

Contest Soapbox

2006 Straight Key Night

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KI4LXM -- Feb 15, 2006 17:38 ET

Straight key night was a blast for me, I am a fairly new Ham here in Flagler, FL and I have an obsession with CW. I spend as much time on the radio as will be allowed and love making distant contacts. I am trying for the WAS award, but would enjoy a QSO with anyone that can hear me!

73, DE KI4LXM -- *KI4LXM*

KA0P -- Feb 3, 2006 19:36 ET

Did not get to operate a lot, but fired up the old HW101 and straight key for 4 nice contacts. Hope to have my old DX-60/Drake 2B ready for next year. 73, Dave KA0P -- *KA0P*

K6TY/0 -- Feb 1, 2006 02:36 ET



WB6VRN operating K6TY/0 using a Martin "Flash" bug, with a Lionel J-38 standing by.

After operating the June 2005 Field Day from my mother-in-law's in Saint Louis, my wife Cheryl, KB0QJJ, and I had cached her Icom 730, a battery, and the antenna, planning to visit once again with our daughters at Christmastime and to operate SKN as if it was "Field Day in December." Thanks to calm and warm weather before Christmas, we easily erected our 40 m vertical "Loop-de-Loop" antenna (the dual to a folded dipole), and set up the rig next to the deep freeze in the not-much-warmer basement. For keys we brought her Lionel J-38, and we had my Martin Research and Manufacturing Company "Flash" bug left over from Field Day service in June.

We leisurely worked nine stations during SKN, five on the J-38 and four on the Flash bug, taking ample time off for family and New Year's revelry. Our Best Fist and Most Interesting QSO nominations both go to Al, W6LX, back in our hometown of Arcadia, California. Al reported on his very stormy weather and relayed important news regarding our dear and mutual friend, John, W6GL.

Cheryl and I confirmed Schaefer's Law of Field Day (first postulated by Mark Schaefer, WB6CIA: "Winds will reach their maximum velocity as you attempt to erect or lower the biggest antenna") when we had to take down the Loop-de-Loop antenna, at night, in 4 C temperatures and 25 knot winds, with only hours to spare before our return flight to California. Reflecting on SKN, I am all the more favorably persuaded by the proposal from Courtney Duncan, N5BF, to add one more "Basis and Purpose" for the Amateur Service: "To celebrate the art and history of radio." SKN does

that, indeed. 73 -- *WB6VRN*

KI4DGH -- Jan 31, 2006 10:59 ET



I can't think of a better way to start off each year as an Amateur Radio Operator than Straight Key Night. I only made 4 QSOs, but they were more Rag Chews rather than contest exchanges. I love the sound and rhythm of CW and personal style that is only possible with a straight key. I think the most telling of the love and popularity of Straight Key Night is that as a result of SKN a new Ham Group has been formed with over 1,000 members signing up to the dedicated use of Straight Keys. Now I can participate in SKN every Night.

For more information about the Straight Key Century Club visit: <http://www.skccgroup.com/phpBB2/index.php>

or <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/skcc/>

CW and Straight Keys forever 73, KI4DGH Chuck Gehring -- *KI4DGH*

VE3WMB -- Jan 28, 2006 09:58 ET



VE3WMB SKN Station - Elecraft K1 and Swedish Army Key

I only made 4 SKN contacts but I had a blast as usual. It was great to hear so many SKN stations on the air. To key my K1, I used a Cold War Era Swedish Army Straight Key that was given to me by some Swedish friends. This key is simply wonderful. The highlights of SKN for me were working 3 people that I actually knew, including Mark, NK8Q and my good friend Ken, WA8REI who was operating Polar-Bear-portable from outside in a park. Ken gets my vote for the best fist. BTW, there is now a new group called SKCC (Straight Key Century Club) who are promoting straight key ragchew QSOs and a monthly SKN-type event on the first of every month. -- *VE3WMB*

