

Contest Soapbox

2005 ARRL November Sweepstakes (Phone)

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NH6P -- Nov 20, 2006 14:10 ET

Great contest from Hawaii. Got my first SWEEP ever. This was the first year to operate SS contest from the new station here in Hawaii since moving from California. Everything worked well with 15 meters playing the best. I want to thank everyone for the help working the last section EMA.....I had a big pile on me and everyone let me work K1EP for the sweep. Great fun, we also gave out many last sections here which makes it lots of fun. Hope to see you all next year.

Aloha, Fred W6YM..... NH6P Big Island Six Meter Club -- *W6YM*

W2GLE -- Feb 24, 2006 17:31 ET

Only my second contest in over 50 years as a ham. Put a real effort into it and had a great time. Really enjoyed the activity. Looking forward to the next one. -- *W2GLE*

K3SK -- Feb 23, 2006 22:49 ET



My first serious contest effort in years. I had a great time and completed "clean sweep" as well. -- *K3SK*

Dave, K3SK looking for that elusive NT section.

N4TP -- Dec 14, 2005 23:28 ET

N4TP is one of the two callsigns of the Tampa Amateur Radio Club, having acquired it upon our merger with the Tampa Bay Amateur Radio Society. The other, W4DUG, has been TARC's club call since the 1930's. We are blessed with a self-contained clubhouse facility with meeting room, classroom, operations center area and space for large antennas (see www.hamclub.org for more information about TARC).

The club recently undertook a year-long project to improve HF and VHF capabilities from our clubhouse, resulting in the acquisition of some pretty exciting gear!

This contest was the "shakedown cruise" for our brand new complement of antennas (Force12 C31XR at 102ft and M240X at 110ft), antenna switching boxes and networked computer logging equipment. It was also our first use of our new contest logging software, N1MMLogger, in an actual "production" environment (Thanks Tom, it works Flawlessly).

While we were "serious" about this contest, being a "full service" club, we wanted to allow all club members that stopped by the opportunity to see how the station works in contest mode. Because of this, we entered as Multi Op-Single TX Assisted Low Power. We did a fair bit of "tour guiding" for visitors and mentoring to a couple of new prospective future testers, live on the air during this contest, and used our second HF position to show them how everything worked, as well as for casual spotting, so it wasn't all "bang out the qso's" this time.

Propagation wasn't so hot! But we are happy to set a decent benchmark score for next year's effort.

Having been involved in contesting in the late 70's and early 80's, I have been inactive save for a couple of field days since moving here. It was nice to be "back in the saddle" again for a (somewhat) serious effort. Boy, things have changed!

The "magic" DSP filters on our Icom 756Pro2's rock! Computer controlled stations with networked logging software rock! Our new 40-meter beam really really Rocks!!! And best of all, no more Dupe Sheets!

There are some pitfalls with this "new" system, though... Everyone has to pay close attention to typos when using computerized logging. There is a big difference between LA and LAX and NTX and NWT. The latter cost us a sweep!

We were kicking butt and seeing all the mults light up the little red dots in the multiplier display on the logging software. Early on, when I took a shift, I noticed that NWT was lit! Super! That's a tough one!

Since the little red dot was lit on the computer, we didn't think we needed it, and we all assumed we worked it, so we didn't go after it. However, late in the contest, I noticed we were missing LAX and started to search for a station there. One of my fellow ops wondered why I was doing that as he had worked a LA station much earlier in the day. I showed him that the red light wasn't on, and he agreed it wasn't but he was absolutely sure that he worked the Los Angeles section.

Upon investigating closer, we found his LA station... logged as LA - Louisiana! I corrected this and didn't think at the time to look at other section typo issues further.

After spending two hours trying to work Alabama for what we thought was the final mult for a clean sweep (Hey, Alabamians! Point your Beams south every once in a while, will ya?), no one asked anyone if they actually WORKED NWT. When doing the log check after the contest, I discovered that we worked someone that QRZ showed was in NTX but logged it as our only NWT contact! I asked the operator who told me that the guy had said he was in the North West Texas section... and, sure enough, our op dutifully copied it verbatim! And of course, the computer ASSUMED we knew what we were doing and logged it as North West Territories!

Garbage in, Garbage out!

Next time, all section abbreviations will be posted at the operating position and will be required

reading before operating!

