Contest Soapbox

2004 ARRL June VHF QSO Party

38 Soapbox entries available

K9SP/R -- Jul 15, 2004 15:24 ET

Not one but two Sherriff's vehicles responded to one or more reports of an "SUV with all sorts of antennas" on it.

K9SP demonstrating his rover setup to our visitors.

We had a great time roving this year. Operated all bands through 10g.

Driving on the Blue Ridge Parkway (FM07/FM08) in Virginia, a park ranger cruiser passed us in the opposite direction. The car did an abrupt 180 and followed us for a mile or so to our destination. When we got out of the vehicle, two park rangers got out of their car and said, "We just HAVE to ask..."

The next day we were in FM19 in Sterling, VA. We were positioned in a shopping center parking lot, making contacts when K9SP looked up and found we were flanked by two Loudon County Sherriff's vehicles. After they ran the tags, they came over and told us someone had called 911 reporting "an SUV with all kinds of antennas and stuff on it." The two officers were very friendly, and enjoyed the "tour" of the rover station.

I'm thinking an investment in a magnetic decal sign, something like "EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS TEST STATION" might not be a bad idea.

Overall, a good time. Looking forward to September. -- *N9SP*

KFØQ -- Jul 12, 2004 22:49 ET

I was originally hoping to get the rover out for the June test but too much going on for that to happen – so at the last minute it was decided that it might be fun to set up a multi-op station (KBØTHN and myself) at a nice spot on the ridge here in SE Minnesota. Never had any idea of a “serious” operation – just wanted to get on the air and see what would happen. Jim and I thought that keeping the band count down would help so we maxed out with 6 bands this year. Since the rain

Stormy skies at KFØQ/Ø (note broken 6MX5 in foreground) photo by KBØTHN

Matt, KFØQ working on the 6 meter side of the operating table. photo by KBØTHN

Jim, KBØTHN operates 144-1296 photo by KBØTHN

was terrible here this June (like most other places) we had a tough time getting the antennas up prior to contest Saturday. The WX however seemed to shape up just in time and I was able to get 222 through 1296 up along with the operating tent, 3 transceivers, 5 bricks, 2 rotators and 2 networked pc's Saturday morning! As luck would have it we missed some of the opening on six Saturday afternoon fixing the big stack (lost 6MX5) after a burst of wind laid it down (ouch) in front of the operating tent! Had to use the PAR moxon rover antenna (was easy to grab in a hurry -). Even though I felt compromised on 50MHz we were still able to work most stations on the band and was quite happy to get ZF1DC in the log as well as VE5UF later on with the moxon! Many other highlights for the weekend – working: KØPG/R, K9ILT/R, WØAMT/R, W9FZ/R (many thanks to all the Rovers!). Missed some of the usual crowd this time around (guess there was other things going on besides the contest!). Really enjoyed the first ever sweep with Bill, KØAWU (loud here on 1296!). Sweeps with WØAMT/R to the west and Bruce, W9FZ/R to my east!!! Would have to say that '902/3 was the most surprising band of the contest! Also managed to snag K8EB from on 3 bands (all CW) for some badly needed mults! Many thanks to Jim, KBØTHN for the help - 73, Matt -- *KFØQ*

(Dang) Probably missed another Rover!
photo by KBØTHN

WA2IID/R -- Jul 12, 2004 10:18 ET

WA2IID/R on Mount Equinox in south western Vermont. Spectacular view.

Once again Tom (KB2SSS) and I had a great time. Not as high of a score as we would have liked, but great time! We operated all bands up to 10368.

We started in FN21tq just south of Ellenville NY. Great site to the south and east. Not too bad to the northeast. Then we went through a corner of FN31 near Kingston NY. Not a good site at only a couple hundred feet overlooking the Hudson river, but a beautiful view. We parked next to the fire house not realizing ahead of time that they had a big fair going on (Roving can be full of surprises)! Then up to FN32 where we spent the night at a motel just off the NY Thruway. Again not a good site, but Tom managed to make some contacts while I slept. Then in the AM, up the hill a bit west of Schenectady (FN22) to a bit higher location where we did a bit better. In September we are going to try out a better location for FN22. Then up west of Saratoga to FN23 and over to Mount Equinox in Vermont (FN33kd) to finish up. Lots of RF noise on Equinox these days and the trees are starting to get a bit tall, but a great site nevertheless. I thought I had made arrangements to leave the mountain late so we could work through the evening to the end of the contest, but they never got put into place so we were "thrown off" at 2000 local. Rather disapointing in that we got there very late in the afternoon and only had a couple hours. We will have to take this possibility into account next time.

Only equipment failure was the new 24G WBFM station that had no audio (I guess slamming the car door on the microphone was not very good for it!). Only other failure was in my head, when I

tried to work W3CCX from FN21tq on 5760, only later realizing I did not turn power on to the LO! Obviously we didn't hear each other. Sorry guys.

Equipment included:

50 Mhz ICOM 706 to 4 el yagi on front of van

144, 432 and 1296 - Kenwood TS790 with 6 foot boom yagis and a mirage amp on 144

222 TS440 and DEMI transverter, Mirage brick

Microwave IF is a TenTec 6N2 with DEMI transverters

2304 DEMI barefoot 1W K1WHS Yagi 3456 DEMI with 35 wat amp K1WHS yagi 5760 homebrew transverter with small horn 10368 DEMI with qualcom 1W and 2 foot dish

Roving is great fun, particularly on a great weather weekend like this. Hope all had as good of a time as we did.

73 Jack WA2IID -- *WA2IID*

KE3HT/R -- Jul 11, 2004 22:30 ET

Interesting trip, Well thats the best word for it. I had one failure, my new 222mhz preamp apparently did not work. You might say I really don't know about the rest of the equipment. Why? Every band was strange. Only 6meters was strange good. 2meters was WAY down, with a bad pre-amp 222 was non-existant. 432 was there but I only worked stations that would QSY up from the lower bands. My longest 5ghz contact was 165miles. I only made contact with one station (1, yes 1) on 5ghz! 3ghz was a little better only on Saturday night at sunset when I made a 281mile contact.

I tried to be different this time. Not a lot of sched's, instead I spent a lot of time on 2m calling CQ. It didn't help. Last January I roved with KJ1K and CQ worked quite well. So what happened? Reports I have heard from other rovers and a couple of main stations seem to think the bands were "flat". I say they were down. On Sunday I gave up CQ and went

back to hunt and pounce. My voice keyer was reported to be clear and copyable by everyone I did work.

Only cool thing was bumping into a Rover from Reno Nevada! NR6CA, Randy.

I keep notes on stations I regularly try to work. This is my summary of them: K8GP: only 6meters, 2meters was rarely even heard! much less worked. No microwave attempts. N2PA: good to 903mhz but thats it. W2FU: where were you? W2SZ: the only one I worked 5ghz on but even then only real close at 165 miles. Strange though they are usually so loud in some of my sites in PA that I can hear them even when they are pointing their beams up north. 2 meters was hard, 432 impossible! W3CCX: worked a couple of different sites but none above 222. I was even in eastern FN12 and they were hard to work. I heard they were working microwaves but I never got through even on 432. K3YTL: normally I work them all bands from almost all my sites. This time they were hard to find. W3SO: was there but even when I was in their grid I could not work them on all their bands! (50-432mhz)

Roving PA was a bummer again this time. My plan has been to be in the middle of all these neat stations but last three contests were disappointing. I am open to suggestions!

Cool this time was Roverlog. Like many of you I don't try many logging programs but this one is a MUST TRY! It does everything but drive the car.