K3PX -- Jan 28, 2006 18:41 ET

Once again, I enjoyed Straight Key Night for the New Year - 2006. I made 30 enjoyable QSO's, all on 40 meters. I worked as far north as VE1DY, Nova Scotia, VE9CQ, New Brunswick, as far south as KP2HC, U.S. Virgin Islands and several western states. I had a nice chat with AA5JJ, Wayne in Muskogee, OK. He was using a vintage Heath DX-60 and a Speed-X key, same set-up as I started out with as a novice in 1960. I also worked N5DY, Jack in Stillwater, OK. He was originally from Long Island, NY not far from where I lived and started out in radio as a youngster. I could have easily made more than 30 QSO's but could not stay awake like when I was younger. I used a Nye Viking "Master Key" Model # 114-330-001 which I picked up, like new in the original box for \$5.00 at a hamfest in Long Island. I used my Kenwood TS-570SG running 100 watts to a 40 meter double extended zepp, 178 feet long, center fed with 450 ohm ladder line via an MFJ-962D antenna tuner. The insulators were salvaged from the old historic RCA "Radio Central" radio station in Long Island. The antenna is at 40 feet, oriented North-South at an elevation of 1,600 ft. in the mountains

of North East Pennsylvania. Most of the keys being used this year were the old J-38, J-37 and Speed-X. Also some old Navy keys, an old Edison key, etc. VE3RER, Dave, in Toronto was using a key made from a single button Apple mouse. Great idea! N2ED, Ed, was using a Mini-Key from Morse Express and running 5 watts QRP. Until next SKN, 73.....Bob, K3PX -- *K3PX*

AC4FS -- Jan 28, 2006 13:53 ET

This was my first Straight Key Night. I had been preparing for it for several months, brushing up on my Morse code sending and copying abilities. I had also been pushing this in our local club, in hopes I'd get a few other members to participate (I actually got two other members to participate).

As luck (or bad luck, as it were) would have it, I came down with the mother of all colds the Tuesday before New Year's eve. By New Year's eve, I was running a fever, coughing my head off, and had a nasty headache (probably from all the coughing!). I could not participate New Year's eve. I was finally able to get on the air around 1:15 PM local time on New Year's day. I worked only two contacts, and when I was done with them, I was shaking like a leaf.

I still enjoyed SKN, and plan on being there for SKN 2007. This year I used my Wm. Nye Master key. Next year I plan on using my newly aquired Kent straight key. I only hope I am 100% well, so I can enjoy it a bit more!

73, Howard -- *AC4FS*

NS1O -- Jan 26, 2006 17:40 ET

I just wanted to say that each year that go's by SK night gets better and better, I heard alot of great fists out their. I only worked two people (KA3YNV, Dave for about 1/2 Hr. and W1EOF, Mark for about 1Hr) Both contacks where FB and I'm looking forward to next year. Sorry Mark for having to hit the hay, the old bod battery (ie coffee) kind of conked out at about 3am. It was a pleasure working you both, hope to hear you on next year, till then 73.

AI NS1O -- *NS1O*

K6 ILM -- Jan 25, 2006 14:39 ET

Decided to try multiple rigs for first time in 51 years. No luck with 1929 hartley & Gross Eagle combo or Hallicrafters SR-75 tranceiver, a little better with Lettine 240 & National FB-7 combo, as well as Ameco AC-1 & National SW-3 combo, then gangbusters with KWS-1 & 75A4. Three other combos on the floor, but no time for smoke test. Key was J-38 I got 60 years ago for 25 cents. In the photo, SR-75 is on top(looks like S-38B) and Hartley breadboard sits on top of FB-7. Picture taken while sitting on Globe King 400B, next year's probable smoke victim. Best fist was Will, WA7OET, who sends like me only better. Everybody's asking for more SKNs - maybe a STRAIGHT KEY DAY on July 4th? -- *K6ILM*

KQ6Q -- Jan 22, 2006 23:31 ET

Only had time for one contact this year - N2ED - Ed in Andover NJ on 40 meters. Started getting some heavy RTTY QRM, and finally had to give up. My IC-746Pro has an RTTY decode feature, so I hit a couple of buttons to see who the QRM was.... JA1CWX calling CQ for a New Years Party! Now that's some a good example of the magic of HF propagation - New Jersey getting QRM'd by Japan! I love this hobby! Even tho the radio is the new generation (and the Noise

Reduction feature in the DSP is terrific!), I was using my original J-37/J-47 straight key from my Novice days. 73 to all! Fred Wagner, KQ6Q (ex W7HSS, HS2AJG, W5QDL, K(N)6VVD) -- *KQ6Q*

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