We were lucky to work Roger thru 1296 from here. Things improved as we were then able to work K1TEO, N3EMF, & K1RZ thru 10GHz from here. We also found WA4GPM from here on C,D,&E for 3 new multipliers...tnx, Buzz.

We stopped near the highway in FM18, to avoid losing time getting to a better site. Agn, we were lucky to catch AA2UK, K1TEO, K1RZ, & N3EMF thru 10G from here. It's always noticeable that signals get louder, as we get further north, closer to the activity. The view to the north, across the Choptank River is fair, but blockage to the west from here has been a problem in the past, when there were actually some stations on from there.

In FM29aa, the corn was much higher this time than last year. We found a site where the antennas were peaking over the tassles, and managed to do OK. It was exciting working K1WHS on 432 from here with S5 signals. We also found W3HMS and W4SW on Skyline Drive agn, and were able to QSO them thru 10G! Vy nice QSOs...Tnx! Agn, K1RZ & AA2UK thru 10G was wonderful. K1TEO was worked thru 3.4G, as the corn tassles seemed to eat Jeff's 10G signals this time. Working rover-to-rover with K1DS/R thru 2.3G was a nice treat here as well. K4QI helped us out with 3 new mults on C,D, & E here...tnx!

A special thanks to my good friend and rover partner, Christophe, ON1CFX for his many contributions, electronic, mechanical, and for his operating expertise. He travelled from Belgium specifically for the UHF contest. Now that's dedication!

Our last stop was FM19xa, also in the corn fields of the Eastern Shore of MD. Results were similar to FM29, with a few new Packrat stations showing up. There were many expected stations who we didn't hear this year. I hope for better activity next year, but we still had a fun weekend staying pleasantly busy on the bands.

We found it to quite effective having one operator cruising 144.260, while the other ran microwaves with stations.

To those who weren't there, you missed a great oppurtunity to work a lot of microwave QSOs. It's not often that we get 24hrs to concentrate on the UHF bands. Use 'em while we still got 'em, guys! -- W3IY



**KIOSK/R in the wide open spaces of DN71.**

With only a barefoot FT-817 and a home-brew 12 element yagi on 432, N0BAF and I set out on a lightweight rover expedition. Started out on a hilltop just over the Wyoming border in DN71. Next we drove to Snowy Pass and worked the front range gang from that great rover spot in DN61. From there we headed for the NE corner of DN60. While back in DN71 we worked N0SWV/R. Jesse was roving in DN72 and having a bit of bear trouble. (One of the many extra hazards faced by Wyoming rovers). Our planned location in DN60 didn't pan out. Rather than give up, we crossed the divide, drove to the

SE corner of DN60 and found a jeep trail leading to a mountain top. From there we watched the sunset and worked all the front range hams hungry for a new grid.

On Sunday, we activated the populated grids DM79 and DN70, then headed out East to the sagebrush and sandhills of DN80 and DM89. With only a bit over 90 minutes to go, we made a dash for DN81 in Nebraska. Got there just before the contest ended and worked a few stations, giving us a total of 8 activated grids. A fun contest, but next time we will be set up for at least one more band. -- *KIOSK*

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