

# Contest Soapbox

## 2006 ARRL June VHF QSO Party

82 Soapbox entries available

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**W0AH -- Oct 16, 2006 12:42 ET**



June 2005



Just set up temporary operating position for contest.



The new house. The 38' tower by shed with antennas are barely visible. Notice the new 50' tower by house. For September, bigger VHF antennas will be atop that

WOW! Just got the 6M antenna up Friday morning before the contest, and the band was exploding! Worked several Europeans and 100 grids in just a few hours. Would conditions the next day be as good? Well, not quite. This was the first contest from our new house on Windmill Hill, north of Inman, SC, and 8 miles south of the NC border. Our previous June 2005 and January 2006 VHF contest efforts were from a small travel trailer during the lot clearing, house construction phases. We still were using the temporary 38' tower and the small 5 el 6M, 10 el 2M, 4 el 222, 16 el 432, and 45 el 1296 antennas. Saturday afternoon and evening were very good on six, but the opening was not as extensive as Friday's. Six was poor to fair on Sunday. Tropo was flat all weekend. Thanks for all the contacts! Tower/antenna improvements are planned for September. For more info and pics on our move to SC click-

<http://dougw0ah.googlepages.com/nothingcouldbefiner...sc>

-- W0AH

tower.

#### KE4WBO -- Sep 9, 2006 22:29 ET



Great contest we roved 12 grids starting in em56 kentucky heading south thru alabama than east to florida ran 2m-1296 low power on loops did my best sunday morning leaving pine level, alabama when i ran into af4od and leapfrogged grids south thu alabama down to city of troy where we stopped and got lunch Bill was buying so couldn't pass it up ,best fried chicken i have ever had in the south i'd say ...any way he took off to rove some more and i headed south to I-10 and headed east to i-75 thru em 70,60-80 which coincided with a somewhat near gale force tropical storm in the panhandle with sideways rain and gusts of wind to 50 knots when i reached el89 worked a

trusty rover 6-1296 10gigs

few more on 432 2m and last qso from el98 was with n4is on 2m he has good ears i was essentially 150 miles out with no gain on my end but he pulled me out of the qrn easily tnx Carlos between crazy drivers on the road and driving now for 13 hours straight i was fatigued and had 100 miles left to go to el96 jupiter exit .. finally hit the front gate at 1145 est sunday night very tired but fun operating contest on the drive home from em65 kentucky 73 maybe wx better next year -- *KE4WBO*

#### KG6IYN -- Aug 31, 2006 19:13 ET

- -- *KG6IYN*

#### KG6IYN -- Sep 1, 2006 00:43 ET



My temporary Contest QTH - A Spectacular 25 Feet above Football Field Level !

After what I thought was a great contest year start in January, I had more than a few unexpected issues passed my way ... Double Whammy for June, having to take care of a family member that was ill and had to assist in some emergency remediation for my work. Both crushed plans to go on a rover expedition or to go to my local mountain top for contesting .... Saturday was completely wiped out for time or ability to do anything for the contest - but as one of my friends said while I was lamenting the scheduling and plans change "You just can't NOT Contest ..."...

As strangely phrased as that statement was, it also had more than a ring of truth and unescapable logic about it - So, what to do, when you've loaned out a bunch of your usual gear (because I thought I was going on a Rove), and you can't be too far from the Home QTH or from the office if needed by either...

Well, the unique idea was to do more than a few things not attempted in a ARRL VHF Contest - Portable Operation, QRP, limited antennas, Solar and Battery Powered...



What's wrong with this picture ? Hint -  
What ? Only ONE Radio ?



Icom's Newest Radio - The IC-7000 "Field Model" !



The Golden Rule - The Worst Day  
Contesting is Better than the best day at  
work !

You can work a lot of VHF and UHF from strange urban locations. The location I selected put me just above all of the obstacles and homes surrounding this entire location (sort of like being at my regular spot up on the mountain).

Your arm WILL get tired from holding the Arrow Satellite Antenna and it's difficult to log on paper

So, Sunday Morning, it was up for breakfast and to feed kids, gather up a vertical antenna and an older M2 Squalo for 6 Meters, an M2 HO Loop for 2 Meters, an Arrow 2 Meter / 440 Satellite antenna, some coax, a few switchboxes, a solar panel and a couple of small gel cells, laptop computer for logging and an Icom IC-7000.

Set up was about one quarter mile from the Home QTH at my old High School, up in the bench seats surrounding the football and track field. Important to note is that this location is almost 70' Higher than being at home ...

