



# Publication of the Northern California Contest Club



Issue 488

January 2013

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**Guests are always welcome at the NCCC!**  
**Please join us.**

**Monday, January 14, 2013**

Time: 6:00pm Schmooz; 6:30pm Dinner, 7:00pm Program

Program:

1. NAQP Club Competition by Dean (N6DE)
2. ARRL RTTY Roundup Redux, by DeanN6DE and Stu K6TU
3. How To Get The Best Out Of [K6TU.NET](http://K6TU.NET) by Stu K6TU

Dinner will be a Chinese Buffet including soft drink (soda, tea, or lemonade), tax and tip for \$20.00.

Egg rolls, crab meat cheese won ton, broccoli beef, honey walnut prawns, orange chicken, ginger of onion fish fillet, dry braised green beans, vegetables chow mein, cherry pork, steamed rice.

Location: China Wok Restaurant, 512 Sacramento Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

**See Page 8 for full details.**



## From the President

Happy 2013 to everyone! NCCC certainly got off to a great start with many (and I mean many!) members getting on the air for the ARRL RTTY Roundup. The early reported scores are very encouraging and Dean N6DE, our VP/CC, will have an update on progress at the January meeting.

January is certainly a busy month for contesting – in addition to the ARRL RTTY RU, the next two weekends see the CW and SSB NAQP contests respectively. These contests are not only focus events for NCCC but also mark the start of a three way challenge between NCCC, SMC and PVRC. We’ve re-printed Dean’s email regarding the challenge as this month’s VP/CC column. Check it out and hope to see you all on the air!

This year we are working hard to recruit folks to help with the different aspects of running the club. For example, K6MM has recruited a number of folks to help him with the collation of the NCCC contest scores and N6DE has recruited folks to help drive individual contest recruitment and motivation (f.k.a. flogging).

Look for this approach to widen – we’re looking to expand this approach to the JUG and would like to recruit folks to column editors for various features in the JUG. More on this to come but it’s an approach that works very well for NCJ and other publications. If this strikes a chord of interest, please get in touch with Ian W6TCP or myself to talk it through.

Continued on page 3



# Northern California Contest Club

Excellence In Amateur Radio Contesting

## Officers:

President	Stu Phillips	K6TU	stu@ridgelift.com
Vice President	Dean Wood	N6DE	cqden6de@gmail.com
Secretary/Treasurer	Dave Ritchie	W6DR	nccc.treasurer@gmail.com
Past President	Chris Tate	N6WM	ctate@ewnetinc.com
Director	Kevin Rowett	K6TD	kevin@rowett.org
Director	John Miller	K6MM	k6mm@arrl.net
Director	Ira Stoler	K2RD	k2rd@arrl.net

## Volunteers:

New Member Mentor	Al Rendon	WT6K	wt6k@arrl.net
Charter Member	Rusty Epps	W6OAT	w6oat@sbcglobal.net
Awards Chairs	Joanna Dilley	K6YL	joanna.k6yl@gmail.com
	Rebar Rebarchik	N6DB	rebar@hamilton.com
CQP Chair	Alan Eshleman	K6SRZ	doctore@well.com
CQP Certificates	Andy Faber	AE6Y	ae6y@arrl.net
K6ZM QSL Manager	George Daughters	K6GT	k6gt@arrl.net
K6CQP,N6CQP,W6CQP QSL Mgr	Ed Muns	W0YK	w0yk@arrl.net
NCCC Email reflector Admin	Phil Verinsky	W6PK	kb-w6tqg@verinsky.com
Webmaster	John Miller	K6MM	k6mm@arrl.net
JUG Editors	Ian Parker	W6TCP	w6tcpian@gmail.com
	Stu Phillips	K6TU	stu@ridgelift.com

## Thursday Night Contesting:

NCCC—Sprint	Ken Keeler	N6RO	kenkeeler@jazznut.com
NS Ladder	Bill Haddon	N6ZFO	haddon.bill@gmail.com
Slow NS (SNS)	Chris Tate	N6WM	ctate@ewnetinc.com

### NCCC Net

Thursday 8 PM

Freq: 3.610 +/-

### NCCC

Monthly meetings take place on the second Monday of each month !

