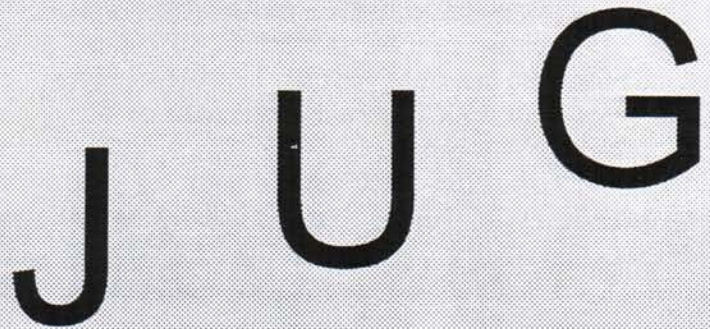


Club Repeaters W6RGG/R 147.24+, 442.200 (107.2PL)



### NEXT NCCC MEETING!

This meeting will be held on Friday, August 16th, at MIGUEL'S restaurant at 22865 Atherton Street in Hayward. The phone number is (510) 886-7200. You get there by going EAST ON JACKSON off of 880 in Hayward. After you go under the BART tracks, go LEFT on WATKINS, then immediately left on WILLIS. Go a short block, and look across the street to your right. The building with the big longhorn steer logo on it is Miguel's. Dinner (from the menu) is at 6:30PM, and the meeting at 7:30. We will pick the NCCC contest focus for the upcoming season, so please be there and make your choice(s) known!

## COOK BOOK

Faster than a speeding bullet, able to leap tall buildings in a single bound, look, up in the sky, it's WRTC! I am proud to report that the World Radiosport Team Championship left a very sweet taste in (almost) every mouth! It was very satisfying to see the majority of the participants standing in rather cool weather at 3 AM Sunday morning, at the end of the event, just to get a few more moments to enjoy each others' company. I have never participated in a radio event that held a candle to this one. I wish to express my sincere and deep appreciation to you special club members that jumped in and helped to make this event as great as it was. The NCCC has just elevated its status in the eyes of the contest world. I would thank each of you personally but this is not a 22 page JUG, so please accept my sincere THANK YOU for all your GOOD WORK!

Now that I am back to earth I must report that I intend to help the NCCC in every way possible to have a good year as an organization and a KB year as a contest club; I appreciate the opportunity to be your

President. Come to the next meeting! It will be a post mortem for WRTC, where we'll have a WRTC VIDEO, and there will be a chance for all members to voice their opinions and vote the direction the club will take in this year's contests.

Very 73,  
Carl AI6V

## NCCC OFFICERS

If you have a question or a suggestion, let your officers know about it! (E-mail addresses are given. Other particulars can be found in the NCCC roster.)

- President ..... Carl Cook, AI6V ..... ai6v@aol.com
- Vice President/CC ..... Jim Hollenback, WA6SDM  
.....jholly@cup.hp.com
- Secretary/Treasurer ..... Dick Dievendorff, AA6MC  
dieven@almaden.ibm.com
- Directors .....
- Ken Silverman, WM2C  
ken.silverman@atlas.ccmail.airtouch.com
- Ed Muns, W0YK ..... w0yk@msn.com
- Dave Curtis, NG0X  
David\_b\_curtis@ccm.sc.intel.com
- Andy Faber, AE6Y ..... ae6y@aol.com

## FROM THE JUGHEAD

I'm sure that each of you has a contesting story like Jerry Boyd's last month to share with us. Send it to me!  
e-mail ..... g.daught@forsythe.stanford.edu  
snail-mail ..... 1560 Klamath Drive  
Sunnyvale, CA 94087



Now, please read your address label on this issue of the JUG. It tells you whether your dues are current. If it says you're paid through 1997, congratulations! If it says 1996, please take a moment to fill out the renewal form, also indicating your top 3 preferences for contests you think NCCC should concentrate on this year. (This is YOUR club!)

Cut out the mailing label; put the form and your check in an envelope. Put the label and a stamp on the envelope, and mail it!

73, ab6yl

## now... WRTC: a host station's perspective

At the WRTC picnic on Wednesday afternoon, after being overcome by barbecue smoke of my own making, I met Roger Western, G3SXW, the referee/judge assigned to the home station at AB6YL. After a brief chat about radio stations, we turned to a serious discussion about beers of the world. I went home as darkness began to fall. A long shower didn't get rid of all of the lingering smoke smell.

I attended the meeting on Friday morning to watch the drawing which would match up my embarrassingly modest station and highly-regarded judge with a pair of the world's top operators. Emil, 9A9A, and Robert, 9A3GW, two ops from the Croatian contest superstation 9A1A, drew AB6YL. I was part of AA6MC's "motor pool" corps, so I gathered everyone and prepared to go to the station. They hadn't brought their own radios, so they arranged to get a 950 from some magic supply. We discussed the station on the ride home. When they began to set up, they found that the 950 had been dropped on its "nose" and that the main tuning knob and some front panel switches were balky at best. It was decided to go with the home station's IC738. The 9A's didn't like my expensive 250Hz cw filters, and I learned why. (They're too good! Lots of calls come in that are outside the passband of the narrow filters.) They ended up using the SSB filters and using the PBT knobs. (I'll buy some 500Hz filters for myself.)