73 & GL ,,, KE3HT/r Microwave rover to 5ghz! Long Live Microwaves! -- *KE3HT*

K2DRH -- Jul 10, 2004 18:56 ET

This year was a tough one to get ready for at K2DRH. Routine tower maintenance took a couple of weekends and many hours hanging from my safety belt. I added 2304 and this proved to be no trivial task either. Just scrounging up all the stuff I needed from the vendors, the ham community and the internet to put together a first class installation took more hours than the contest itself did. And it took twice that long to design and fabricate the tower brackets for the antennas, mount the pair of 76 el loopers in between all the other stuff, hang the 1-5/8 inch coax, install the 1/2 inch super flex rotor loop, roll my own mast mounted preamp box with surplus 28V relays, design and

And I wasn't even running any smoke!

build a switching box/sequencer ... the task list seemed to go on and on.

But it finally all came together the week before the contest, only to blow up the transverter receiver during my test QSO with K3SIW. It was just amazing how fast Steve and Sandra at DEMI turned it around so I could have it in time for the contest, only for me to blow it up again! This time I was able to cobble in an external receiver bypass. It was good enough for a few QSOs, but was noticeably down on receive. Aside from K3SIW, who is really loud here, nobody else moved the S meter!

I started the contest with a 6 band sweep with K0PG/K9ILT rover. Tim and Pat provided me with 9 grids on 6 bands during the contest, quite a lot of QSO's! I was able to find and work W0AMT/R on 7 bands in a few grids on Saturday too, but never heard them at all on Sunday. 6M was spotty at best, alternating between Texas and Florida with very short openings. I was thrilled when I found ZF1DC on 50.125, and Ron W4WA told me it was him at the mic. I kept hoping for a good run like last year, but none ever materialized. 2M was in reasonable shape, and things seemed enhanced on 432 and above so I proceeded to work it more like a January contest. One QSO at a time.

WSJT was really good and I managed to work most of my skeds. I missed completing with W2FU on 2M when we ran over into the next time slot and K9NS started up a schedule on the exact same frequency we were already on. It's getting so popular there's QRM! Despite what I've said before, I tried FSK 441a again on 222 with W2SZ and never heard a ping. Low percentage 222 skeds are just not a good option for SOLP stations! W1TEO on 6M was in several times every sequence and we completed in less than 2 minutes on 6 using 15 second sequences, then again a few minutes later on 2M. Likewise W3CCX and K7BV/1 were a breeze with several good bursts every sequence. I worked W2SZ on 144.170 and unfortunately that was also K0PG/R & K9ILT/R's com frequency, but they were kind enough to QSY for a while. Need to schedule those WSJT QSOs lower in the band or I can't accept them anymore! I don't know how they survive in the crowded NE corridor.

6M was open even less on Sunday, and the openings were to pretty much the same places and were even shorter. I concentrated on 2M and moving everyone I could around the bands. Seemed like there was fairly weak, but really nice tropo enhancement 2M in the afternoon. I was really happy when K4XR in EM64 AL came back to my CW CQ. He was really light and I had ask for his call a few times to make sure it wasn't KY5R in EM64 whom I also worked! Of course Goose K1LH in EM76 TN was there on 2M , 6M and even on 432! Wish more of y'all had your antennas pointed up my way!

The last hours of the contest ended with the usual flurry of local stations on 144.200, many of whom

I'd not yet worked. Yet calling CQ on 144.197 usually yielded only receiver noise in return! Only by getting right on the call could I get anyone's attention. I wish more stations would tune around a bit rather than just listening on the call. Repeated scans of 6M for a last minute Es burst were likewise disappointing but I did find a lot of local stations there too. In the end I worked a lot less QSOs than last year, especially on 6M, but was able to bring up the score with a good showing on the higher bands. It was more work than most June VHF contests, but I'm very happy with the final result.

73 de Bob K2DRH EN41vr Illinois -- *K2DRH*

K1DS/R & N1XKT/R -- Jul 6, 2004 23:13 ET

Harding Beach, FN51aq, Cape Cod

Watch Hill, RI FN41

After living in Providence, RI for 23 years there is a certain pull to go back there for roving. As the weekend grew closer, our plans changed, as we realized that it would be over 7 hrs of highway driving to get to our furthest stop, FN51aq, in Chatham on Cape Cod. I actually took 8 hrs. We took off at 6:40PM and made great time until we hit the end of the Cross-Bronx Expressway, where a 4-car pile-up blocked the route for an hour. We sailed on across CT and RI to the Cape, finally arriving in West Yarmouth at 2:40AM. We sank into our motel beds and slept til 9, got going after breakfast and headed to our first stop on Harding Beach, FN51aq. We chatted with a few locals on the bands before the contest, a station at the Marconi site and another on Nantucket, but heard very little else. Even as the contest started, things were quite slow. No doubt we were in a marginal QTH, as few would be pointing this way, despite having announced our plans far and wide. Everyone was in the first few hour frenzy on 6 & 2. An hour later, we heard K1TEO, and promptly ran him on all 10 bands with ease, followed by K1GX for 10 bands also, but still no sign of W3CCX. We finally heard the Packrats on 222, and were able to work on 5 bands, but were disappointed that the highest band worked was 1296. Onto the next grid, almost a 3 hr drive back to FN41 at Watch Hill, RI, where we would set up right at the lighthouse—at sea-level again, but a great water shot to the west. It took circling around three times to find the driveway between the bushes that leads to the site—we had notified the local police that we would be there, and no one came to visit. We were

Mt Watchussets, FN42bl

able to easily find lots of contacts, now that the first 6 hours of the contest were over, and folks were actually taking some time out to track us. We easily worked Camelback thru 10G, as well as K1TEO and others, and headed to our next grid, FN31 near New London, CT. We really didn't have a specific spot in mind, but we sought a waterfront location. The best spots were all closed, as they are in the state parks that are closed at dusk, and it was about 11 PM when we arrived. We did find a parking lot for a beach and amusement park, but the waterfront view only looked south and there was a slight hill and a stand of trees to the west, but we were able to work the gang thru 1296 again, knowing that K1TEO would supply the mults for FN31 on the higher bands. We took off to head up toward the MA state line and find a motel room for the night. Mt. Wachussetts, FN42 is a spot similar to Camelback, a ski area, drivable to the top, loaded with commercial communications, and a breathtaking view of the countryside. It opens for visitors at 9AM, and when we arrived at 9:20 W1FKF and KA1OJ were already setting up their microwave dishes for 10, 24 and 47G, aimed north to N1JEZ in FN44. I set up our dishes also, and very quickly had them all in the log on 10 & 24G. Leon and I were quite surprised with our first 24G SSB QSOs at 20db over S9 on a path of about 130 miles. After an hour we find the W3CCX gang and worked them on all bands, although the QRM was rough, especially since we use 144MHz IF, and the other stations close by were on 2m as liaison for their micro contacts. KA1EKZ/R and his rover partner arrive and set up their multi-feed dish for their contacts with W2SZ. They had spent the previous day in 4 Maine grids. We also made contact on all bands thru 5G (their top end). It was nice to share some roving experiences with Justin and give each other a tour of our respective rovers. Time to move on….we stow the dishes and lower the main mast and head down the mountain, I stop at the lower parking lot to check directions to the next stop, and then we head for the Mass Pike West. A mile or two later we both get a nose full of something burning, quickly turn off all the gear, charger, and open the windows to try and sense where the odor is originating. Two miles later we finally come to a spot in the road where we could pull over, turn off the engine and lift the hood and make sure the rover is OK. Well, the engine looks fine with the hood up, but, "Hey dad, look at this smoke coming from the wheel…did you leave the emergency brake on?" Luckily, that was the issue; I need to get the brake light warning fixed and the linings checked. It seemed like too long a drive to get to our next planned stop in FN32 on the MA Pike, and after we arrived, it was difficult to find a decent parking spot in which to operate. The usual car lot was very full with folks coming and going, and the truck side of the area was lines with 18 wheelers, about as high as our antennas, and in the direct path of our most desired directions. We did work a bunch of stations thru 1296, but nothing higher, as the trucks, trees and a close-by ridge seemed to keep the microwave RF contained. Onto the homestretch, we headed down to Rte 8 thru Winsted, CT, where we had spent many happy summers in camp. I was even the ham radio counselor there back in the 60's. Great memories… We continued making QSOs on the lower 4 bands as we passed thru FN31 and FN21 on our way to the next stop in FN20. This was a new spot for us, and as time was running low, we decided to use the west-bound rest stop, rather than spend