Details [here](#)

## NCCC Membership Information

If you wish to join NCCC, you must fill out an [application for membership](#), which will be read and voted upon at the next monthly meeting. ([PDF application form](#))

To join, you must reside within [club territory](#) which is defined as the maximum of:

- Northern California, anything north of the Tehachapi's up to the Oregon border, and
- A part of north-western Nevada (anything within our ARRL 175-mile radius circle centered at 10 miles North of Auburn on Highway 49).

Also as a reminder, the NCCC Annual elections are in April. If you would like to volunteer to help the club more actively, consider running for election either as an officer or director. Nominations (self or otherwise) should be made to NCCC Secretary/Treasurer Dave, W6DR either electronically or in writing.

A sincere THANK YOU to everyone who took the time to complete the NCCC survey. We received completed responses from 83 members including many write in comments. The results of the survey will be the featured presentation at the February NCCC meeting to be held at the Sneha Indian Restaurant in Santa Clara.

Personally I feel really charged up about the upcoming contests! Solar flux continues to rise and looks like cycle 24 will peak towards the latter part of this year. While not the greatest cycle I can remember, any numbers of sunspots are better than no sunspots.

Look forward to working you all in the NAQP events!

Stu K6TU

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## **VP/CC – Dean Wood, N6DE**

I am excited to announce a new club competition in the 2013 North American QSO Party (NAQP) contests between NCCC, SMC (Society of Midwest Contesters) and PVRC (Potomac Valley Radio Club)!

In the NCCC survey last year, members ranked NAQP in the top 5 of all contests that NCCC should emphasize. NAQP is an NCCC focus contest for the 2012-2013 contest plan. NAQP offers something for everyone... a Saturday-only contest giving you Sunday free, a low power contest for our little guns, a great SO2R contest, a largely stateside/VE

Contest with potential high rates, a multi-band contest where QSOs and multipliers can be worked again on each band, a friendly exchange (Name + State/Province), and a M/2 category for our biggest stations to enjoy.

NCCC has continually performed well in NAQP, winning many team competitions and often fielding more teams than any other club. Yet, there has been no club competition to rally the whole club around an NAQP effort... until now!

NCCC has designed the details around an NAQP 2013 club competition, and invited our two biggest rivals, PVRC and SMC, to join us. They have both accepted!

Beginning with NAQP CW on January 12, we will have a 3-way NAQP challenge between NCCC, SMC, and PVRC. The competition includes all 6 NAQPs in 2013 (Winter CW/SSB/RTTY and Summer CW/SSB/RTTY).

The winning club gets possession of a traveling NAQP club trophy (similar in concept to a mini-Stanley Cup), food/drink from the other two clubs' regions, and bragging rights at Visalia and Dayton.

This side-challenge between NCCC, SMC, and PVRC runs in parallel with the normal NCJ NAQP teams and does NOT affect the NCJ NAQP teams at all. We will still be organizing and submitting our NAQP teams. For the 3 winter NAQPs, Fred K6DGW has generously volunteered to organize NCCC NAQP teams and promote NAQP activity using the reflector.

Other points to emphasize:

- No 175 mile circle. NCCC club members anywhere in the world can contribute to the NAQP club challenge.
- S/O and M/2 stations will be able to contribute to the NAQP NCCC-SMC-PVRC club challenge. (M/2 are not able to participate in the normal NCJ NAQP teams)
- Club score per NAQP will simply be (points) \* (# of club participants active)

You'll be hearing much more from me about NAQP on the NCCC reflector.

We cannot let PVRC or SMC beat us in this inaugural club challenge! NAQP is one of the NCCC focus contests for 2012-2013, and now we have a club competition trophy to rally around! The winter NAQPs give us in W6/W7 a propagation advantage to run up the score.

