



Publication of the
Northern California
Contest Club



June
2008
Issue 433

NCCC Net
Thursday 8 PM
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Our Next Meeting

CQWW WPX CW Contest Feedback
2008 Membership Survey Review
"Contesting And Your Health: Reducing Contest
Stressors"
ARRL Field Day, June 28/29 Plans

Casa Azteca
Dinners: \$15.00
RSVP: (k6eu@arrl.net)

Date: Monday, 9 June 2008
Time: 6:00pm schmooze, 6:30pm dinner, 7:00pm
program
Location: Casa Azteca 20 North Abel St. Milpitas,
CA 95035
(408) 946-0466

NCCC Officers

President: [John Miller, K6MM](#)
Vice-President and Contest Chairman: [Jim Brown K9YC](#)
Secretary/Treasurer: [Tom Carney, K6EU](#)

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Past President: [Bob Tellefsen, N6WG](#)
Director: [Tom Taormina, K5RC](#)
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Director: [Tom Berson, ND2T](#)
Honorary Director: Rusty Epps, W6OAT

Webmaster: Ed Muns, W0YK w0yk@msn.com
JUG Editor: Rob Brownstein, k6rb@baymoon.com

Zero Beat

By John Miller, K6MM

Over 60 Members showed up for our May meeting in San Jose last evening (May 12). This was the first meeting of the "New Team" for 2008-2009, and it was very gratifying to see such a great mix of old-timers and newbies. In case you're wondering about the New Team, see the info on the next page.

Tom, K6EU returns as a seasoned Secretary/Treasurer, and Jim, K9YC, brings high energy to the VP/CC role. Bob, N6WG; Tom, ND2T; Dean, N6DE; and Hall-of-Famer, Tom, K5RXC round out the BoD.

My special thanks to Bob, N6WG, for taking over the Awards Chair job from Bob, KO6LU, who spends much of his time in Montreal these days. Also, kudos to Rick, N6RNO, for stepping into the CQP Chair role, formerly occupied by Kevin, K6TD.

Speaking of Kevin – his position as Non-Voting Director has been transformed into the much more valuable "New Member Mentor," where he will leverage his many talents to help integrate our newer members into the club. Andy, AE6Y; Ed, W0YK; and George, K6GT continue in their Volunteer roles. Many thanks to all – it's a pleasure to be working with such a first-class team.

2008-2009 NCCC Board of Directors and Volunteers	
Board of Directors	
President	John Miller, K6MM
VP, Contest Chairman	Jim Brown, K9YC
Secretary/Treasurer	Tom Carney, K6EU
Past President	Bob Tellefsen, N6WG
Director	Tom Taormina, K5RC
Director	Dean Wood, N6DE
Director	Tom Berson, ND2T
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CQP Chair	Rick Eversole, N6RNO
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QSL Managers	Ed Muns, W0YK and George Daughters, K6GT
NCCC & CQP Webmaster	Ed Muns, W0YK
Email Reflector	Ed Muns, W0YK
New Member Mentor	Kevin Rowett, K6TD

The May meeting was divided into two parts: (1) Vision 2008 and (2) A Review of Contest Logging Programs.

Meeting – Part One – Vision 2008

This part of the meeting focused on our strategy for the year. Some stats are helpful here.

NCCC is currently made up of 558 members. However, you might be interested to know that only 50% operated in at least one contest last year, based on readily available contest data for at least 30 contests. Is that shocking? Not necessarily.

In addition, 66 of these 558 members joined the Club within the last 12 months -- an increase of over 13% -- a nice recruiting effort. But many of these members are new

to the Radiosport of Contesting, and need our help.

In planning any strategy for the Club, it's important to keep in mind NCCC's stated goals, found on the website:

1. To promote the fun, satisfaction and competitive thrill of radio contesting
2. To help our members develop their operating and technical skills to become better contesters
3. To win the club competition of major amateur radio contests

It was also helpful for me, however, to recognize that NCCC is made up of at least four types of members – I call them the 4 C's.

Curious – those members who are beginning contesters. They joined NCCC because of our reputation and are anxious to get in the game. In general, they have limited or no experience working contests but are motivated to learn and need to know how to take advantage of our many resources. This is an important group for us to nurture this year.