the extra time to get to the east-bound stop. Although we were able to make QSOs thru 10G, we missed 24G, and we're sure we could have done better from the other side, about 60' higher. Ran into that buzzing noise mode again as the battery voltage was low for the FT100D IF, but it rapidly cleared when we switched on the engine and charger for that marine cell. Crossing again into FN21, we completed our last stop in Tannersville. Eleven hundred miles for this weekend rove, but the QSO rates and multipliers were not spectacular. We had great weather, reasonable road conditions, and only the minor issues mentioned---and accomplished most of our goals. K1DS/R & N1XKT/R -- *K1DS*

KC8HZM -- Jul 4, 2004 18:51 ET

From bottom to top: 15 element 70cm Quagi (ARRL website), 6m moxon, 7 element 2m yagi (DK7ZB design), and copper J-pole on top. Worked well, but needed to be much higher!

Originally I was planning on operating as a rover with my usual rover partner, KC8HZQ. But life is unpredictable and plans changed, so I decided to just put up a quick and dirty temporary installation at my parents house. Although Jeff (KC8HZQ) wasn't able to operate that weekend, he did graciously loan me his Icom 706 MkIIG, FT-290R, and powersupply.

My antennas were all homebuilt, I used a 7 element yagi based on the DK7ZB design on 2 meters, a 15 element Quagi from the ARRL website for 70cm, and a moxon rectangle from www.cebik.com for 6m. The antennas worked quite well, the narrow beamwidth of the 15 element 70cm beam made pointing quite critical. The antennas were all located about 25 feet up on a mast bolted outside of my bedroom window. Unfortunately, that low height really hurt me, I really needed to get those antennas up higher. Sunday I didn't hear anything except for a few stations on 6m.

But it was fun, highlights include 6m openings to Texas/Missouri/Louisiana on Saturday, and Florida on Sunday. One of my goals was to work more CW, which I did do. Working K8MM over in EN83 was exciting, coordinating bandchanges all in CW. I heard him on 432 when I got the beam pointed right on him, but I still had the power turned down to less then 5 watts from before by accident, so he couldn't hear me. Of course it was nice running into W8LON again and having a chat with him Saturday night.

I knew that K8DOG was out roving, but I didn't hear him until 15 minutes before the contest was over.

In the picture you can see the Quagi on the bottom, barely above the roofline, the moxon just above it (warped a bit), the 2m beam above that, and a copper J-pole on the very top of the mast.

Marten KC8HZM http://www.goshen.edu/~martentb -- *KC8HZM*

NØURW -- Jul 2, 2004 19:06 ET

1953 Studabaker Duce & 1/2... I needed a big winch to raise my tilt over towers... This one was dirt cheap & it came with wheels...

NØURW EN41 (Iowa) (ö¿ø) This year I operated in the low power single operator all band section ...I tried the same scenario as last year. Testing a qrp signal 1st on 2 & 6 meters in preparation of the July CQ WW Vhf Contest ....If I made the contact great,, it meant things could go well for me come July... But ,,, if I just wasn't being heard at qrp levels,,, I could turn on the 170 watt brick ... Saturday ::: 6 meters started out good with a nice opening to the south (Texas),,,southeast (Florida),,,, & southwest (Arizona/New Mexico)... No problem working most of these stations on 10 watts... I couldn't just sit in one place and call cq... I had to surf up & down the band ... when things started dying out I turned on the 170 watt brick... It netted me a few more.... 2 meters was so - so ... 10 watts was much tougher here...no band enhancement to speak of... Ended up using the 170 watt brick alot more on this band.... I also ran 222,432 & 1296 , but I only went to those bands when someone else had those to run... 222 & 432 were average along with 1296.....

Sunday ::: Not much of anything out of the norm on Sunday... 6 & 2 pretty much dead all day... Occasionally a distant station would pop in outta nowhere on 6 ,,, this was very welcomed as it was almost always a new multiplier... 222 seemed to be very good ,,, signals were up,,,,but,,,,the only way to make a contact there was to bring someone up from 6 or 2 ,,,, 432 was again average along with 1296.....

Big thanks goes out to the rovers.....keep up the good work.... I would also like to thank all the suppliers of ham radio & associated equipment ... And of course a big thanks to the ARRL for hosting these vhf contest.. Look for me next in the July CQ WW VHF Contest July 17th , 18th... I haven't decided yet if I will run in the qrp section or kick on the 8877's... Tune in to find out !!!!! 73's all.... Dan (Ö¿ø) -- *NØURW*

W3SO -- Jun 29, 2004 13:54 ET

Tnx for the QSOs and for over 115 QSOs with rovers. Topping the list was W3IY/R whom gave us 18 QSOs from 6 different grids. Next was K3LFO whom we worked 14 times in 5 differnt grids. KB3ITG and KC3WD were worked in 4 different grids and VE3NPB and KE3HT were worked in 3 different grids. VE3NPB had an excellent signal.

For this contest, we installed another 6m beam that was fixed on New England. The 6m ops said it

Back row, left to right: W3PAW,W3YOZ,W3TEF,W3BTX,K4VV,AI3M Front row, left to right; K3IXD, WR3Z,W3SF Missing; W9NET

The team presnted Marty, W3YOZ, a birthday cake after the contest. (That is a tower and VHF antennas on the cake.)

helped. We experienced a number of 6m opening to FL and TX; double hops to CA; and to C6ANC, T49C and ZF1DC for our DX QSOs (plus the VEs).

We used CT 9.81 again, networking 4, DOS 486 computers, and there were NO crashes.

Being able to participating in the fall and spring sprint helped. It gave the equipment a shake down and the operators became more familiar with the bands and with CT.

Thanks to AI3M's XYL for cooking us lunches and dinners. And to W3SF for bringing his camper.

Unlike Jan. we had beautiful weather both days.

QSLs to W3TEF, station details at <www.qrz.com/w3so>.

W3SO will be on as Multi-op in CQWW VHF (CW-SSB).

For the W3SO, FN00sn, Wopsononock Mountaintop Operators Ed, K3IXD -- *K3IXD*

K0NR -- Jun 29, 2004 11:03 ET

I operated Single Op Portable in the Rampart Range of the Rocky Mountains (DM79). For a number of reasons, I didn't operate on Saturday and missed the a nice 6M opening. Operating on Sunday didn't have much in the way of 6M propagation but we had reasonable partipation (in terms of grid activation) around Colorado. A number of rovers were out and it makes a big difference!

My rusty CW skills helped squeeze out a few of the weak ones. This really helps compensate for the

The innovative "shove all the gear into the back of the SUV" operating position.

QRP power levels.