All in all, we had a lot of fun! Got two new converts to contesting, too! Thanks to our operators, Picot Floyd-AG4JK, Jason-KD4ACG, Tenacious 15 meter op Jodi Pecorraro-KI4FWJ who wouldn't give up on Alberta, Bill Bode-N4WEB, HF Station Trustee Warren Elly-W1GUD, the official voice of the TARC voice keyers and Jim "Holy Smoke" Gerhart-WA3DIT ("Relieve me! I need a cigarette break!"), Who slugged it out in the trenches for hours hunting for and finally working Alabama. You guys were great!

But most of all, thanks to the TARC membership for giving us the resources and allowing us to equip the facility with world class systems. We look forward to more competitions in the near future!

73

for the Tampa Amateur Radio Club 2005 SS-SSB Participants, Lu Romero -- *K4LVR*

NE1RD -- Dec 8, 2005 21:06 ET

Thanks to all those who patiently pulled out my QRP signal. I owe half my points to good ears on the other end of the QSO! -- *NE1RD*

KB0VVT -- Dec 5, 2005 22:30 ET



Raytown South Amateur Radio Club flyers distributed in the school hallways and science classes.



Rebecca, [KB0VVT](#), ready to watch a Kansas City Chief's game after the SS Phone contest.

SS Phone 2005

Note: The photographs will open to a larger size if you click on them with your mouse.

As I have stated in my SS CW 2005 write-up, much has happened since last year's Sweepstakes when the KB0VVT 2004 SS CW Multi-op team placed 5th in the Nation. However, in that write-up, I did not mention that the KB0VVT 2004 SS Phone Multi-op team placed 8th in the Nation. Please see the following link to see photographs, to find out what I have been doing in the past year, and to find out about our new High School Radio Club competing in SS CW:

http://www.arrl.org/contests/soapbox/index.html?con_id=96&call=kb0vvt

http://lists.contesting.com/_3830/2005-11/msg01415.html

At first, during the week before the contest, it appeared that it would be difficult for me to put in a serious effort heading into the SS Phone weekend. The week after SS Phone would be a short school week with Thanksgiving. Initially, I had an Advanced Placement (AP) Biology and AP American History test scheduled for the Monday and



Joe, KC0UNB, and Rebecca, KB0VVT, operating during the 2005 SS Phone weekend.



This is the [ICOM](#) high power operating position. After a few minutes, you will notice the keyboard templates made by Rebecca to assist the operators. Notice the silver bell at the left that was used when a new section was worked.



The new [Cushcraft MA8040V](#) vertical may be the antenna for you if you live on a small lot. This 27 foot tall vertical antenna was used for low band operation along with an [Alpha Delta DX-A Sloper](#) on a 50 foot [Universal Tower](#).

the 2nd radio and let it play through the speaker while I ran a frequency on the main radio using headphones. If you heard operating in the background on Sunday afternoon, it was probably

Tuesday after the contest. Melody Gilbert, one of my best friends, attended our last Raytown South High School ARC meetings. She seemed interested in helping Joe Watts, KC0UNB, and me during the SS Phone Contest. However, there was one obstacle that would keep Melody from helping during the SS Phone weekend and inadvertently open up the weekend for me. Melody and several other students are members of the Raytown South High School Cardinal Chorale. Well, this year the Cardinal Chorale was one of the school choirs selected to sing at Carnegie Hall in New York City the Tuesday after SS Phone weekend. When do you think they decided to travel to New York City? Of course, it would be during the SS Phone weekend. It started looking bad with two upcoming tests and the loss of Melody. Amazingly, things began to change as the SS Phone weekend drew nearer. Many of my teachers became aware that many of the students in my classes participated in the Cardinal Choral and that they would be absent from classes for the entire Thanksgiving week. Lucky for me, my teachers postponed the tests and major assignments until after Thanksgiving week. As it turned out, the same event that was to prevent Melody from participating in SS phone would be the same event that would give me the extra time I needed for the contest weekend.

As expected, I made the majority of the contacts, operating for the full 24 hours. Joe Watts, KC0UNB, indicated that he would be putting in a big effort for SS Phone after the SS CW contest but as it turned out other activities would take precedence. He operated for a few hours on Saturday evening and for a couple of hours on Sunday morning. I wish that he could have operated during the last hours of the contest when the rate slows down. However, Joe's help was still appreciated and he was still able to squeeze in over three times more contacts using the 2nd radio than he did during SS CW. Joe used the IC-756 PROII for the SS CW because we thought it would be easier for him if he had the spectrum scope. We decided it would be best for him to use the IC-775 DSP for the phone portion since this radio is awesome and has 200 Watts output.