Set up for two hours of operation in the morning, took about two hours off to play with my family that came up to visit, then about four more hours until clouds prevented getting any charge on the batteries. I had about 130 contacts logged, but made a critical error in judgement on the laptop... I had started logging on the laptop, not expecting to be operating for more than a few hours. When I received the green light to remain for the rest of the day, I knew I wouldn't have enough battery power to keep logging on the laptop. My critical error was that I wasn't using my regular laptop or logging software, I was keeping my contacts logged in Notepad ... self realization set in seconds after I powered down my laptop, and then depression that I had just lost about 60 contacts logged ... I started back up after a break for lunch and play, logging to paper, but the loss of the first data set prevented my sending in any official log for this event. Unofficially, I had almost 25 grid squares on 6 meters, 9 on 2 Meters and 7 on 432 ... best distances with the set up as pictured on 6 meters was Washington State and Canada to the North, Texas and Louisiana to the East ...

All in all, a good experience and something I have never tried before. The Icom 7000 isn't as light on power consumption as a few other radios but it wasn't bad either. Dialed down to lowest power on all bands, and with about 40 watts coming in from sunlight, I had no problem keeping the batteries charged.

Lessons learned - (humor is where you find it ...)

Paper may be old school, but it has it's place.



or the computer when you're keying the mike and aiming the antenna.

Best Story - Late Sunday afternoon the band opened from Southern California to Colorado on 6 Meters. I had just been chatting with a couple of the other local contest stations, lamenting the loss of the local Rovers and lack of any heard in the region. About 30 minutes later Colorado came rolling in, and I was on .125 working a few stations... out of about three or four stations that responded to my CQ, I was only able to pick out part of one call "VER". I responded, asking only for that station and after about two tries in the QRM, I got a return "This IS KR0VER... Bruce, It's Eric in Colorado !". This turned out to be one of the local Rover Stations that had left San Diego earlier this year and had traditionally provided me with a good number of grid squares I would have not otherwise been able to work or log in the contests. It made for a good laugh, and even funnier, explaining what I was doing instead of the regular contest operation I had been for the past few years ... In the end, and for my best moment of the contest, I was told the they had no goals set for the contest for points, but that they had said their single goal was to work me in San Diego from their Rover in Colorado - and they accomplished that well !

Pictures supplied for their benefit and chuckles in contrast to my normal operation- hi hi

See you all on the bands in September ! 73 -- *KG6IYN*

**K7MDL/R -- Aug 26, 2006 13:01 ET**



At 5500ft in CN99 looking at the BC/US border though the clouds.



At 6000ft. above Lake Chelan in CN98. Snow further ahead completely blocked

This was a rover effort jointly with N7EPD this year. It was nice to have him along. I usually do these long trips solo. His sharp ears and CW proficiency netted us a chance contact from a mountaintop in DN09 to KI7JA/P operating 2M QRP from CN94 mountain top.

Our route started in Seattle, headed north through CN87, CN88, CN89, CN99, and DN09 (Mt. Kobau Fire Lookout eastern British Columbia) for the night. The eastward path through CN89/99/DN09 only had a view westward keeping the first days QSO count to only 70. At one mountain lookout in the CN99 BC Cascades we did manage to squeeze out a 2M CW QSO back into Seattle to work W7FI.

The second day we continued south in Eastern BC, Eastern WA, to Tunk Mtn Fire Lookout in DN08, and Lake Chelan in CN98. The forest road was snow blocked at 6000ft so we doubled back 15 miles, on the way slicing open a tire on forest road just 2 hours before the end of the contest with 3 more grids to activate and make Chelan Butte in CN97 by 7:15pm.

Tire fixed, we hit the highway, 6M opened up and we had a great shot southward the whole way, crossing CN98/DN08/DN07/CN97, working stations as fast as we could log them, crossing grids and reworking many of the stations minutes later.

the road. Back 15 miles to the highway!



At 6000ft. on Tunk Mtn. Lookout in DN08



At 3600ft. on Chelan Butte in CN97 at contest end.

We reached Chelan Butte in CN97 with a nice 360 degree view of eastern Washington, Lake Chelan, and lots of contacts. We ended up with 188 QSOs mostly operating the remote mountains and eastern side of Washington and BC.

While we were equipped with all bands from 6M though 10GHz, we made no contacts on 903MHz, only 1 in 1296MHz (amplifier power got kicked off for 2 attempts), and nothing above 2.4GHz could be made - we were pretty isolated. The high bands were definately tough to get this year but the scenery was worth it. Looking at the results below you can see 6M was the usual utility band, and despite being in some similar locations last year, we were able to log a few more grids this year. We ran 120W or less on all bands into yagis on the truck, except for 6M which used a 6M KB6KQ loop antenna.