73, Bob

-- *K0NR*

W3BBO -- Jun 25, 2004 20:59 ET

My first Rove attempt. Wow, that was work! I quit early Saturday evening, about 8 PM. Bands were still open, but just tired from being in the sun all day. I found a nice place to operate from in EN91, unfortunately couldn't put up the antennas, so had to use the mobile antenna on the car. Not as good, as using my homebuilt 4 element 2 meter and 8 element 432 MHz yagi's.

Attached is a picture of the mobile when I was operating in EN92, located in Pleasant Ridge Park, not far from W3TX Scott's farm. It seemed like a much better location than the farm, so I setup there. The antennas in the picture look screwed up, but really looked and worked much better than that.

I would have mounted a 6 meter dipole at the very top of the mast, but just not enough hands, so I used the vertical on the car for 6 meters. While assembling the 2 & 432 beams, I managed to drop the pole. Bent some of the reflectors, but not much damage. Tom, KA3FZN came out around 5 PM and helped me tear down. Then I came here to FN02 to finish out my day. I was really tired, and still am this morning! Hi.

Made the following contacts:

EN91 = 4 contacts EN92 = 22 contacts FN02 = 19 contacts

6 Meters opened up late in the day and worked some Texas stations. My best DX on 2 and 432 was

West Virginia.

I had to babysit Sunday afternoon, so the VHF contest was over for me. My portable setup is fine for a Field Day operation where you'll be in the same spot for the day, or a weekend. However for Roving, I'm now a believer in good antennas mounted on the car, so you can operate while in motion, or temporary stopped on the side of the road. Stopping to setup antennas is a real pain. Hi.

73 de Bob W3BBO -- *W3BBO*

N0DQS/R -- Jun 25, 2004 09:52 ET

EN00 at the beginning of the contest

EN00 near Central City,NE.

Wow, what a weekend! Started the contest in EN00/10 near Grand Island/ Central City,Nebraska. A little bit further south than normal. Got there Friday nite and discovered that from 2 meters on up was not very good. Saturday was not any better and to top it off there were thunder storms developing in about every direction and due to the lighnting it was just about impossible to hear anyone on 6/2/222 and was not going to get any better. Developed an early issue with 6 meters and never got the problem solved till Sunday. Had a storm to the East of me and another developing to the West and another to the north! Headed north to my next stop in EN01/11 and drove into and thru 2 more storms. The first was pretty intense, beat me up with golf ball size hail and developed a funnel cloud. Heard about it Monday on the news. Got a cracked windshield and lots to dents in the rover, had to straighten a handful of loops on the directive systems yagis. I had taken refuge on a side road under a huge tree (dumb, later I thought since there was tons of lightning and lots of winds. I could see the headlines "rover crushed by tree") but was thinking only of keeping the hail off of the antennas. They got beat up a year earlier by golf ball size hail sitting in my drive way. Also on Monday I saw on the TV about a local Deputy whose patrol car got hit by lightning (with him in it) it melted his VHF antenna and blew the back window out) So apparently these vehicles are grounded pretty well in the rain.Any how after that storm blew over I again headed north and about 15 miles down the road another storm, with hail but much smaller but more of it. This hail drifted like snow up next to the

This contained large hail!

Developed a funnel cloud

Cracked windshield and ice on the hood.Lots of golfball size hail.

houses and buildings and each tree you came to, well about half of the leaves were on the ground stripped by the hail. Again headed north and ran into heavy heavy rain, had problems with the highways and lots of fast moving water over the roads and in places 3-8 inches of mud and silt. Tricky when you hit that stuff and anything above 20 mph. In the mean time my qso count had be "zero" for quit a while. Again headed north. Finally ran out of the rain and was able to work a few. Biggest problem was my normal spots were really a mess with all the rain.Also I handed out a lot of handouts explaining what I was doing, due to all the bad weather a lot of people were going out of there way to talk to me since they thought for sure I was a storm chaser. I told them sometimes I was chasing storms and sometimes I was the chasee, actually the brochure explained quite well. By this time I was finally near Neligh,NE or should I say "only", I was looking far to the north as I was heading to South Dakota and watching another storm which seemed to just hang there. Hit my next grids in SD and headed north and for 3-4 hours watched my next storm as I headed for it. Any how I got into Mitchell,SD about2:30 AM local hit the Motel and about 5:30am it let go and about 9 am the lightning,wind and rain finally quit. By this time I was behind schedule 5-6 hours and just kept getting further behind. Still out of each contest or outing there is some new experiences, some good and well some less desirable. Oh and to top it all off I kept trying to get ahold of my son at home and finally got him on his Cell phone, storm went thru home and lighting hit a neighbor and took our phones out! Been a real wild season here this year for bad weather! catch you all for the next one. 73 -- *N0DQS*

Getting bombarded with golf ball size hail

K9AKS -- Jun 24, 2004 20:00 ET

This view to the north from Lover's Leap shows the waterfront of Hannibal (MO) and the bridges to Illinois. Note the lighthouse part way up the bluff north of town.

Again this year I operated QRP Single Op Portable, but was limited to Saturday plus one hour on six meters Sunday morning. The site was Lover's Leap in Hannibal, MO, which provides a great view out over the Mississippi River to the north and east.

Lover's Leap would be a great rover site, by the way, because the parking lot is within a few feet of the top of the bluff. It is not a great place for a longer-term operation because one has to leave by dark and it is a very busy public place. In anticipation of the crowds, I set up back away from the bluff just off the main parking lot. Many vistors stopped by to chat (all had an uncle or neighbor who is a ham) and more than a few non-thinkers left their muffler-free cars running with stereos blaring while they took in the view!

The highlight of the evening was a wedding held within twenty feet of my car. I had been running cw with the speaker on, and decided to leave it that way [I was there first!] so if anybody recorded the wedding they got plenty of cw in the background.

I ran a IC 746 on 6 and 2 and an FT 736r on 222, 432 and 1296, held to ten watts maximum. Modest yagis were put on a hand-turned twenty foot mast. No operating highlights; flat conditions in general, plus a couple of good hours of Es on 6 mainly to Florida and Texas. But it was enough to generate 91 qsos in 56 grids for a score in excess of 6000.

I'll probably be portable, and weak, from somewhere for the CQ contest in July.

73 -- *K9AKS*

N0EDV -- Jun 22, 2004 07:30 ET

Casual operating rules prevailed!

Had a great time! Weather was HOT! KB9IQR and I BOTH got sunburned, even in the shade! This was our starting point in EN50 at the Frasca Field airport in Urbana, IL. Roving our way back home, we activated a total of 7 grids. The Yaesu 857 performed flawlessly! All run on battery power. Used an inverter to power the rotor. It was too hot to have to rotate by hand hi hi! -- *N0EDV*

W5ZN -- Jun 21, 2004 19:13 ET

W5ZN "thumbs up" after 30+ hours duking it out on the bands in the Single Operator High Power category

Thanks to everyone that worked W5ZN !!!

Really enjoyed the weekend, although the 6 meter Es was practically non-existent here. Had a nice brief opening to the west coast early Saturday evening. That was about it on 6.

Lot's of great WSJT stuff on 6 & 2. Tried some 222 but all nil there.

Was great to have N5KDA/R running around Mississippi and south Arkansas on 50-1296 MHz. If those guys hadn't been out there, my score would have been much lower.

Had some T'storms float through that provided a path for some 10 GHz rainscatter.

Heard lots of new calls on....SEND IN A LOG, PLEASE. If you only have a few Qs you can use the online log system link from the ARRL Contest Branch page. Give it a try !!!

C U all in the next one.