I kept the same basic schedule as was used during SS CW. I operated from 3:00 PM CST Saturday afternoon until 2:00 AM CST Sunday morning. I then started up again at 6:00 AM CST on Sunday morning and ran straight through until 7:00 PM CST. I tried some pseudo SO2R on Sunday afternoon with the 2nd radio. I do not have any of the fancy SO2R boxes so I pulled the headphones out of

someone I was listening to on the 2nd radio while I was waiting for my opportunity to work them when the time was right.

I would have liked to have taken a break during Sunday afternoon but I did not want to interfere with a Kansas City Chief's game scheduled for Sunday evening. My decision turned out to be good because one of our neighbors came over complaining of interference in their telephone and computer speakers. It was a neighbor that had never complained before. My parents offered them a free telephone filter from Radio Shack and filters for their computer speakers but they did not think they should have to use filters and we should not be allowed to invade their privacy. Whatever! I still finished the contest and everything seems to be back to normal in the neighborhood. Since I am a senior in high school, this may have been the last Sweepstakes that I operate from this house. Thanks to everyone for all the support and contacts over the years!

For those of you that like the statistics, I have copied our number of QSOs made and section obtained for the first 3 hours of both the CW and Phone contests. Also listed are the last five sections in the order they were obtained.

Hour 1, CW, 73 Qs, 31 Sections. Hour 2, CW, 123Qs, 42 Sections. Hour 3, CW, 186 Qs, 59 Sections. Last 5 Sections CW: PR, OK, IA, MB, and finally NL.

Hour 1, Phone, 115 Qs, 39 Sections. Hour 2, Phone, 223 Qs, 51 Sections. Hour 3, Phone, 280 Qs, 60 Sections. Last 5 Sections Phone: NE, OK, LAX, PAC, and finally NWT.

There is a chance that Joe and I may have broken the all time School Club records for both CW and Phone. The present records were both set in 2001.

The all time School Club CW record presently belongs to WG4PDS (The guys who set this record are older than my dad) with a 3830 posted score of 1114 Qs, 80 sections, for a score of 178240 points. After ARRL log checking, the score was 1073 Qs, 80 sections, for 171680 points. Our 3830 posting is 1147 Qs, 80 sections, for a score of 183520 points. We will cross our fingers! Hopefully, the log checker is not harsher than it was in 2001. Who knows, there may have been a school club out there that beat us this year.

The all time School Club Phone record presently belongs to W1YK with a log checked score of 1388 Qs, 80 Sections, for a score of 222080 points. Our pre-log checked score is 1449 Qs, 80 sections, for a total of 231840 points. Again, we will have to wait to see the outcome of log checking or if another school club beat us this year.

It was so nice to hear other young people operating during the contest. Michael, N3CA, was one young contender that I worked during the contest. I hung out with Michael, along with other friends, during the Dayton Hamvention weekend this year. Andrea Hartlage, KG4IUM, and I planned a youth dinner that turned out to be great fun. Later, Michael and Andrea joined me at the Crowne Plaza Hotel for the KCDX Club CW Pile-Up contest as well as the nightly midnight pizza provided by various contest groups and equipment distributors. I think Michael may be hooked on contesting after hanging out at the Crowne Plaza with the other testers. He did a great job this year operating in SS Phone.

I also worked Kristin, KC0INX. I first saw Kristin wearing a scarf several years ago at the Dayton Hamvention while she was performing a "14er Event" skit for the Youth Forum audience. I also remember her photograph in last year's Sweepstakes Phone article. Kristin, I read your soapbox and

saw your comment on straining your voice during the contest. I would recommend that you try using a contest logging program with computer sound card support in order to save your voice during the contest. I have used Writelog for years but N1MM is free and it is supposed to be pretty good. For sweepstakes, I at least record the CQ message, and the exchange starting at the precedence. The key to all of this is to get everything recorded and checked out well before the contest so that there are no last minute surprises.

One young person Michael did not mention in his soapbox that I worked was Ashley Kopacki, NJ2YL. I think you can find her photograph in this year's Field Day Article. Field Day along with both CW and Phone Sweepstakes are my absolute favorite amateur radio events.