Let's put the following 3 dates on our calendars and get off to a crushing start in the winter NAQPs for this club competition!

January 12: 10AM PST - 10PM PST - NAQP CW

January 19: 10AM PST - 10PM PST - NAQP SSB

February 23: 10AM PST - 10PM PST - NAQP RTTY

NAQP contest rules are available at:

<http://ncjweb.com/nagprules.php>

Below are the details of the NAQP NCCC-SMC-PVRC club competition if you are interested in reading them.

73 and KB...

-Dean - N6DE

# NAQP 2013: A 3-way club competition between NCCC, SMC, and PVRC

## A. Dates

Includes all 6 NAQPs in 2013

### Winter

January 12: NAQP CW

January 19: NAQP SSB

February 23: NAQP RTTY

### Summer

July 20: NAQP RTTY

August 3: NAQP CW

August 17: NAQP SSB

## B. Scoring

Club score per each NAQP contest running is:

Points \* Multipliers:

(Total points of all club logs) \* (number of club participants)

Participant = a club member with at least 1 QSO in the contest, either as a S/O or a M/2 team member.

Add all 6 scores together for each club to determine the overall 2013 NAQP club winner.

S/O and M/2 entrants are eligible to contribute their points to the club score. M/2 score is calculated on a percentage member basis like Multi-ops for CQWW DXpeditions. example: if a M/2 scores 200,000 points and 2 out of 4 of the operators in that M/2 are club members, then the contribution to the club is (50%)\* (200k points) = 100,000 points. The M/2 gets to claim 2 in the number of participants field.

Any participant who runs high power in NAQP as a check-log station will be counted in the club participant multiplier total, but will contribute 0 points to the points field.

Score tracking will be done using a shared spreadsheet on Google Drive. In the interest of announcing a club winner soon after the last 2013 NAQP event (NAQP SSB on August 17), claimed scores will be used for the points calculation.

## C. Eligibility

Any club member in good standing is eligible to contribute points to his/her club total. The participant must be a club member at the time the contest takes place. Scores are not calculated retroactively if a participant joins a club after having participated in a contest, but can contribute points for future running's of NAQP.

There is no club circle rule like ARRL or CQ contests. Any club member in good standing located anywhere in the world can contribute their score to their club.

Participants must submit a log to the NCJ in order to be eligible to contribute points to their club.

#### **D. Rewards**

Winning club gets possession of a traveling NAQP trophy, similar in concept to a mini-Stanley Cup. Winning club also gets bragging rights and food/drink from the other two club regions to be enjoyed at a club meeting or Dayton/Visalia.

#### **E. Miscellaneous**

This club competition between SMC, PVRC, and NCCC does not interfere with or replace the normal NCJ 5-person NAQP teams. It runs in parallel with those teams, and we will be submitting our own 5-person club teams on the NCJ web site independent of this club challenge.

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## **True Butt-in-Chair Time Or... Where have all the QSO's gone?**

Stu Phillips – K6TU

*Where have all the QSO's gone?*

*Long time passing*

*Where have the all the QSO's gone?*

*Long time ago*

*Where have the QSO's gone?*

*The op lost them every one*

*When will the op ever learn?*

*When will the op ever learn*

Apologies to Pete Seeger...

Continued on page 7

How do you translate Butt-in-chair (BIC) time to QSOs? Looking back on my contest efforts with the current antenna/equipment configuration, I've found that my average hour QSO rate is about 65 QSO's an hour. This is a combination of running and S&P operation – certainly I have peak hours that regularly exceed this (easily!) but as a rule of thumb, 65 Q's/hour is a good planning number. Note that this is all SO1R – I haven't ventured into SO2R – yet...

As I approached the recent ARRL RTTY Roundup and thought about my goal for this year, I didn't guesstimate a total QSO count based on this rule of thumb, instead I looked at last year's score where I'd made 1,338 Q's and pondered. Last year had seemed like an all out effort – could I do more? A stretch goal is always fun to shoot for so 1,400 seemed like a good number.