Comfortable – those members who have reached a point where they are satisfied with their station capability, skills, and/or time available for contesting. They may have young families, heavy workloads, or other hobbies, but still have an occasional weekend or so available to work a contest. Members here may not be as active as the other C's, but still can be curious about new technology or motivated to make modest changes and need our support.

Committed – these members are looking to improve their skills, stations, or both. They regularly attend NCCC meetings, are very active on the email reflector, and are anxious to learn best practices. They are willing to put in the time and effort to become more competitive and improve on their own scores. They aren't afraid to ask questions or be available to help others. I believe many NCCC members fall into this category.

Competitive – or should I say Highly Competitive. This group consists of some of the best contesters in the world. They have honed their operating skills, optimized their stations, and generally compete at a high level. Some are actually preparing for the 2010 World Radiosport Championships in Russia (see separate report in this issue of the JUG). This group is also willing to volunteer to give presentations, provide quality advice, and generally be available to help the other 3 C's.

By the way, I believe that somewhere between Committed and Competitive there exists a 5th C – Crazy: These members -- such as Tom, ND2T & Bob, W6RGG, who

were willing to sit on rocks in the South China Sea or Rick, K6VVA, who was willing to fight for the right to put out a signal from the Farallon Islands – are inspirational to everyone.

So here's the question: "How can NCCC help *you*, regardless which "C" you identify with?"

To shed further light on this topic, our new VP/Contest Chairman, Jim, K9YC, shared his view of Vision 2008, including a discussion of the Contest Buddy Program and the new Member Survey, which was distributed at the May meeting. This survey is now online for anyone to access electronically: <http://tinyurl.com/5p36yw>

Jim emphasized the need for volunteers to help coordinate activities. Donald, AE6RF, has offered to analyze the survey data and make recommendations to the Club for follow up and action. We hope you will take the time (10 minutes or so) to fill out this online survey -- very important.

Using your feedback from the survey, we will further clarify our plan for the year, by leveraging Resources & Training opportunities available for our members. In addition to the regular NCCC meeting programs, there are upcoming contests, archived resources on the NCCC website, and a new Contest Buddy Program we hope to implement this summer.

There are plenty of contest opportunities for you to consider (see Contest Calendar in this issue of the JUG). For Club Competition, it's likely that we'll get behind Sweepstakes, NAQP, NA Sprint, and the ARRL RTTY Roundup. The Thursday NS Ladder and state QSO parties are excellent practice and training opportunities. Other contests are available almost every weekend. Of course, there will be full support for our own California QSO Party this October.

Finally, I'll need your support in the area of Recruiting & Marketing. The Annual Dues

Drive kicks off this month led by Tom, K6EU. With a healthy treasury, we'll be able to continue exhibiting at Pacificon 2008 in October, and the International DX Convention next year in Visalia. These are great opportunities to recruit new members and showcase our capabilities and accomplishments.

Meeting – Part Two: Contest Logging Software

After an introduction to Logging Software by Jim, K9YC, the remainder of the evening was devoted to a series of presentations on Contest Logging Software. From a list of over 30 programs, 5 were selected for detailed review. The majority of NCCC and other testers use these Contest Loggers. Presenters were:

1. CQPWIN – Andy, AE6Y
2. CT & CT-Win – Dean, N6BV
3. N1MM Logger – John, K6MM
4. WriteLog – Tom, W2SC
5. Win-Test – Bob, N6BV

Two handouts were also prepared:

1. Responses from the five presenters, answering four key questions about each logger.
2. A 60-item Side-By-Side Feature Comparison Chart

The presenters focused on the “sweet” spots of these popular programs, and answered the questions:

1. What type of user is this logger best suited for?
2. What three things distinguish this logger from others?
3. What are the three most significant shortfalls of this logger?
4. Why did you choose, or migrate to, this logger? Why should someone, in general, choose this logger?

In general, the choice of Contest Logger will depend on your specific requirements: contest skill level; computer skill level;

logging only vs station interfacing; style (SO1R, SO2R, Multi-Op) and preferred mode (CW, Phone, RTTY), among other factors. The good news: There's a Contest Logger out there to fit every need.

All PowerPoint presentations and Handouts can be found in the Members section of the NCCC website.