73 Joel -- *W5ZN*

KC0RAD -- Jun 20, 2004 22:26 ET

Just wanted to add my two cents to the soapbox and to say what fun I had. I am a fairly new technician and this was actually my second contest (participated in the Jan 04 contest). My goal for this contest was of course to improve my score, ie. more contacts, grids and bands used. I am happy to report that I doubled my contacts and got lots of new grids. Although my score is no where near the top it is still a great improvement. I also learned alot during this contest so watch for me to be closer to the top in the future.

My furtherest contact on 6 meters was ZF1DC in EK 99, 2 meters was in EN 52 and EN44, 440 was in EN 52 (I also now have more contacts on 440 then my husband)

I owe all this to my husband (N0TTW), first for building and putting up some new antenna's, and second for having to be out of town and unable to participate, otherwise I wouldn't have gotten close to the radio (Thanks Honey, I Love You!!) Would also like to thank my local Ham Buddies KC0HLN and KC0AKJ for encouraging words and help. Want to also say Hi to the only other female I made contact with, K9ILT.

We (myself and N0TTW) have limited abilities as we are in an apartment. But as shown in pictures is our small station and the homebrewed antenna's. This is what our station consists of:

Radio equipment:

Yaesu FT-100D All-mode radio. VHF/UHF cable is attached to a duplexer to split the 2m and 440 bands in order to feed the RF Amps. The 2 meter amp is a Mirage B-5016-G running at 150 watts. The 440 amp is a Mirage D-100-TVN running 100 watts.

The 6m/HF connector is connected to a 2-position switch that allows switching from verticle to horizontal antennas, while running 100 watts into them.

Antenna Equipment:

All the home brewed antennas were designed using EZNEC and were attached with RG/8 coax.

The 6m antennas consist of a YAESU ATAS-100 verticle and a home brewed Bent Dipole on a rotator with the 2 and 440 antennas. The 2m antenna is a home brewed 3 element Yagi beam. The 440 antenna is an 8 element Yagi beam.

Thanks everyone for the contacts had fun, be listening for me, 73's KC0RAD -- *KC0RAD*

W0LSD -- Jun 19, 2004 16:52 ET

Ken,W0LSD Alan,WD0BGZ and Bruce,N0KIS at the end of the contest

Had a great time working the contest from Mt. Princeton, DM68 in Colorado .... We didnt obtain the score we did last year but we did receive an email from N4DXY/MM/R that they heard us on 2-meters in grids EM54 and EM64, (Colorado to Alabama on 2-meters) .... Now that we know we can be heard from 9000 feet, guess we need to buy a few preamps so we can hear everyone else next year.... We operated 6-meters, 2-meters and 70-cm .... Operators were Ken, W0LSD Bruce, N0KIS and Alan, WD0BGZ .... Our rigs were Icom 756pro, 746pro and a 706 ..... -- *WD0BGZ*

Bruce,N0KIS and Alan,WD0BGZ connecting the 70cm beam

2-meter antennas at 9000 feet looking towards Denver over the top of Buena Vista in the valley.

K7CW -- Jun 19, 2004 14:27 ET

K7CW Multi-Unlimited on Table Mountain, Washington

We operated 50 MHz through 10 GHz plus laser this year and our final score will be above 200,000. Thanks to all those rovers who got out and allowed us to get some points on the higher frequencies. This year, our operators were KE7V, K7WIA, N7EPD, VE7DXG, K7ND, W7YOZ and K7CW.

Mother Nature got at us again this year on Table Mountain in central Washington State, elevation 6350. We got snowed, sleeted and rained on. At times, the wind was nasty and gusting. We persevered, and survived, thanks to KE7V's warm RV.

Thanks to all for the QSOs and fun times! -- *K7CW*

W1BQ -- Jun 17, 2004 15:19 ET

The W1BQ Ham Shack arrived at the top of Mt, Agementicus, Maine in the town of York FN43pf at 8AM Saturday for set up. The mountain is only about 800 feet above sea level, but York Maine is at nearly sea level. I operate as a single op low power and I am set up from 50MHz through 2304MHz. I put in about 20 hours of operating time and enjoyed the beautiful clear and warm weather. You can see my sation in the pictures I have attached. On six I use a 5 element M2 6Mtr beam which, I switch back and forth between it and the pair of M2 phased loops. On two I use a K1FO 12 element beam, which I switch back and forth between it and the pair of M2 phased loops. One picture shows the 20 foot mast with 2 & 6 mtr loops installed. On 222 there is a 16 element

K1FO beam and on 432MHz I have a 25 element K1FO beam. For 1296 I use a single M2 35 element yagi. On 903MHz the 33 element Directive Systems loop yagi, and on 2304MHz the Directive System 75 element loop yagi, known as the blow torch. All antennas above 222MHz are fed with 1/2 inch Heliax, all others are fed with low loss 9913 coax.

I included a picture of the operating station inside the van using the TS2000X as the main transceiver and a Icom 706MIIG as the back up rig. Down East transverters are used for 222 MHz, 903 MHz and 2304 MHz. About 20 feet from the van is a Honda 2KW generator/Inverter which powers the whole set up.

I had a fair run at the Florida openings on six Sunday and overall this was one of the best June contests I have participated in. Left the mountain at about 6PM on Sunday to return to my home QTH in Hampton, NH. -- *W1BQ*

N6ZE/R -- Jun 17, 2004 14:55 ET

6M: 29 QSO; 10 Grids 2M: 45 QSO; 13 Grids 70cm:27 QSO; 11 Grids

7 Grids activated between the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean

Final Score = 5248 -- *N6ZE*

W4SHG -- Jun 20, 2004 20:31 ET

The W4SHG Contesting Antennas 2 Meter 1.25CM and 70CM in the foregrond 6 Meter and 903 thur 3.456G in the background

Well after a couple of weeks of preparation, one bucket truck, a nice set of ruts in the front yard and 2 inch hole in the back deck we were again ready for this year June QSO Party (2004) from Virginia FM18GK.

The above is the result of some changes on the microwave tower as living in a subdivision on ¼ acre lots leaves no room for guy wires. Therefore the tower being mounted to the house via house brackets becomes un-climbable at the 60 foot mark with near 40 foot above the house. After making a little challenge with AA2UK (Bill) in the January VHF Sweepstakes I decided to install a 3.456 ghz system on the already loaded tower. I told Bill if we could work on 2.304 ghz I would put up 3.456 ghz. Since we were unsuccessful in two previous contests I thought I was safe and would not have to go to the added expense for a band that would yield mostly CW qso's in probably only contests. Well Bill promptly worked me on 2.304 CW in the January

The W4SHG Microwaves The Oval dishs are phased and diveded for 2304mhz The square dish is the newer 3.456mhz Ireland Special All the Yagi's are M2

The W4SHG shack, the place where good backs go bad and minds falter late into a contest. Thank goodness there is a refrigertor within chair rolling distance.

contest so I fell on my sword and got 3.456G for the Microwave Tower.

By the way where was Bill (AA2UK) this contest. I hope all is OK there.

The 3.456 ghz system consists of a dish found in Ireland which is some business band in that country. I found a representative in Florida and proceeded to get the 66.00 dish as a test. I was going to get a large looper but decided the dish may work better. I am still unsure as to whether I am correct, as 3 contacts on 3.456 certainly didn't light up the world. Nonetheless we added some 7/8th's hard line drilled a hole in the back deck, installed the transverter on the deck minimizing the feed line loss to the dish and then brought the IF back on some LMR-400 into the microwave switcher. I also extended the PTT line out to the transverter.