RTTY RU requires you take 6 hours off out of the 30 – and moreover, with the hours in no more than two blocks. I'd planned to take my time off in one block – originally between 11pm and 5am but as the contest progressed, I was banking on 40m having good propagation to Asia on Sunday morning with the opportunity to grab both rate and multipliers. So I packed it in at 1030pm and set the alarm for 4am. I launched my first QSO exactly 6 hours after the last on Saturday night.

The contest was good – propagation helped and I passed last year's score with 90 minutes to go (more multipliers!) and equaled the QSO count with an hour to run. The 1,400 goal was in sight and I made it with a few to spare.

But as I reflected on the contest, I realized that I hadn't come close to meeting my full potential. The rate sheet wasn't too shabby and most hours I'd comfortably met the rule of thumb or beaten it so in theory I could have made:

$$24 \text{ hours} \times 65 \text{ Q's/Hour} = 1,560 \text{ Q's}$$

I'd only reached 90% of that theoretical number. So where had all those extra QSO's gone?

I'd kept a reasonably good mental log of what I had been doing through the contest. I'd left the chair at various times through the contest for different reasons – here's a rough tally:

- Bio-breaks throughout the 24 hours – 30-40 minutes
- Stretching & grabbing refreshments – 50 minutes
- Eating and talking with XYL – 40 minutes

So the True BIC (TBIC) time (total logged time – lost time) was something like 2 hours shorter than the 24 hours I "operated"! At least 130 Q's just disappeared into thin air.

Clearly some of these time sinks are easier to recover than others. But with some advanced planning there is easy time in reach.



- Stock the shack with liquid refreshments and light snacks
- Eat at the operating position – this is easy multi-tasking
- Pay attention to station ergonomics
  - ◇ Stretch while seated – especially the neck
  - ◇ Good chair and monitor position to reduce neck strain
  - ◇ Operate while standing up if possible

I'm sure that our world-class operators are ROTFL or even rolling their eyes but this wasn't obvious until I really sat down and thought about how to truly maximize my Q count during a contest.

I'd addressed many of the obvious opportunities; better antennas, higher power, learn my logging software, minimize transmission lengths... but I'd completely overlooked what was hidden in plain sight – time management.

Some things are so obvious only other people can see them! This was a lesson well learnt for me this past weekend and one I felt would be useful to share.

Stu K6TU

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## NCCC Monthly meeting – Monday, January 14, 2013

Program:

- (1) "NAQP Club Competition" by Dean (N6DE)
- (2) "ARRL RTTY Roundup Redux", by Dean (N6DE) and Stu (K6TU)
- (3) "How To Get The Best Out Of [K6TU.NET](http://K6TU.NET)" by Stu (K6TU)

Dinner will be a Chinese Buffet including soft drink (soda, tea, or lemonade), tax and tip for \$20.00.

Egg rolls, crab meat cheese won ton, broccoli beef, honey walnut prawns, orange chicken, ginger of onion fish fillet, dry braised green beans, vegetables chow mein, cherry pork, steamed rice.

**Please RSVP to David, W6DR no later than Saturday evening, January 12, 2013.**

You can pay in advance via PayPal: [paypal@nccc.cc](mailto:paypal@nccc.cc)

You can also pay cash at the door.

Date: Monday, January 14, 2013

Time: 6:00pm schmooz; 6:30pm dinner, 7:00pm program

Location: China Wok Restaurant, 512 Sacramento Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

[\(707\) 645-2008](tel:7076452008)

Directions: <http://tinyurl.com/2f892nb>



# My Townhome Shack

by Byron N6NUL

## Motivation

The NCCC Sweepstakes Handbook, 7th ed. 2007, states:

*“For an operator spending 24 hours in the chair, 100,000 points is reached with 667 QSOs and 75 multipliers (28 QSOs/hour), or with 625 QSOs and 80 multipliers (26 QSOs/hour). These numbers easily are achievable from relatively modest stations (which most NCCC members have)”*

Oh, how those words haunt me! A “modest station” is probably meant to be a tribander on a short tower with wires, but in my mind it should apply to my situation, too: a townhome in a medium density housing complex where even a small tower is out of the question.