To all my middle school and high school amateur radio friends out there, consider starting an amateur radio club at your school. If you are home schooled, perhaps something can be worked out with Dan Henderson. If you start a school club then you can operate in the School category during Sweepstakes where you can be much more competitive. Wouldn't it be better to compete against people your own age? Some Sweepstakes operators have been doing this contest two or three times longer than we have been alive! I was able to convince my principal to sponsor our school club. My mother has been the moderator for the last couple of meetings. If you start a club, you will most likely not have a club station immediately setup at the school. That is OK! The Sweepstakes rules state that, "A club may operate from a member's station only if no on-campus station exists." It should be okay that your dad or mom actually setup your home station as long as it is just students operating during the contest. There are many top testers that go and operate from turn-key locations without helping to setup the equipment.

Look at some of the all-time school records at the following links:

<http://www.arrl.org/contests/results/ss-alltime-cw.html> <http://www.arrl.org/contests/results/ss-alltime-phone.html>

Some of the Sweepstakes School category records have been barely touched! Kristin's score would have been a new Rocky Mountain Division record in the school category even if she took out the 20 Qs made by her Dad. Michael's score would have been most likely a new Atlantic Division record.

Lastly, please give CW a try. I know it is difficult to imagine operating CW during a contest at 30 words per minute. It just takes time and practice. When I was younger, I used the RUFZ computer program to increase my copying speed along with the Writelog CW decoder and the super check partial callsign database. At first, you may only be able to do search and pounce, but eventually you will get it if you stick with it. Some operators will slow down for you. As a beginner, it may be best to start out in contests using a less lengthy exchange.

The main thing is for us to get on the air and have fun!!! We are the future of amateur radio, so get on the air and score some QSL cards and some points!

Well, that is another Sweep!!!

It was nice to hear you all on Sweepstakes SSB... I hope to see you at Dayton. Until next year ...

You can find my e-mail address at the following link:

<http://www.qrz.com/kb0vvt>

Rebecca Rich -- *KB0VVT*

W8EDU -- Dec 5, 2005 02:22 ET



Yvette, KB3HTS, carefully scans 20 m at the Case Western Reserve University club station, W8EDU. (W8WTS photo).

The Case Amateur Radio Club station, W8EDU, at Case Western Reserve University was active on SSB as well as CW this year, hosting a M/S effort in ARRL SS SSB.

The emphasis in this contest was to provide some exposure to contesting to operators that don't routinely compete, and to demonstrate ham radio to some non-licensed students. Case Amateur Radio Club member and Physics/Astronomy major KB3HTS was particularly successful in sharing her enthusiasm for ham radio with her peers.

Participating in The Collegiate Championship of Intercollegiate Amateur Radio Contesting is another

enjoyable aspect of ARRL Sweepstakes. There are rivalries building in The Collegiate Championship, and W8EDU is in the thick of it. More information on The Collegiate Championship of Intercollegiate Amateur Radio Contesting can be found at <http://www.collegiatechampionship.org>.

A special thanks to Bob Leskovec, K8DTS, Alan McIlwain, KI8JV/VE4AKM, Sam Wolfe, NV8L, and all of the other Case Amateur Radio Club members that keep the station in such great order.
-- W8WTS

KC0INX -- Dec 4, 2005 21:28 ET



Early in the contest.

In the November Sweepstakes last year, I could be heard as one of the K squared team using the call KS0P. This year it was just me because the other half of the K Squared team is in Europe. My name is Kristin, KC0INX, I'm 17 years old, and this was my sixth year to work the November Sweepstakes. It is by far my favorite contest. This year was the first year I didn't operate with at least one other person under the age of 17. This year I did most of the operating by myself except for about 20 contacts my Dad, KC0EFR made through out the contest. I ran as a multi-op station just because I could not do this contest without the technical help from my Dad. I used an Icom 706 MkIIG, a Mosley TA33Jr at 30 feet using 600 watts on 15 m and 20m, a quarter wave vertical using 1200 watts on 40 m, and a full size 80 m horizontal loop at 25 feet using 1200 watts on 40m and 80m. My dad made sure all the equipment worked well together, and if something went wrong, he was always right there to fix it. All I did was operate, log for myself, and look up multipliers I needed on the DX Summit during the 20 hours I worked



I am getting tired of sitting now.



about to work a station when I got out to the radio, and when he saw me, he took off the headphones and handed them to me when I told him, "No, go ahead, you can work this one." His reply was, "You don't want to work Puerto Rico?" (A multiplier we still needed at the time). So, even though I was still half-asleep, I decide I wanted to make that contact, and I did. Thank you to everybody who worked me, I appreciate it! Hopefully we will work again in another November Sweepstakes down the road!