The ruts in the yard were donated by the 65foot JLG lift I rented to drive into the back yard and get to the tower. I installed the 3.456 grid dish and decided that 16 elements on 903 was a bit light for 10 watts so I replaced the looper with an M2 14wl on 903. This antenna is much more difficult to get pointed but I think it performed quite a bit better. Not surprising, as they are quite different in length. I suspect similar performance from a looper the same size. So that being fed with 1 1/4 inch hard line no changes in the feed line were required however the yagi is far more susceptible to other metal objects in its near field. I took a day trying to figure out why SWR's were high on the tower and perfect on the ground. I found it just too close to the cross arm. Once that was corrected we were good to go.

As with every contest you try to ensure that all your bands work but in my case I hadn't made a contact on anything higher than 432mhz since the January contest. So at contest start I pointed to FM15 looking for Mr. Rover Extraordinaire (W3IY/R) in the early warning system van and got him up to 903mhz. Nothing on 2.3G or 3.456. OK, lets keep rolling I'll

All is fed with heliax which I found to be crucial at this location. 2 Meters is 7/8ths Hard Line, everything else is 1 5/8ths except 903mhz which is 1 1/4. 6 Meters is fed with 1/2 Hard Line. All to minimze loss.

catch him in the next grid and I got to 2.3G on CW but 3.456 nothing. Well it's clear to me now that I did something wrong. Being at 67ft ASL doesn't help but CW and the gain ought to work. Then Bill (W3IY) got on the Chesapeake Bay Bridge in FM16. To my amazement we worked SSB on all bands and he was 30+ on 3.456G. What was that all about. Now I know all the Mirowave stuff worked. Lucky

About that time 6 Meters opened up and the plan I had to follow a couple of rovers went in the toilet. I knew that if I did not get the multipliers while they were there I would again be trounced by the guys in the South as 6 Meters opens for them usually wider that it does here in Virginia. I had lots of fun catching Cuba (T49C) and the Cayman Islands (ZF1DC). I stupidly asked for his grid twice not usually logging an EK grid. The band stayed open for a couple of hours and went down on Day 1, so I went back to the rover follow plan and hollering on 6 and working those through the bands when I could.

Finished Day 1 with a better that last years score at about 2:00am and took a bit of a nap until 6:00am Day 2 Sunday morning. All was quiet and I worked a few new stations, which I suspect, just turned on the rig and found a contest on the air. Then the band flew wide open into Florida. I worked every one in Florida and they worked the Eastern Half of the US. I had some success but some of the guns in Florida were just cranking off 6 meter contacts certainly in excess of 100 per hour. Some of the guys were in my transceiver at 20+ with the attenuator on. Certainly a terrific opening for our contest and will certainly play a major factor in the scoring this year. I suspect some really good scores from the Southeast.

The band died around 4:00pm for me as it lasted about 6 hours from what I could tell. I went to working guys as best I could but by this time the back and mind were starting to falter. I again tried to pick up some rovers but never got another contact above 2.3ghz. Bill and Christophe, the best CW whistling expert known to man, went in to FM08 on the mountain and I worked them SSB on all bands except 3.4G while he was driving up the hill. Wow, 2.3 with the antenna pointing who knows where. I love it but 3.4G was a bust. I surely busted something or so I thought. I tried twice to get to them and finally the pile of guys trying to get to them terminated the attempt. Bill later told me he lost 60db somewhere in his system. So this time it may not be me. But don't bet on it.

The last 6 hours of the contest were really a bust as the folks left on the air had mostly been worked. I caught AD4DG late and worked thru what he had running and found the Lone Rover ND2X/R rolling literally right past the house. I worked him on all the bands as he was maybe 500 yards from my QTH at the time. He was trying to activate another grid FM17 and did so and I worked him on everything he had there except 1.2G. The slot antenna on his vehicle and my bad location squelched that.

All in all it was my best effort, and quite honestly I don't think I will be able to do much better from this location. Thanks to the single op guns, K1TEO, K1RZ, K4QI, K3DNE, KE2N and the Mutil Op Stations K8GP, W3SZ, K3EAR, W3CCX who took the extra time to work this little pistol here in

FM18gk.

I suspect this may be the last June QSO Party with the current rule structure. This is sad as there will be many guys who elect not to participate because of the changes. For those guys I will miss you all as we need more folks operating on these bands. I think it important to use all these bands or certainly they will be lost very much like the portion of 220mhz to UPS.

See you all from the mountain FM08us for the Fall Sprints and in the September QSO Party from FM18gk

Respectfully Submitted by: Steve Gilmore -- *W4SHG*

WB2VVV -- Jun 18, 2004 15:32 ET

WB2VVV FN41CR RI
144/222/432/903/1296/2304 MHz Antennas

Here is a picture of the antenna system I used at WB2VVV (FN41CR) in Rhode Island, for the June VHF Contest.

It is very compact, sharing a single TV mast with my rooftop TV antenna, and provided contacts on: 144/222/432/903/1296/2304 MHz. The small 144, 222, and 432 MHz yagis are connected to one coaxial feedline via a Comet FM triplexer. The tiny microwave antenna is an antenna range LPDA and uses another coaxial feedline. Despite covering six bands there are only two coaxial feedlines running from the antennas to coaxial switches in the shack.

For 50 MHz, I used a small low yagi on a temporary mast in my yard fixed Southwest, and also a taller omni horizontal loop antenna. Both 50 MHz antennas were connected to the rig via a coaxial switch allowing me to choose the better antenna to make a contact. These antennas are not pictured, although a picture can be provided if desired.

These are very small antennas that almost anyone could put up, allowing many bands of operation while still being "low impact".

73, Chris WB2VVV

PS: Bigger antennas, much like I formerly had in NNJ (FN21XA), are coming... -- *WB2VVV*

KQ6EE -- Jun 17, 2004 10:36 ET

KQ6EE hiked up to Mt. Baden Powell (9399 feet above sea level) which is the second highest peak

Hon, kq6ee, standing at the top of Mt. Baden Powell ready for the big day (cq contest). The background is northern desert.

beam antenna was setup under the shade (tree)

in Los Angeles area. On Saturday, I waked up in morning, left my at about 6:30am, and arrived at the trailhead was about 8:30am. It took me about 3 hours to hike up to the peak. The weather was so perfect: clear, sunny and NO SMOG. I brought my FT-817, ICOM four bander HT, Alinco 220 HT, dual bander beam, magmount, tripod and other stuffs. I operated from 6m to 1.2 ghz--FM and SSB; except 220 and 1.2 ghz--(FM only). I enjoy the whole Saturday afternoon breathing fresh air, seeing the best view, AND doing CQ CONTEST. I didn't do any contest on Sunday because of the family activity. I don't know where to go during the Field Day. May be hike to Mt Baden Powell again because it is the best view and the most popular mountain in Southern California. OR hike up Mt. Baldy which is the highest peak in Los Angeles area -- only a plan. 73 to all -- *KQ6EE*

At the peak, radios displace at the monument of Mr. Baden Powell who is the founder of boy scout.

My backpack was full of radio stuffs, it was so heavy, I don't know how did I carry up here

N6ZE/R -- Jun 16, 2004 14:02 ET

N6ZE/ TRANSCONTINENTAL ROVER (Again!)

As N6ZE/TransCon Rover, I completed my 3rd TransContinenal Rover Operation in a 12 month perio. During the contest, my travels in Florida, Georgia, & California resulted in 2700 miles of travel by air and by car.

The TransCon Rove began from the Ft. Lauderdale, FL (EL96) Airport Terminal. 6 QSOs were made on 6/2/70 with an FT817 & Yaesu supplied whip antenna. Deafening RF trash from computers & CRTs made comms very difficult. I had only 10 minutes to operate there. A total of 6 Qs were made.