Summary

For me 2007-2008 was the Year of Expansion. My hope, then, is that 2008-2009 will become the Year of Engagement – by increasing operator confidence, station capability, and contest participation.

I'd like to be able to look back a year from now, and see that we were successful in motivating each member of the club to do something *new* for themselves: become a better CW operator; learn how to use a new logging program; enter at least one more contest than they did last year, become a Contest Buddy, put up a new antenna, operate Sweepstakes for the first time, try out a fun new mode like RTTY, volunteer to give a presentation on their favorite topic, or travel to a rare county for the California QSO Party.

Above all, let's remember this is a hobby – so let's not lose the *fun factor*!

CU in the next contest.

73, John K6MM

VP/CC Corner

By: Jim Brown K9YC

The big news this month is the NCCC Survey. Those attending the May meeting got to fill out a paper version of it; for those who missed that chance, it's included in this month's Jug, and there's also a version on the Internet. Here's the link to it.

<http://tinyurl.com/5p36yw>

It only takes a few minutes, but it's important that everyone complete it. You

only need to complete it once – if you did it at the meeting, you don't need to do it again. On the other hand, if your needs or interests change, feel free to do it again! We'll use the latest version you give us.

Please use the survey to let club leadership know the directions you'd like NCCC to take over the next few years, what you need from NCCC, and what you can contribute to NCCC. Vision 2008 and the Contest Buddies program depends on local volunteers in each geographical region of NCCC territory to coordinate those wanting help with those offering help, and to match those wanting to use another member's station with those wanting to share their stations.

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS! We're trying to structure the Contest Buddies program so that each volunteer works in his/her own local area. This way, each of us is more likely to be working with folks we know, and no one volunteer has to do a lot.

It was great to hear all the Kbers in WPX, many hiding behind various prefix aliases. Contesting opportunities in June and early July include:

- ANARTS RTTY (June 14-15),
- VHF QSO Party (June 14-16),
- All Asia CW (June 21-22),
- Field Day (June 28-29), and
- RAC Canada Day (Jun 30-July 1).

Field Day has always been one of my very favorite ham activities. I love the contest, getting outdoors, the setting up of temporary antennas and stations, and the camaraderie. It's also a great time to build contesting interest and skills, learn more about how antennas and radios work, and so on. There are many Field Day groups in our area, and many of them are looking for operators. ARRL has a slick Field Day locator at <http://www.arrl.org/contests/announcements/fd/locator.php> in the form of an interactive map. Check it out!

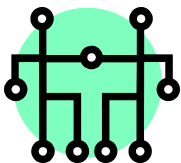
Redwood DX and the Marin Radio Club have a joint effort at what W6OSP describes as terrific site on the bay across from the entrance to San Quentin just off of 101. The Saratoga club operates K6SA from a great

site off Skyline Drive. W6ZZZ and AE6RF are working on Field Day plans for two different clubs in the San Jose and Santa Cruz areas. K5RC and K6TA can point you to Field Day operations in the Reno and Sierras. Contact these hams or the individual clubs for details, or post a note on the NCCC reflector if you'd like to go out with one of these clubs.

Field Day can also be a lot of fun as a small non-club group of a few friends, CQP-style. Maybe even use it as a dry run for a CQP expedition, or use your regular CQP QTH. Summer is a fine time for antenna projects that can make the winter contest season more fun. 80 and 40 meters are great contesting bands – if you have an antenna that gives you half a chance. Simple antennas work well on these bands if you take them seriously. It's well known that every dB of transmitted signal adds another few percent to your score. On both bands, but especially on 80, higher is usually better (a few dB). Trading small coax for bigger coax can be good for a dB or so. A simple vertical, especially if top-loaded as a Tee or inverted L, is an inexpensive way to make lots of smoke on 80 and 160 – if you put some radials under it.

You can't work them if you can't hear them. Adding coaxial chokes at the feedpoint of your transmit antennas, killing trash from noisy equipment around your home, and building a dedicated receive antenna for the lower bands are known good ways of improving the rates. If your 80/40 antenna uses open wire line, replace it with one or more dedicated dipoles and add coax chokes to reduce receive noise. If your QTH is short of space for a full-size antenna, consider a shorter one with loading coils from Hypower Antenna Company. Contact K6EU for help with planning and executing antenna projects.