73's, Kristin, KC0INX -- *KC0EFR*

N3CA -- Nov 27, 2005 14:17 ET



Michael N3CA gets ready to copy a call.

the west coast at the start of the contest. I got all sections by 3pm Sunday, the last being Hawaii which I found on 15m. Surprisingly, some of the last sections I needed were Oklahoma, Santa Barbara, and Mississippi.

the contest. I called CQ most of the contest, except when a multiplier I needed came up or band conditions went bad. I worked Sweepstakes this year with my own callsign, KC0INX, which was a first. Unfortunately, I only have my General Class license. This caused some problems when I needed some of the multipliers that were outside of my General Class Privileges. This was probably why it was the first year I didn't get a clean sweep. I missed Newfoundland, Quebec and the Northwest Territories. I finished the contest with 807 contacts and a score of 124,278. Although it was fun, and a great new experience to do most of the operating by myself, there were a few drawbacks. One of those was not being able to rest my voice. Our solution for this next year is to have a voice keyer. Another drawback was not being able to just get up and walk away from the radio for five minutes while another operator took over. The biggest drawback however, was definitely getting tired of sitting. As you can see in the picture, I found ways to get around that problem while I still continued to operate. One benefit of working alone was the fact that I knew I was the person who worked that certain multiplier we needed. This is what I

woke up to at 6:50 am Sunday morning. My Dad was about to work a station when I got out to the radio, and when he saw me, he took off the headphones and handed them to me when I told him, "No, go ahead, you can work this one." His reply was, "You don't want to work Puerto Rico?" (A multiplier we still needed at the time). So, even though I was still half-asleep, I decide I wanted to make that contact, and I did. Thank you to everybody who worked me, I appreciate it! Hopefully we will work again in another November Sweepstakes down the road!

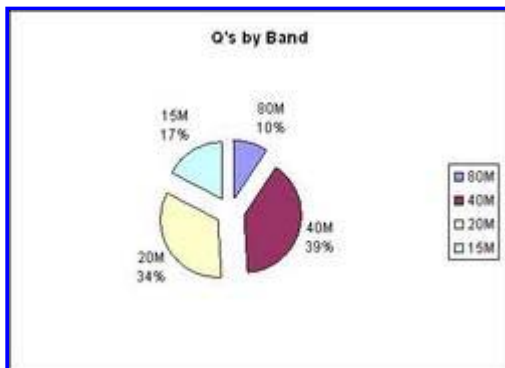
This was the first real test for my new Force 12 C3E beam at 50ft and resonant dipoles on 40 and 80 to replace my G5RV. It was an interesting contest - I discovered that I have audio feedback on 80m when my laptop is attached to my radio, so I was without the voice keyer for a lot of the time. My voice is now very sore. This was my second time doing Sweepstakes, but it was the first time doing it both as a single op and competitively.

I was surprised that I was able to get a clean sweep running low power. I s/p'd for the first hour or two combined with short bursts of running. 10m was open to

It was also good to hear other young ops on the air. I am 17, and I also heard young hams KB0VVT,

KC0INX, W3MTC (op W3ADX), K3ASK, KB1LQC, N4CV, and KC2NMZ in the contest. I'm looking for young hams to join a youth team for the next North American QSO Party. We've had two incarnations so far. Send an email my way if interested. -- N3CA

KG5VK -- Nov 25, 2005 09:25 ET



It looks like Hurricane Katrina took out our major comp W5DDX within Louisiana, so maybe us "Yankee boys to the North" have a shot at first place this year. I would have rather lost to them versus them being QRT from a Hurricane.

KG5VK had great support from the Shreveport Amateur Radio Club membership with a total of Eleven Operators this year !

All the grizzley details about equipment used etc may be seen at <http://www.lottphoto.com/ARRLSS.htm>

I feel we will move up from 5th place in our division last year and be second only behind K4JNY for the division this year, maybe K4JNY will fail to turn in his log Hi !

Thanks again to K8KI and his Team at www.Q-Track.com
Bob I expect you to be here for ARRL SS in 2006 !!!

73 Steve KG5VK -- KG5VK



Couple of OPS at KG5VK



<http://www.lottphoto.com/ARRLSS.htm>

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