I stayed overnight in Coconut Grove, FL (EL95) & was lucky enough to be able to operate from an 11th floor hotel balcony. As during the Jan. 2004 VHF SS, I was able to visit with old friends from my past living in EL95 during the 1990s. Unfortunately, I had high buildings to the Northwest through Northeast, but I did manage to work K0GU (DN70) at a distance of 1700 statute miles on 6m CW with the FT817 & a 1/2 wave dipole. I heard W6OAL (CO)& W0AH (CO) as well as a bunch of EMxx stations, but the peanut whistle was unable to break through the din. My dipole also served on 2 meters & I used a KB6KQ Mini-Loop for 432 Mhz. I did hear the 2m CW of WA4OFS

(EL88), but I was not heard by him. 15 QSOs were made at this stop.

For 20 minutes on Suday AM, I operated from the outside deck of my employer's Atlanta Airport Ramp Control Tower structure (EM73). When I operate as a QRP Rover, I usually travel from site to site by airplane, so there is only 1 factor which can help make QSOs: ANTENNA HEIGHT!. 2 watts & a dipole or other non-gain antenna make ANTENNA HEIGHT mandatory. However my Atlanta operating environment some 100 feet above the ramp had many loud audio & RF noise generators: The huge aircraft control center has some 2 dozen work stations, all with networked computers and plasma or CRT screens; the whine of up to a dozen taxiing airliners utilzing large jet engines; and airplanes taking off all created a tremendous racket. (Thanks to Murphy, I had conveniently left my headset down on the concourse level.) Strong kerosene fumes & smells from the exhaust vents of a greasy Chinese restaurant provided additional operating distractions. 6 Qs were made on 3 bands; KI4ADK in the NC mountains (EM85) provided he furthest 2m QSO.

I landed at Los Angeles at 4PM PDT on Sunday afternoon; I had gotten up at 3AM PDT in Miami, but I didn't want to give up the opportunity to operate from the 4 L.A. area grids so I spent the next 3.5 hours operating from various spots in DM03, DM04, DM13, & DM14. Highlights included: making several Qs with 4C2X (DM11) on 6/2/70; with 10 watts + whip, I worked KF6YYv/6 (DM16) on 70cm;& I made a 2m contest exchange with N6TEB/R in DM07.

TransCon Roving is fun, but I hope to be home for the next VHF test....or Roving by auto from a bunch of West Coast grids.

btPete, N6ZE/R...K1FJM -- *N6ZE*

K2QO/R -- Jun 16, 2004 14:14 ET

Wow! Another new high score for the Minimalist Buick Rover team of K2QO and W2TAU. We tackled 8 grids on a 589 mile romp through FN14, 24, 23, 22, 13, 12, 03 and 02. Did I say Buick? Well, yeah, a Buick Rendezvous to be precise. (http://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~msadams/RDV%20Photos/K2QO%20Rover%20in%20FN02au.JPG) Add a solid Yakima roof rack and convert a Saris hitch mount bike rack and you have end up with a roomy, high fuel efficiency SUV for a weekend of radio.

The minimalist approach (kinda like the NO BUDGET thing, thanks Dan) uses common low to meduim performance gear and HB antennas to increase the the ratios of QSOs/$ and Fun/QSO/Mile. The beauty here is that nearly any ham can get in on the fun. Even a die-hard HF QRPer like me.

We are QRP on 222 and 1296 and here is the kicker. Based on QSO points x Grids, these two bands provided 39.5% of our total score! Now that is some serious QRP action.

The K2QO system on 222 and 1296 consists of an FT817 IF radio, W1GHZ HB 222 transverter (see QST Jan 03, I think) and a DEMI 1296 transverter that I got used for $200. The antennas are a

WA5VJB 6-el beam for 222 and an Antenna Book Quagi for 1296. Now that is truly a minimalist setup! Max distances covered in this contest were abut 125 miles on 1296 MHz and 110 miles on 222 MHz.

One of the coolest things in the contest was mobiling down the the NYS Thruway during the Sunday 6M opening. We bagged lots of new grids, and some twice and the road goes above and below the FN12/13 gridline a couple of times. Maybe those tax dollars were put to good use after all :-)

OK, the bottom line:

271 Q's and the following equipment breakdown, er, list.

6M FT100D 100W PAR OMNI

2M FT100D 50W HB 6-EL

222 W1GHZ 5W HB 6-EL

432 FT100D 20W HB 11-EL

1296 DEMI 3W HB QUAGI

10G DEMI 2W HB HORN

All that is left is to send in the log and enjoy the other soapbox comments here at ARRL. We hope you all had fun this contest and we hope to work ALL of you in September.

73, Mark K2QO and Paul W2TAU -- *K2QO*

N6VMO -- Jun 15, 2004 19:13 ET

Operated the 2004 ARRL June VHF QSO Party from CM94sp.

My location was the W6AB Satellite Amateur Radio Club on Vandenberg AFB.

GPS location 034 48’ 51.45N 120 30’ 2.00W Elevation ~900’

QRV on 6m, 2M, 70cM and 23cM.

The station with yagi antennas for 2M, 6M, 70cM and 23cM. My portable 6' offset fed dish and homebrew feed horn was also used on 23cM.

My 'busy' operating position. The Kenwood TS-790A for 2M, 70cM, 23cM and the ICOM IC-718 with TenTec transverter for 6M. Running 150W on 2M, 70cM, 6M and 14W on 23cM.

Once again the contest, excellent weather and location made it a great weekend. -- *N6VMO*

W6AB Satellite Amateur Radio Club site near the Vandenberg AFB Tracking Station.

K0RPT -- Jun 15, 2004 06:31 ET

Well, this was my first try at a contest. I was pretty bummed as all week long propagation was great on 6. Saturday morning 6 was open to the NW with stations pouring in Nebraska. Then out of the blue comes this nasty storm and all the bands went dead. With a whopping total of 71 contacts I think I will have to pray a bit more next year. It was still fun to set up the antennas and give it a try! -- *K0RPT*

W7GK -- Jun 14, 2004 20:03 ET

Took our mountain top entry to Rocky Point (8275 ft) in the Pequop range this year. Rocky Point is

Our camp with the triband stack in the background. The stack is on a rotatable mast turned with a HAM IV.

Another shot of the camp. We operated from solar power.

Kathy, KD7ODB, the camp Comandant

located between Wendover and Wells, NV a bit north of Interstate 80 in grid DN21.

Operated 6m, 2m and 432 as a SO-LP. Set up our camp and began listening around 1100 PDST. First contacts were with Jim, N7WUZ and the Idaho Potato K0IP. Continued making contacts on 6, 2 and 432 within a 100 mile radius until late afternoon when 6 opened up to the south and central U.S. There was also a brief opening to San Diego and Baja, Mexico. Within several hours we logged the majority of our 101 contacts. The band closed around 2130 PDST so we decided to catch some ZZZZ's.

The wind blew at a steady 30-40 mph from late Saturday until Sunday afternoon but everything held up just great.

Sunday's opening was into southwestern Canada which gave us the chance to work about 20 of our northerly neighbors. Who said CW was dead. Around 1330 PDST SSB gave out and CW signals started popping up so we wrang out every last possible QSO before the the band died.

Our total was 99 QSO's so out of desperation to break 100 gave a shout on the EARC's NE Nv repeater system for anyone to push us over the magic number. Gerry, KG7TD responded with a QSO on 6 and 2 so our final tally was 101 QSO's and 6930 points.

Now to city folks that's nothing but in western states like ID, NV, UT, WY and MT where little towns are 60 miles apart, that's a bunch.