I have an old IC720 which I offered for use as the second radio, but they wanted something better, so we called AI6V at the magic radio place and told him about the broken 950 and placed an order for a more modern second radio. I also left a voice-mail message with my friend Craig, WA6OXX, to see if he had a loaner.

Then we turned our attention to the antennas. They were happy with the C-3, but wished it were up higher than its 35 feet. (So do I!!) The center of the dipole is up there, too, and the ends droop down to only 15 feet elevation. I asked if they wanted me to move the ends, to get any possible directivity more toward the northeast. They were happy with where it was, but they wanted its resonant frequency moved down a bit. I got up on the roof with two clip leads, and quickly brought the frequency down to about 7.04; they were happy, and it was time to relax and look at the photo albums they brought. "This is the small tower at 9A1A. It's 62 meters high. Our station is in a junior high school, and we always convert classrooms to the station's use for contests." (Well, the tower height at AB6YL is half that number; then there's the conversion between meters and feet to deal with...)

Pat, my XYL, had been planning suitable meals for a few months. I didn't realize that she had planned to serve all of those she'd been considering. I had not died from my smoke inhalation on Wednesday, so I charcoal-grilled some chicken parts, and we all sat down to a dinner which included Pat's potato salad, the best on the planet!

I received a call from WA6OXX saying we could come and pick up his ICOM 751 to use as a second radio, so we headed out into the hills. When we arrived, I introduced Emil, Robert, and Roger to Sandy, Craig's XYL. She said "George, you know where to find the stuff you want. I'd like to show the fellows my babies." I went into Craig's shack, gathered as much radio equipment as I could carry, and took it out to the car. Then I walked around the house and went down to the corral. Sandy and Craig keep their babies in a corral? Yep. They are alpacas, which are pretty neat animals. Emil and Robert couldn't believe the corral with the alpacas and the 55 foot tower... I'm not sure about Roger. The 9A fellows had brought a camera, so they have it on film! I hope they put it in their station photo album!

On the way back, Robert asked why, every so often, one of the little center-line reflector bumps in the road was blue. I told him the secret, and he spent the rest of the trip watching for them! We set up the second radio, installed the software, checked the keying, and all were satisfied that the station was ready to go! (We had four computers which would work!)

We turned in early, Roger on a bed in the shack, to make sure no one sneaked in and put a tiny kilowatt linear in one of the coax lines, and the 9A boys in their own room (which used to house our two sons.)

We were up at about 4 AM, and what turned out to be the only meal of the day was served... it lasted



about 20 hours. Coffee, tea, milk, juice, coffee cake and a big raspberry Danish.

The "envelope" was opened, and a collective gagging sound was emitted. K6B!! Not a CW delight, to be sure, but somehow appropriate for an NCCC host station. (Isn't our motto K\_B!?) Emil made a few quick QSO's using AB6YL, and dutifully penciled them into my log. Fresh fruit and melon slices.

At 1200Z, they started on 40m CW, and the rate was prodigious. Both operators throughout the day were smooth and economical of motion. It looked deceptively effortless to get 2000 QSO's in 18 hours with 100 watts from my little station! Bagels, lox, and two kinds of cream cheese.

About mid day, I couldn't stand seeing so much contesting going on and AB6YL not getting any Q's. I took the 720, a spare car battery, and an armload of Hustler mobile antennas to my car and drove a block away. This is not a permanent mobile installation, mind you. I was able to work about 15 1x1's and some other stations, too, (Hawaii, Massachusetts) from this kludge operation. Sandwiches with beef, ham, turkey, cheese lettuce onion and tomato.

Both operators were very aggressive when pursuing a multiplier, but when a station didn't answer the first call, they'd get frustrated. I said (like so many others have said) "welcome to W6!" Instant response: "Boo! If you had 5KW and 4 over 4 at 62 meters, you'd get an answer first call!" Well, I guess that's probably right. Peanuts, pretzels, chips and dips.

I fired up the charcoal (yes, again) and made good ol' American hamburgers; everybody ate (in shifts) despite their bloated condition. At 2300 Local time, they shut down, copied their log about a dozen different places, pack their bags, and I drove them back to the "Convention Hotel." On Bayshore Freeway, we got a QSO using auto horns, (I don't remember with whom, darn it!) but Roger disallowed it for several good reasons. It was past the allotted time, it was VLF, not 10-40 meters, and the operator signing K6B was not one of the team members. When I left, the competitors were all standing around "debriefing" one another.