My townhome has one attached neighbor, no attic, and a 12 pitch (45 degrees) roof. The lot is only 40 feet x 30 feet (12.2m x 9.1m), and the building uses up most of that. Fortunately, my neighbors are accommodating and as long as I take the effort to remain unobtrusive, they accept my hobby despite the CCRs. The map on QRZ will show you how close-in my neighbors are, so I need to pay attention to RF exposure. We all know things can change, so I take great pains to tread lightly.

I have tried several different configurations of compromise antennas, with poor results. So a couple of years ago I decided I was not thinking big enough and changed my goals. I would build a shack in my little townhome that had as many of the features of that magic beast, the “modest contest station” as possible, and see how close I could get to 100,000 points in Sweepstakes.

Building things is a huge part of the fun of ham radio for me, so I also planned on doing as much as possible myself. But what about thinking big? What does that mean?

To me, it meant not letting the physical constraints of my home stop me. Starting underground with a real earth ground system and antenna entry port. Being stingy with loss (every fractional dB is precious) by using high quality and appropriate coax for each band. Modeling, and individual antennas for the contest bands. Gain if at all possible. Separate RX antennas (see Jug #486). Lots of Elecraft kits, and preparing for SO2R. And trying to understand, as much as possible, what I was doing.

This monthly column will lay bare my continuing efforts to achieve these goals. I am sure this will amuse some, and my mistakes will dismay others. Hopefully, though, others in restricted housing will find a useful nugget here and there.

73, Byron N6NUL  
byron@n6nul.org

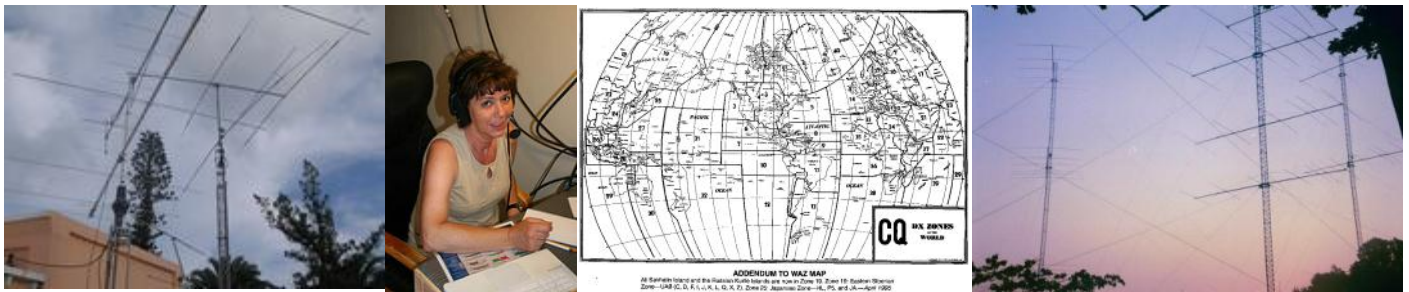


Please consider writing an article for JUG !

February 2013 Newsletter Deadline—January 28th

This is your newsletter so lets make it something we are proud of. I hope you will consider writing an article for the JUG! Whether its about your station, recent contest experience or a technical article we would appreciate hearing from you.

Send your articles to Ian W6TCP [w6tcp@comcast.net](mailto:w6tcp@comcast.net) and Stu K6TU [stu@ridgelift.com](mailto:stu@ridgelift.com)



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- IC-7000** All Mode Transceiver
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- IC-7700** Transceiver. The Contester's Rig
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- IC-7600** All Mode Transceiver
- 100W HF/6m Transceiver, gen cov. receiver
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  - 5.8 in WVGA TFT display
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