73, Jim, K9YC



Welcome Aboard!

By John Miller, K6MM

These 8 new members were voted in at the May 2008 meeting. Those marked with an * were recruited at the Visalia International DX Convention in April.

AA6YX	Dave New <i>Sebastopol, CA</i>	*N6IL	Mike Furman <i>Santa Clara, CA</i>
*K6CMD	Chris Tate <i>Brentwood, CA</i>	*NI7T	Mike Reagan <i>Quincy, CA</i>
*KE7TJO	Shelley Parker <i>Silver Springs, NV</i>	*W3FF	Budd Drummond <i>Redding, CA</i>
*KG6D	Kevin Gehrke <i>Manteca, CA</i>	*W6RD	Chuck Tift <i>Modesto, CA</i>
*KT6YL	Tiny Gehrke <i>Manteca, CA</i>	*W6WTG	Terry Godley <i>Bakersfield, CA</i>

Did You Know? – NCCC Has World-Ranked Contesters

By John Miller, K6MM

One of the reasons NCCC has the reputation of being a world-class Contesting Club is because several members are ranked worldwide as “the best of the best”. Yes, statistics are being kept on the top Single Operators around the world, based on contest performance. Current rankings show Tom, W2SC ranked 13th in the world, while both Andy, AE6Y and Ed, W0YK are tied at 18th.

Single Op World Standings				
1	W2GD			
2	HI3TEJ			
3	YT1AD			
4	PY2MNL			
5	KR2Q			

6	W8QZA			
7	OK7CM			
8	KK9A			
9	KAILMR			
10	YV5YMA	CT1ILT		
12	LY6M			
13	W2SC	K2NG	TA3D	
16	K3WW			
17	OH2UA			
18	UA9CLB	AE6Y	W0YK	N1UR
	LU5DX	K4GMH	CN8KD	KP4KE

Other members are working hard for a team slot at the World Radiosport Team Championships to be held in Russia in 2010. In the Western area, 7 NCCC members are in the Top 20:

WRTC	NA#4 W6, W7, KL7	
Race	CALL	TOTAL
1	K7RL	5723
2	K6XX	5442
3	N6MJ	4834
4	N6RO	4119
5	K6LA	3738
6	N7ZG	3705
7	AE6Y	3192
8	N6AA	3173
9	K4XU	3101
10	N6TV	3071
11	K6AM	2969
12	KO7AA	2823
13	K6AW	2788
14	N6TR	2581
15	N7CW	2444
16	KL9A	2382
17	K6NA	2186
18	K7NV	2144
19	W2SC	2143
20	N6XI	2103

We wish these members the best of luck in their pursuit of representing the U.S. at WRTC 2010

2008-2009 Contest Calendar

By John Miller, K6MM

There are some great opportunities for you to practice your CW, optimize your station, bring home a new award for the wall, or help add to the Club score. For Club Competition, it's likely that we'll get behind Sweepstakes, NAQP, NA Sprint, and the ARRL RTTY Roundup. The Thursday NS Ladder and state QSO parties are excellent practice and training opportunities. Other contests are available almost every weekend. Of course, there will be full support for our own California QSO Party this October. Plan ahead now to maximize your contesting fun!

	ARRL Contests		CQ Contests		NAQP Contests		NA SPRINT Contests		CQP	QSO Parties
Jun-08	VHF	FD								AL, WV
Jul-08			WW VHF		RTTY					RAC
Aug-08					CW	SSB				MD/DC, NJ, OH
Sep-08			WW DX RTTY				CW	SSB		AR, CO, TN, TX, WA
Oct-08			WW DX SSB				RTTY		CQP	IL, PA
Nov-08	SS SSB	SS CW	WW DX CW							KY
Dec-08	10M	160M								
Jan-09	RU ^p		160 CW		CW	SSB				
Feb-09	DX CW		160 SSB	WPX RTTY	RTTY		CW	SSB		DE, LA, MN, MS, NC, VT
Mar-09	DX SSB		WPX SSB				RTTY			VA, WI
Apr-09										FL, GA, MI, MO, NE
KEY =	CW	SSB	RTTY	CW+SSB						

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