I learned a lot about how to use my station, about how neat CT really is and how to use it better, and about how *ham radio really does engender international friendship*. My team ended up about 40<sup>th</sup> or so, with a nice low error rate... but what will they remember? They'll remember the alpacas, the blue reflectors, and the fact that their hosts tried to murder them by "American food poisoning" which, simply put, is way, way too much good food.

The awards banquet on Sunday was a fantastic end to AB6YL's most wonderful ham experience! It was a

privilege and a pleasure to meet all of the faces that go with the calls that I've worked so many times.

73, ab6yl

## WRTC FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF THE COMPETITORS: Anecdotes from W6R (K6LL + N2IC)

(reprinted with permission .. ab6yl)

### Some background in preparation for the WRTC:

I flew up to Steve's house for WPX cw, where we practiced using his low tribander and a specially-constructed 40 m inverted vee. We used three different callsigns over the course of the weekend, to keep the activity level high for maximum training effect. We learned several important things during this practice session:

- Without the computer's RS-232 port connected to the transceiver, there is a significant probability that contacts would be logged with the wrong band or mode selected on the computer. For that reason, we decided not to use our favorite logging program, TR-log, for the WRTC, since it is difficult to correct previous qso's.
- For a multiplier excursion to another band, it was important to develop a routine procedure. The radio B op handled the rotator, antenna switch, and computer band/mode. The Radio A op concentrated on getting radio A onto the new frequency. As soon as the mult was worked, the reverse procedure was immediately initiated, and radio A went back to the original run frequency. After a while we could pull this routine off like a Richard Petty pit stop.
- At the time of the WPX contest, the WRTC rules specifically prohibited the use of bandpass filters on either radio. We rapidly discovered that synthesized radios transmit wideband noise whenever they are in the transmit mode, even with the key up, across several bands! This is not to be confused with front-end overload of radio B. There is no filtering at radio



B which will solve this problem. It has to be done at Radio A. After the WPX, the rules were clarified to allow internal modifications to the transceivers. Coaxial stubs were internally added to both transceivers, and the wideband noise was brought down to insignificant levels. Switches were added in the radios to select the proper stubs. It was real fun trying to stuff 25 feet of RG-58 inside the cabinets of the TS-850 and TS-950! The Kenwood service technicians should have seen those radios! (Speaking of Kenwood, they were conspicuous in their absence from the list of WRTC sponsors. What's with those guys anyway?)

#### Friday afternoon, just before the WRTC contest:

We got down to our host's station and set everything up. For some reason, the latest version of NA software would not key the radio through the LPT port on Steve's antique computer. We ran around in tight little circles for about an hour, trying to make it work, and then decided to switch to CT. It worked fine.

When we first cranked up the TS-950, we noticed that the internal wattmeter was reading 150 watts, and the external Autek unit was reading 120 watts. Our host volunteered his Bird wattmeter, and it read 85 watts! Steve and I exchanged glances, and immediately began spouting the praises of the Bird wattmeter, about how it's a laboratory standard, the choice of professionals, the standard of comparison, built like a battleship, etc. We must have overdone that little song and dance though, because our referee pounced on the Bird and dragged it off to the Motel 6 to compare it to the OFFICIAL WRTC WATTMETER. The Bird turned out to be about 30% low, so we didn't get to use it. Darn!

#### During the contest:

When the contest started at 0500, Radio A started running stations and hardly ever went to S&P. We depended almost entirely on radio B to find multipliers. Preprinted paper check sheets of ARRL countries, zones, HQ stations and WRTC callsigns were used. Each time a new mult was found, other than the most mundane, which we were sure to work later, radio A stopped the run, worked the mult if possible, and then immediately went back to the run frequency, hopefully with stations still waiting and the packet spots still valid. We alternated the operators between radio A and B on the hour. Radio A stayed on cw unless we thought we could double the rate on SSB. There were times on SSB when Steve had the CT last 10 QSO rate was over 550 and the last 100 rate was over

350. Absolutely unbelievable and unforgettable! When the contest was over, I truly thought we had won. I couldn't believe, as was the case, that it had been just as frantic an 18 hours for many of the other competitors. The level of competition was truly intense!

In retrospect, the only thing I can think of that we should have done differently is to more actively pursue moving mults from band to band. We did it a few times, but could have done it more. Steve was more diligent at it than I was.

We found a couple new items to add to Tree's list of "ways to irritate your WRTC partner"

- Open a box of Quaker Oats cereal squares, loudly rustle the wax paper inside, and chomp furiously on the little squares. It was enough to trip the vox, bury W6QHS's signal under the QRM, and render any line noise inconsequential.

- Consume mass quantities of bean burritos early in the contest, with predictable results.

Let me conclude by thanking again all of the organizers, sponsors, host stations, judges, referees, and contest participants throughout the world who made this WRTC an unforgettable experience. Standing up to receive the bronze medal was the highpoint of my amateur radio career.