Hope to see you in September from a new location.

Dave, W7GK (Genghis Khan) and Kathy, KD7ODB (Outrageous Dingy Blonde) -- *W7GK*

CHOP, Dave, W7GK logging QSO's from the FT-847 into the laptop using N3FJP's VHF Contest software.

KH6WZ -- Jun 14, 2004 20:41 ET

KH6WZ in DM03 overlooking Bolsa Chica wildlife reserve.

Yikes. Murphy creeps into the IF radio, and a BFO failure killed my 10GHz system. However, this was a good practice session for the upcoming 10GHz contest! -- *KH6WZ*

W5WJP -- Jun 14, 2004 16:45 ET

Sparse 6m openings....but still a lot of fun. Ran my FT-847 with a 6m log at 20 feet and got about half the contacts i had last year from the same setup. -- *W5WJP*

W1AUV/R -- Jun 15, 2004 13:37 ET

Even though we had a couple of problems, we managed to have a good time this June. An unknown

FN22wi, the van and the view.

problem caused 6 meters to fail forcing me to revert to using 5 watts on a back up radio.

The highlight of the weekend for me was the 195 mile 10 GHz contact with N1JEZ/R. We were in FN22wi (near Cairo NY) and Mike was in FN44ig on Mount Washington in NH. This was my longest (and only about my 5th) contact on my new 10 GHz rig. My 200 mW made it! Thanks Mike!

The picture is of the Rover van and the nice view in FN22wi. We had a great weekend and the weather was fantastic. My thanks go out to my wife Linda for letting me convert her van over to a Rover van for the contest. I'll need it back for the next one!

Thanks also to Alan for riding all over New England with me. -- *W1AUV*

WV1K -- Jun 15, 2004 13:05 ET

The tower before it shrunk ten feet. No, there are no covenants here, but there is rampant Cape Cod Towerphobia brought on by acute lack of a life. The antennas are the same, and on 6m the antenna is a Force 12 EF606 that I thought played well.

I was limited to 6m because of a tower snafu.

I had been told 35 feet was permissible without any permits, but after someone whined, the tower had to be lowered to 25 (yes that's twenty five) feet. Hope they enjoy looking right at the antennas !

So, there is no room left on the tower and I was on 6m. No openings on Cape Cod at my place. There were alot of stations with good ears which helped, but some that still need to remember people live out to the east and point their antennas accordingly from time to time. -- *WV1K*

K0AWU -- Jun 15, 2004 00:34 ET

The June contest is always looked forward to with great anticipation. A chance to enjoy the activity and good tropo conditions. Well that is what I dream about during the long cold northern Minnesota winter. Good tropo we didn't have. Great weather then a cold front Saturday night put a damper on

K0AWU -W0GHZ 10Ghz Rainscatter
EN37ed -> EN34lx

any possible tropo.

The poor conditions and very spotty brief Es on 6 meters (65 contacts in 44 grids mostly Saturday) produced a lower score than the last two June contests. One of the highlights was catching Gary W0GHZ on 2m at the same time I was looking at local radar that looked promising for a shot at 10Ghz rainscatter. We were rewarded with an S9 SSB contact over the 155mile path. Amazing what can be worked via rainscatter with a watt and 18" dish!

I worked one new grid on 1296Mhz (EN25) and a new state and grid on 222Mhz when I worked W2SZ/1 (MA - FN32) via WSJT.

181 Contacts in 96 Grids on 6m, 2m, 222Mhz, 432Mhz, 1296Mhz and 10Ghz. -- *K0AWU*

KJ6NO -- Jun 15, 2004 00:25 ET

144 and 432 loops

Great contest weekend except that I had to work most of it. Rigs were IC 756 PRO II on 50 MHz and an IC 910 on 144 and 432 MHZ. Antennas were all loops the highest was the 6 meter loop at 10 feet. The 144MHZ loop was at 6 feet and the 432 loop was mag-mounted under a window air conditioner! 73 Ray -- *KJ6NO*

W8CM -- Jun 14, 2004 08:53 ET

I traveled from the Dallas EM13 area to Childress, TX to give 6 meter contacts from rare (at least to me) West Texas grid DM94. Sitting under a big shade tree in a city park with an HO loop at 9 feet above ground, IC-706mkIIG, and a 100AH gel cell battery did tend to make me appreciate the home

station kw and stacked long boom yagis, hi,hi. Music to my ears was the return comment "thanks for a new one!". Sure got to walk the dog a lot between "openings" - looking forward to the sunspot cycle upswing. -- *W8CM*

WV0H -- Jun 14, 2004 16:02 ET

WV0H op

This was a pretty bleak year for 6m. The only opening was of my 2m rig whilest 6m was going, unbeknownst to me! With soldering iron in one hand and N0UGY on the phone in the other, we managed to repair my TR-751 RF gain pot/problem. Upon sucessful closure of the 2m rig, so did 6 and it stayed closed all weekend for most of us on the Front Range. Thanks to the rovers out there, with out you guys we would have no contest. I heard you Todd, but I couldn't seem to hear your response so I didn't log it. -- *WV0H*

Those are Lodge Pole pines and bungees holding up my 6 and 2/432 arrays! Thanks to WB9QDL for the $5.00 PVC and Cu wire UHF antenna.

K0XXX -- Jun 14, 2004 09:59 ET

Desperate to work the contest and with my tower not yet up, I set up a ten ft. tripod with twenty feet of mast in my back yard. With the tripod held in place with metal fence posts driven into the ground, the 6 meter beam was set at 15 ft. and the two meter, at twenty five. The cable for rotor and the coax for the two meter beam were a bit short, so they were strung above the ground. The 6 meter coax, being longer, was left to lay across the grass. I experimented with making contacts for two weeks

Temporary antenna setup

before the contest.

An hour before the contest starts and it's time to make a few last minute checks. With my daughter cutting grass outside the window, I'm getting a lot of electrical noise from the lawnmower engine. Finally, she stops and I can try a few local contacts to try things out. Six meters is unusually quite. Six meters is dead. Six meters has had the lawnmower run over its coax. No problem, the shorter coax will now be off the ground with the other wiring.

Finishing up repairs on the coax just as the contest is starting, I notice dark skies to the southwest and the wind is picking up. Checking the weather on the local NWS site, I see that my county is under a severe thunderstorm warning. I quickly make a local 6m contact and prepare the equipment for the storm.

Two and one half hours later, the storm has moved off far enough to re-connect the equipment. Then, my wife asks, "Have you looked at your antennas lately?" The rain has softened the ground and, under the heavy winds, one of the fence posts has pulled out of the ground. The tripod and antennas are leaning as a 45 degree angle.

Finally, everything is ready and I've only lost three hours. There's a nice opening on 6 meters and I soon forget the earlier inconveniences. Even the two meter amp dying during the first meteor scatter contact doesn't bother me and I have a blast. -- *K0XXX*

W4FAL -- Jun 14, 2004 08:31 ET

W4FAL Station

The ARRL June VHF Contest is always a favorite. This year I got to spend some time with the contest between chores around the house. Still don't have the tower up yet, so I was working with comprimised antennas that weren't that high.

I managed 14 grids on six meters, 4 on two meters, and 2 on 70cm. ZF1DC in EK99 (Cayman Island) and T49C in EL83 (Cuba) were great additions to the logbook on six meters.

I operated with a FT-847, and inverted V at 65 ft for six meters, a vertical on 2M and 70cm (I told you they were compromised antennas).

Thanks to all that worked me. I'm already getting some QSL's via the ARRL Logbook of the World.

73,

Frank, W4FAL -- *W4FAL*