Band -QSO -Grids

50 MHz -101 -43

144 MHz -51 -14

222 MHz -14 -4

432 MHz -21 - 8

902 MHz -0 -0

1296 MHz -1 -1

- -- *K7MDL*

**KI6BEW/R -- Aug 6, 2006 21:28 ET**



KI6BEW working his 1st 6 meter double hop contact using the loop.

This was our first try at being a vhf rover and we had a great time. The weather was nice and we found some great places to park. Only operated from two grids this time but plan on four or more next time. Six meters was a blast!  
-- *WA6OSX*



Loops for 50, 144 and 432 mhz

**KI4GZD -- Jul 12, 2006 21:24 ET**



Kent W4JJF (closest), Wayne N4HWH and Catherine WB4CAT



A look off the tower where we had our antennas (WOW what a view)

We had great weather for this year's June Contest except for a few storms that somehow missed us. I had planned on going on top of WalkerTop Mountain as usual and operating Single-Op Low power and I received a call from the Dixie Radio Pirates. They had lost their spot atop Anderson Mountain and wanted to participate in the contest. We couldn't let that happen because anyone that wants to contest should contest, so I told the Pirates they were welcome to join me on top of the mountain. I didn't get to start till about 3PM because of other commitments but once we started it was wide open. The group was made up of W4JJF-Kent, WB4CAT-Catherine, KG4PBG-Richard, and last but not least Mr. Hot Water himself N4HWH-Wayne. We had a 2Meter SSB and FM, 223 FM, 440 SSB and FM, and 6Meter SSB station set-up underneath the tower and we operated for approx. a 24 hour period. More pictures to come.

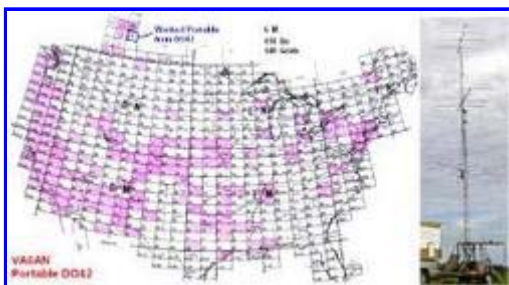
Greg -- *KI4GZD*

**KI7BP -- Jul 12, 2006 21:58 ET**

DUE TO THE GREAT SNOWPACK WE HAD THIS WINTER TED AND I DECIDED TO OPERATE FROM DN33 WHICH IS ON THE CAMAS PRAIRIE AT 5800 FOOT ELEVATION, SOUTH OF FAIRFIELD, IDAHO. CONDITIONS WERE FANTASTIC. A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR CONTACTS. WE WILL BE BACK NEXT YEAR. TED KI7BP GARY KB7QFE -- *KB7QFE*



**VA6AN -- Jul 11, 2006 01:02 ET**



Grid map for 6m and photo of 6m antennas

Great Contest Was raining upon arrival of site almost parked truck and camper in ditch (rural mud road) could not setup on Friday night so had supper and went to bed. Sat morning was much better and was able to set up my one man portable hi hi. First time using stack match neat but don't think the added effort really helped. May decide one large antenna would be as good as smaller ones. Any comments greatly appreciated. 73... will be listening for you next year. Pix worth million words... AI -- VA6AN

**K7XC -- Jul 10, 2006 23:39 ET**



K7XC - Caught In The Act

While it was not the best I have ever done in a June contest, it was by far one of the most satisfying. So many things went well, N6ENU/7 in DM28 was grid #43 on 222 Mhz! 6M co-operated- Kinda Sorta Mostly... All in all a great way to spend a couple of days! I WILL BE BAAAACK! -- K7XC





K7XC - Opearators View



K7XC - Computer Logging is a MUST!



K7XC - Amps in the hallway to cut down on in shack noise pollution.





K7XC - AM-6154, 350W on 144 Mhz.



K7XC - AM-6155, 400W on 222 Mhz.



K7XC - Main Tower. 50 Mhz - 6 ele K7XC  
HB on 30' Boom at 39'. 144 Mhz - M2  
18XXX on 33' Boom at 41'. 222 Mhz - M2  
7WL on 31' Boom at 43'. 432 Mhz - 9WL  
K1FO on 27' Boom at 45'.



K7XC - Second 50 Mhz Yagi. 4 ele K7XC  
HB on 15' Boom at 20'. Fixed Due North  
For High Angle Es Into W7/VE7.

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