A special thanks to our hosts Dave Barton, AF6S, and his charming wife Susan, KA6SEH, who made us feel completely welcome and at ease operating from their San Jose QTH. They are two of the nicest people you would ever want to meet. Special thanks also to our referee, Scott Jones, WR3G, who spent 18 boring hours listening to someone else operate, when he would rather have been applying his own excellent operating skills.

73,

Dave, K6LL

## WRTC: A Judge Comments

(reprinted with permission.....ab6yl)

As three busloads of contesters wended their way through Napa Valley the Monday after WRTC, a few of them suggested that I do a "post-contest" summary of the event along the lines of what I have written after some of the major contests. So even though N0AX and perhaps others by now have beaten me to the punch, here it is.

The event was superbly organized and handled by the WRTC, Inc., Committee. While the occasional



participant arrived at the airport only to find that his promised ride was nowhere to be seen, and the bus first took us to the wrong pier, etc., I have to say, from the perspective of one who has participated in a number of IARU Conferences and Meetings in recent years, and one whose job it was, in a previous life, to organize press conferences and public events, that the entire week was remarkably error-free.

It will be awfully hard for anyone else to organize a similar event in the future on the same scale. You just don't find an area where you can combine the industry-insider contact knowledge and fund-raising acumen of a W6RJ and a W6QHS, the drive and energy of a W6OAT and a K3EST, the organizational talents of an AI6V, an AA6KX, an AA6MC and a W6RGG (I know I've missed a few) in one place. It was these guys who made it go, and my hat is off to all of them. Thank goodness all I had to do was show up!

For me it was to be the combination of a reunion with an old friend with whom I used to barnstorm around to ham radio events in Southeast Asia, Phil Wight, W5UHK/VS6DR, and a reunion with new friends from all over the world who I have been working for years but had never met before in person. Phil has taken up residence in Mountain View, CA, in recent years, and had invited me and my XYL Somporn to stay with him if we ever had occasion to be in the Bay area. So we did, but unfortunately, on the second day of the event, Phil was hospitalized, so Somporn and I moved into a hotel close to the WRTC Motel 6, there being by that time "no room at the inn."

The first organized event was a working dinner for the judges, of which I was one, at which Chief Judge K4VX, along with K3EST and W6OAT, went over all of the rules and procedures in detail for us. In retrospect, it seems that some things that took up a lot of time in the discussion, such as the checking of transceiver power levels and the use or not of "quick-disconnect" connectors between the bandpass filters and the second rig, turned out not to be very important in the end. There was an interesting thread as to whether any attempt should be made to pair up certain judges with competitors thought to be the most likely to try to get away with something, but, in the end, K4VX and K3EST prevailed in their insistence that the pairing of judges with competitors had to be completely random in order to make the event completely fair to all and fully perceived as such by the competitors. Beyond that, this session allowed me to meet my fellow judges, almost all of whom I had met at Dayton or Visalia or Friedrichshafen at one time or another, but it was nice to be working on the same team with them all and to get to know them a bit better.

The next event was the picnic at which all participants -- organizing committee members, station hosts, competitors, judges, referees, hangers-on -- met each other. WJET-TV of Erie, PA, was interviewing people for the special on the event that they hope to place on ABC's "Good Morning America" and someone suggested to them that I would be a worthy victim for an interview, which probably means that the effort to get on ABC is doomed. On a hunch I confirmed with K3LR that WJET-TV is owned by none other than K3TUP, a call not exactly unknown to the contest world himself. This explains why a TV station in PA went all the way to SF to cover a story. Then I limbered up my rusty Spanish with LU6ETB, EA7TL and EA4KD, none of whom I had ever met before, and also met OH0XX for the first time ever, a real pleasure.

I drove over to the event (yes, it turned out to be almost a necessity to have a rent-a-car for one's full-time use) with my "IARU boss" VE3CDM, the President of IARU Region 2. Tom knows an awful lot more about contests than he did before he went to the event, and somehow I have a feeling that any attempt to propose a "Contest Free Zone" on the bands in a future IARU Conference will quickly be relegated to the trash can. Ham radio politicians were much in evidence at WRTC, reflecting the importance we as contesters have in organized amateur radio out of all proportion to our numbers. Many ham radio politicians are contesters in their own right -- need I even mention K1ZZ as an example? Dave and XYL Linda, KA1ZD, were there. Chief Judge K4VX is an ARRL Director, judge W7RM is a former ARRL Director, competitor Y7IAD is the President of Yugoslavia's SRJ, judge PY5EG is the President of Brazil's LABRE, referee UA6HZ is the immediate past President of Russia's SRR, etc. One might even venture this thought on the future of Amateur Radio: "As goes contesting, so goes ham radio."

I got in the barbecue line and sat down for a meal next to that real-life judge, K4BAI. John and I have been working each other regularly for all of the 44 years we have each been in ham radio, have been fellow members of FOC for about 20 years, and yet had never met in person before. Little did I suspect that this balding fellow in my age bracket would turn out to be one half of the second-place team after the dust settled. Some people are ageless!

Towards the end of the picnic, judges and referees selected the stations they would be stationed at as observers, and I drew WB6AFJ. I called Alex immediately upon getting back to the hotel and



arranged to go over and inspect his station that very evening.

The very organized WRTC committee had already given me a folder with a lot of the info on Alex's station, and, except for noting that his VCR (to be used for recording the entire contest on tape in case disputes about call signs or other matters needed to be resolved after the event) was busted and he was hoping to borrow a neighbor's, there was not much additional info to report other than what the committee had already given me. I did have Alex turn on the rig and was pleased to hear that there was absolutely no line noise. Most of the visit was spent getting to know Alex and his XYL Winnie. Alex is a DX'er, not a contester, but that might have changed since (more later).

Age and the desire not to let the XYL get bored combined to keep me away from a lot of the beer-drinking bull sessions, but I heard rumors of sprinkler systems going off in the hospitality suite, the house detective chasing everyone outside to keep the noise down in the hall, complaints by the owner of the motel restaurant that the pizza being ordered in from outside was depriving him of yet another chance to demonstrate how only five patrons can be served per hour, etc. I am sure there are plenty of participants who can give graphic descriptions of the bull-session aspect of the WRTC in case there is a clamor for this information. At any rate, the JA gang and the S5 gang (were there *any* S5's who stayed home?) are to be thanked profusely for staging a couple of the more prominent such events.

The following day -- Thursday -- participants had a choice between going on a tour of Silicon Valley or the city of San Francisco. Somporn and I chose San Francisco and were pleased to see that our tour guide was none other than old friend and erstwhile PVRC'er N6RA, who in addition to being one of SF's premier patent attorneys has become sort of a history buff about his adopted home town. Tom's XYL did the honors on the other SF bus. We were introduced early-on to San Francisco's famous fog. As we went up the hill Tom described in detail San Francisco's 1000-foot candelabra tower, which has just about all of the city's TV and FM broadcast antennas on it as well as paging services, etc. It's a good thing he was able to describe it so clearly because when we got up there we couldn't see a bit of it for the fog. After going across the Golden Gate Bridge and then heading downtown where we clambered over San Francisco's famous hills, we ended up in Chinatown at a restaurant specially selected for us by a prominent member of San Francisco's Chinese community, K6KQN. All present, including my XYL, who is something of an expert on the subject,

agreed that the dim sum was the best we had ever had. Vince, you really came through! One of the sights our attention was directed to on the tour, incidentally, was Vince's KT-34 atop his office right in the middle of downtown San Francisco. How his radio waves manage to hop over the surrounding buildings is anyone's guess. To describe his QTH graphically, if King Kong ever falls off the Transamerica Building, guess whose antenna will get crushed! Nevertheless, I understand Vince is up there on the DXCC Honor Roll.

Sitting near me on the bus were WN4KKN and KM9P, busily discussing the internet access business which they both know something about. I had never met Bill either, and after getting to know him in person I felt somewhat sheepish about having written a certain essay on the contest reflector once. At any rate, his performance as the other half of the K4BAI team should allow him to assume his rightful role as one of America's premier testers.

That evening the buses took us to the oil refining center of Martinez for a big feast at a Shell Oil clubhouse, and on the way we were allowed to sample some of the Bay area's finest rush hour traffic. I was sitting next to VE3CDM on that trip, and I think that on the way over we solved every problem the IARU has ever had and began dreaming up some more to solve. But once we got there it was a great feast put on by W6RJ's favorite Mexican restaurateur.

I learned much to my surprise that, having run out of new DX countries on 80 meters to bag, Bob now travels to Africa to bag real live big game! Everyone filled themselves to the brim and there was still plenty more to go around, along with fine examples of California's great wines. You know, like the stuff you can win in the CQP.

On Friday we began to get down to business. First of all, judges and referees were called together and given their final marching orders by K4VX, K3EST and N6AA, and then the competitors were called in and the drawing began which paired up the two-man competitor teams with their stations and judge/referee on-site observers. Never have I admired my good friend and former housemate Bob Cox more as, in his own friendly, relaxed way, he kept order of the proceedings at this time. Not only can Bob keep order in a pile-up on the air, he knows how to do it in person too.

A couple of the judges and referees had cancelled their trips to SF at the last moment, and in what I thought was a particularly brilliant and appropriate move on the Committee's part, the Coach of the Chinese demonstration team, BA1FP, was chosen as a



replacement for one of the missing on-site observers. LU6BEG of Team Argentina was in bed with a fever, so OH0XX, who thought he was coming just to observe and have a good time, was pressed into service as the other member of that team with LU6ETB. Olle had operated in Argentina and speaks fluent Spanish so it was no more of a reach to put him on Team Argentina than for RA3AUU to be a member of Team Belgium. KZ2S and N2NT were also pressed into service as competitors at the last minute to replace another team that hadn't shown up.

There was quite a bit of tension in the air as competitors and on-site observers wondered who they would draw as companions. The first one to draw me was the representative of my own club, PVRC, KP3P. Since there was a rule that -- except for the USA, which had so many participants -- no country's competitors could have a fellow countryman as on-site observer, the Committee felt that my club relationship with KP3P would create room for doubt and so my envelope was thrown back in the hopper. I am happy to report that Tyler and teammate KR2J did a superb job without me! The next time I was drawn was by the Yugoslav team of YT1AD and YU1RL. I had met Hrane, YT1AD, on several occasions in the past but had never met YU1RL before. I informed them that there was no CW keyer available at WB6AFJ and they would have to use a keyboard at all times, but they managed to borrow a keyer from DJ2YA, and, after I collected my XYL from our hotel, we were off to San Jose and the QTH of Alex, WB6AFJ. Tom, VE3CDM, joined us for the ride.

Alex met us at the door and put his place at our disposal. The YU boys decided to use his rigs (FT-1000-D + TS-930-S) instead of their own, but YT1AD wanted to use his own laptop which he had brought with him. We left the boys there to get things arranged while Somporn, Tom and I headed for Sacramento and a small gathering of DX'ers/contesters that W6GO had invited over to his place for a get-together in my honor. It was great to see some old friends and the great W6GO station, but it had been hard to fit the event in because of the heavy WRTC social schedule, and the five hours on the road meant that we didn't get back to our hotel until 2300 local, only to have to get up again at 0300 local to be able to get over to WB6AFJ's house in time to be sure there was time to put everything in order. We worked feverishly to get the main rig to where it could be keyed by CT coming out of YT1AD's laptop, and to where the receiver audio from the FT-1000 could be fed to the borrowed-from-a-neighbor VCR and thence provide the line drop whereby I could monitor what the boys were doing all through the contest. Alex got out his

soldering iron at this ungodly hour to make up one last cable which put us all in business. At 0430 local, a half-hour before the contest, I pulled out the magic envelope and handed it to YT1AD, who with trembling hands opened it and learned for the first time that he and his partner would have to get used to sending K6N for the following 18 hours.

Meanwhile my XYL Somporn learned that Alex's XYL Winnie had been born in Indonesia, and that they both enjoy gardening and cooking as among their hobbies, and I breathed a sigh of relief that Somporn would be entertained for the weekend while I concentrated on paying attention to what the boys were doing at the radio.

The beginning of the contest came at 0500 local, and I sat back just behind the operators, my own favorite set of Realistic Nova Pro earphones on my head, pen in hand to make note of any observed discrepancies as the contest went along. Sasha, YU1RL, acknowledged by both of them as the better CW operator of the two, started the ball rolling on 40 CW. The boys had climbed the tower during the previous afternoon to re-orient the 40 meter inverted-v and the CT rate meter seemed to show that this had been time well spent. YU1RL is an excellent cw run operator and I was impressed watching him in action, and learned a lot. Especially good was the fact that he was aware when more than one station had called him and therefore would usually not sign his call again until he had worked everyone who was waiting to call him. But at the same time he varied the number of times he signed his call so that during slow times he would sometimes send it three times before standing by. He also expertly varied his keying speed, speeding up when the pile got big and slowing down when the Q's began to drag out a bit.

The one thing I suggested to him after the contest was over is that he learn to send "test" just prior to standing by during slow times so that stations know he is QRV for callers and not in the process of calling somebody else.

The boys ended up with a unique rate of 3.7, somewhat high, but I think most of the uniques were run up in the first part of the contest when the boys were getting used to the set-up and when YU1RL, who had never computer-logged before, was getting used to the keyboard and to CT. As they gradually became more familiar with their surroundings, they became aware that every time I raised my hand to write it was because I had observed an error -- usually a broken call -- and they began to be spooked by my hand motion.

The minute I would raise my hand they would call back the station they were just finishing with and make



sure they had the call right. Thus I would say most of my four pages of notes were written during the first two hours.

Competitors were not allowed to use the super-check-partial feature of their logging programs, but once the program began to build up a database of the stations in this particular contest, the error rate also began to drop accordingly.

As the contest went on, I gradually became aware that neither YT1AD nor YU1RL have had much experience with S&P. They have been accustomed mainly to going to rare islands or third-world countries for the major contests, or else operating from home at one of their country's superstations, and a contest has usually meant for them, as K5GA once put it on the reflector, "sitting back and pressing F1 over and over again." Neither was particularly adept at tuning through a crowded band and picking out the multipliers in a hurry.

My conversations with other observers after the contest indicated that they observed much the same thing on the part of many of the operators they observed. This, in my opinion, gave the USA and Canadian operators a leg up over many of their overseas competitors in this particular competition. Regardless of how easy it may be to run people from the East Coast, for example, I don't think you'll find many top operators from over here who haven't spent an awful lot of time S&P'ing. I also heard comments about operators passing over easy QSO's while S&P'ing, looking only for multipliers and not bothering to work anyone else. This was often true for the YU's as well.

Once he did find a multiplier, however, YT1AD was very aggressive on SSB about getting through to the station being called. EA8ZS allowed as how K6N was his first WRTC station worked in the contest, and practically let out a whoop of joy in the process.

YT1AD also kept the multiplier factor in mind, and got a number of stations to change bands for him for a new multiplier.

Sasha, YU1RL, is more a man of my own tastes, however, and hates to move people. Also, on several occasions he quarreled briefly with Hrane when Hrane had found a multiplier on the second rig and wanted Sasha to break a run in order to go get it. Much as I empathized with Sasha at the time because I feel the same reluctance in breaking up a run, he should have listened to Hrane, as the final results showed.

You can't help sitting with top operators for several hours, watching them go through their paces, without a certain amount of bonding taking place. Toward the end of the contest I got frustrated with Sasha trying to drag VK4EMM's call through without

success after several attempts (he knew he hadn't gotten it right yet because my pen remained poised ready to write). He was trying to make a two-letter call out of it. I finally violated the rules and gave him a hint: "You're missing a letter, and it's a very short one." About two tries later he had it. He told me after the contest he was pretty impressed that I could read the guy so quickly. Call recognition certainly helped, but I found that Sasha could frequently copy stations at a pitch of about 100 Hz. that I couldn't even hear, but that once the pitch was up to around 400 or 500 Hz., I could sometimes hear better than he could. Whether the audio lash-up we had through the VCR was somehow rolling off the lows or whether my ears naturally roll off the lows, I don't know, but N6AA said later that the same thing happens when he operates with K6NA -- they always hear different stations in the pile.

A corollary of Sasha's unfamiliarity with S&P was the fact that he would frequently call a station too far off frequency to get him. I would say to myself: "If only you'd move up 400 Hz you'd have him." He would just stay on the same spot and call and call and call. Thinking all this over after the contest, I wonder if there aren't some Europeans who are experts at S&P because they run QRP all the time and never get to run anybody, and whether they might have fared better than some of their better-known brethren in this particular instance. On the other hand, it would be hard to match Sasha in sending technique and smooth pile-up control. He is a real cw technician.

The contest ended at 2300 local, everybody was happy, the boys had made considerably more QSO's than they had expected to, with a raw QSO total of just over 2300. Alex, the perfect host, was pleased that his station running barefoot had gotten out so well. Both 9K2MU and 3V8BB called K6N rather than the other way around. Alex had some of his local ham neighbors over to see what was going on, and then they would go home and work the station on all bands. I observed no overloading from any other WRTC station, but a few of the local hams overloaded the receiver now and then. It was not a serious problem. On 10 meters during the hottest part of the day they had a bit of line noise which mostly wiped out ground-wave sixes trying to call from directions other than where the antenna was pointed. On 20 and 40 there was noise caused by distant thunderstorms from time to time. There never seemed to be a problem on 15.

About midnight we got away after effusive farewells to Alex and Winnie, and I dropped off the diskettes, tapes and notes to I2UIY at Contest Central and went back to my hotel to catch some shuteye.



About 0830 local I came back and pitched in to help score logs, which by then were pretty much done.

I quickly realized that without the tools put into the Committee's hands by N6TR, they never would have been able to score the logs by the time the awards banquet took place that evening. The log analysis program developed by Tree over the years, based on the requirements drawn up by N6AA, to be used as a tool by the CQWW Contest Committee, was simply invaluable here. The truth is that there simply wasn't enough time to do much with many logs over and above the first cut that Tree's program provided. The not-in-logs, the bad calls and the uniques were all pulled out by the program and the judge working on that particular log only had time to go through, subtract points and assess penalty points based on what he saw in front of him, and move on to the next log.

It was immensely helpful to me in doing this that I had listened to the contest as an observer and knew to a substantial extent what stations had been on. Thus when K7U was detected as a non-existent call in the log I left it in, because I had heard that station very clearly call the boys at K6N on a couple of bands. I even remember remarking to Sasha at the time that maybe the state of Utah was celebrating its centennial or some such.

The iron men in log checking were N6AA, N6ZZ, and I2UIY. These indefatigable fellows, and perhaps a couple of others, had stayed up all night crunching numbers. By 1000 local Sunday morning the job was done except for typing in the AH3D (China team) log -- which had been hand-written by the operators -- which was done by N6TR with vocal assistance from W3ZZ and occasionally yours truly. But disaster had struck the Finnish team of OH1JT and OH2IW, as the last six hours of their operation had inexplicably not been found on the disk. And the backup VCR tape recording was also unusable. So Silicon Valley's finest computer super sleuths -- N6TV and K2MM -- were called in to work on the corrupted disk. An estimated score was arrived at so that the OH team could be put into the results along with the others in time for the banquet, with an asterisk by their score. The last I heard, after unloading all the TSR's from the OH's laptop, the data was being recovered successfully, slowly, by PC Tools from the corrupted disk, 512 bytes at a time.

The final banquet, a real feast at the Stanford University faculty club frequented these days by that former industrialist W6QHS, was a happy affair with brief speeches of recognition for all who helped organize this unbelievable and historic week. None other than the President of ARRL KB6ZV joined the festivities and the crowning event was, of course, the

awarding of the first three places to KR0Y/K1TO, KM9P/K4BAI and N2IC/K6LL in that order.

VE3EJ/VE3IY who had a brilliant fourth place finish were also judged most the most congenial duo by the judges and referees, and VE7CC/VE7NTT were honored for their leading low-unique rate. I agree that some mention probably should have been made of the top European team, the top Japanese team, etc., but I can only guess that the continuing uncertainty of the final situation for the OH team kept the Committee from wanting to say too much too soon.

Most of the participants stayed on for the next day's tour of the Napa Valley wineries, which afforded me the pleasure of interesting confabs with K1AR, K5ZD, WX3N and G3OZF as well as BA1FP, between naps on the bus and on winery lawns. As I have been saying for years, the West Coast shall rise again. Just wait till all of those BA's, BD's and BG's start fattening the contest logs of our Left Coast brethren. No more comments will be heard about Right Coasters and their worn out F1 keys, I am sure.

Thanks, WRTC, Inc., for a once-in-a-lifetime experience!

Very 73,  
Fred Lant, K3ZO

## Contest Calendar

### August, 1996

- European HF Championship 1000-2200Z, Aug 3
- ARRL UHF Contest 1800Z, Aug 3 to 1800Z, Aug 4
- North Amer. QSO Party, CW  
1800Z, Aug 3 to 0600Z, Aug 4
- WAE DX Contest, CW  
0000Z, Aug 10 to 2400Z, Aug 11
- SARTG WW RTTY Contest  
0000Z, Aug 17 to 1600Z, Aug 18
- SEANET WW DX Contest, SSB  
0001Z, Aug 17 to 2359Z, Aug 18
- ARRL 10 GHz Cumul. Contest  
0800-2000 local time, Aug 17 and Aug 18
- North Amer. QSO Party, Phone  
1800Z, Aug 17 to 0600Z, Aug 18
- WSWSS VHF and Above Sprint  
1900-2300 local time, Aug 21
- TOEC WW Grid Contest, CW  
1200Z, Aug 24 to 1200Z, Aug 25
- Utah Centennial QSO Party  
1500Z, Aug 24 to 2100Z, Aug 25



## September, 1996

All Asian DX Contest, SSB  
0000Z, Sep 7 to 2400Z, Sep 8  
European Field Day, SSB  
1500Z, Sep 7 to 1500Z, Sep 8  
North American Sprint, CW  
0000Z-0359Z, Sep 8

At the August meeting the results should be in on what the club wants to do for contests this year. Check for the meeting location and please come on by and take part in the discussions and decisions.

Here it is August already, and contest season will soon be on us. CQP will be the first weekend of October and the start of the big contests. Well, the really good big contest is the week before CQP - CQ WW RTTY.

Make plans to get on for CQP - it is the most fun contest of all season.

As promised last month, I have all the scores for this month. Send your summary sheet info to me via e-mail (jholly@cup.hp.com), snail mail (2021 Stonewood Ln.; San Jose 95132) or via packet. I'm back up on packet now and check into K6LLK.

CQP  
WA6YVS 2068

CQ 160M  
P49V 397,024  
W6BIP 17,625

ARRL RTTY ROUNDUP  
WA6SDM 37,512  
W6ISO 3,588

JANUARY NAQP SSB  
AB6YL 34,615

ARRL VHF SS  
W6ISO 462

NA SPRINT  
N6RO 13,570

ADRS RTTY WPX  
WA6SDM 145,668

ARRL DX CW  
P49V 4,289,820

AB6YL 49,329  
W6PLJ 37,062

ARRL DX SSB  
P40V 6,282,390  
K6HNZ 231,849  
N6CCL 231,678  
N6RO 124,200  
AB6YL 116,604  
W6PLJ 78,480

CQ WPX SSB  
P40V 11,209,231  
WU7Q 3,100,902  
K6HNZ 1,857,300  
N6CCL 502,944  
AB6YL 343,376  
AE6Y 341,376  
W6PLJ 50,120

CQ WPX CW  
AE6Y 475,888  
AD6E 154,872  
AB6YL 138,432

ARRL FIELD DAY  
W6PLJ + W6ISO 2A 1340  
AB6YL 1D 590

IARU  
N1EE 312

NCJ RTTY NAQP  
WA6SDM 21,141

73, WA6SDM, VP/CC



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Please indicate your priorities for three contests you would like the NCCC to focus on in its 1996-1997 season. ( A "1" indicates your choice for highest priority, "2" for second priority, and "3" for third.)

\_\_\_\_ ARRL DX Contest  
\_\_\_\_ SS  
\_\_\_\_ WPX  
\_\_\_\_ CQWW  
\_\_\_\_ Other Contest: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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