

2008 ARRL DX Phone — One QSO at a Time

“I must be a contest masochist — high line noise, heavy splatter, tons of QRM, low sunspots and running low power — but always back for more!” — *K2MFY*

H. Ward Silver, NØAX

How does one make a winning score at the bottom of the cycle in quite-a-bit-less-than-optimum conditions? The same way that it's done at the top of the cycle — one QSO at a time! And let's face it; if you aren't "in the chair" then you won't make *any* QSOs. Simply by keeping those QSOs rolling, you will make the best score you can, wherever you live and whatever the propagation. Remember, DX Is and Contests Are!

Considering that there were probably a number of other things that could be done instead of operating, a lot of folks did warm up those chairs. A total of 2056 testers sent in a log this year (1246 from the US and Canada and 810 from DX stations) — that's a 5% drop from 2007. Fewer unique calls were logged in 2008, as well: 1814 QSOs on 20 meters by K3LR and 2976 QSOs on 20 meters by PJ2T set the bar this year. That's down 33% and 20%, respectively. Interestingly, PJ2T had almost as many unique calls on 15 meters (2855) as they did on 20 meters.

The number of QSOs did drop, but not as precipitously as the number of unique call signs. 409,488 DX to US/VE QSOs were contained in the final database and that is only off by 6.7% from last year. Only 296,134 contacts were contained in the US/VE database, suggesting that a higher fraction of DX stations submit their logs than US and VE stations do for this contest.

Taking a look at the geomagnetic and solar

Table 1
Propagation Indices for ARRL DX Phone

Year	Flux		Planetary A _p		Estimated K	
	Sat	Sun	Sat	Sun	Sat	Sun
2002	191	183	5	10	1.6	2.5
2003	138	147	14.5	11	2.8	2.6
2004	105	106	5	6	1.8	1.8
2005	81	84	10	36	2.5	4.3
2006	75	74	2	1	0.9	0.5
2007	73	73	2	3	0.5	0.8
2008	69	69	19	8	3.3	2.0

indices over the few days before and after this year's contest, it's clear that Murphy paid us a visit in the form of disturbed conditions. Saturday was at the end of a disturbed period, with conditions improving a bit on Sunday. Even so, the high latitude conditions were definitely upset, rendering the all-important 20 and 15 meter polar paths nearly unusable for US stations outside districts 1 through 4 and 8 and VE stations in VE4 and west. Being able to eke out some European contacts made a lot of difference in the final score for stations with a high-latitude path to the Old World.

Write-up Notes and Features

Look for these modifications and updates to the statistics in the Web version of this article at www.arrl.org/contests/.

- Category trends now include a total for comparison of activity from year to year.
- The domestic single-band trend graph now includes sunspot number (SSN).
- A new type of accuracy plot compares error

rate with non-dupe QSOs

- Power is no longer part of the single-band comparisons.
- Every ARRL Division and all of the continents are once again graced with the attention of a resident (or nearly-resident) author to look at their results.

Records

"I came to 40m few minutes before the end and I was not expecting a lot of QSO with only 100W and a DX88 vertical antenna. And in fact yes!!! Great fun." — FYIFL

Take a close look at Table 2 for the list of records set by US and VE stations this year. That's right — there weren't *any* set this year! Not even on the low bands or on 20 meters, the most popular band, worldwide. So don't feel bad if you didn't exceed your score from last year — it was hard to do!

Outside the US and VE, things were a little better, particularly for stations with only salt water between them and the North American continent. The two 20 meter records were broken pretty convincingly by KH7B and AI6V operating as P4ØV. 40 meters turned out to be just right for AO8A from the Canary Islands, tapping into huge pools of US and VE stations frustrated by poor conditions on more northerly paths. The Caribbean Contest Consortium station, PJ2T, just keeps racking up the wins, this time far outdistancing the pack in SO-Assisted, displacing a record from near the last peak of sunspot activity and almost setting a World Record!

Exceptional Performances

"This was my first ARRL DX Contest effort since 1993. It was also my first full-bore Single-Op effort using Computer Logging. I try not to be more than one century behind." —HC8A (op N6KT)

Every contest has its standout performances, no matter what the conditions may have been. Here are a few noteworthy efforts

Table 2
New US/VE Records for 2008

Category	Call District	Call	New Record	Old Record	Year Set
All	Any	None	None	All	Any

New DX Records for 2008

Category	Continent	Call	New Record	Old Record	Year Set
SO-20	OC	KH7B	559,143	420,831	1989
SO-20	SA	P4ØV (AI6V, op)	670,299	607,290	2004
SO-40	AF	AO8A	293,436	179,550	1994
SO-Assisted	SA	PJ2T	6,177M	5,982M	1999

harvested from the database.

- VO1MP handed out the semi-rare NL (Newfoundland) multiplier in the SO-HP category to the tune of 1.384M points. Gus made 1721 QSOs, bagged 268 DX band-entities, and finished in the lucky number seventh spot. What's such a big deal? He did it with only 19 hours of operating time!
- As if he'd never been gone a day, Rich N6KT reappeared as HC8A after 15 years of inactivity. Slugging it out across all the bands, his equatorial QTH in the Galapagos Islands enabled him to make 810 QSOs on 10 meters and vault to the top of the SOAB-HP category.
- In the very competitive SOAB-LP category, KU1CW put together a very nice 568k score and finished second from MO, not traditionally a state that does well in DX contests. He did it with lots of multipliers — the most in the category.
- W8QZA didn't hear a single, workable European signal all weekend from San Diego, but that didn't stop him from putting W6QU in enough logs to qualify for second place in the SOAB-QRP standings. He leapfrogged several stations that should have had much better propagation and prevailed.
- Out west as well, W6YI walked away with the SOSB-40 competition, handily outdistancing a posse of pursuers from Back East. With the "Chinese Dragon" over-the-horizon radar putting a big dent in Asian low-band participation, plus the general difficulties of noise and bootleggers from ITU Region 3 on 40 phone, his 505 QSOs were no mean feat.
- In the multi-multi competition, K3LR's team held the high ground against all challengers again this year. Beaten or nearly tied on every other band, the new 20 meter tower (with lights and paint and everything!) proved its mettle and carried the day. Winning a major band by nearly 25% is hard to do at that level of competition.

US and VE Overview

"What fun!!! Talk on the radio, silence the CO (carbon monoxide) detector; repeat, repeat..." — K9WN

20 meters, as expected, remains the money band for DX contesters, worldwide, for the

From September 2008 QST © ARRL



Single Operator High Power (SOAB HP)

VY2ZM	2,929,977
NN3W	
(@N3HBX)	1,857,648
K4ZW	1,825,416
VE3EJ	1,750,248
VC3E	
(VE3AT, op)	1,560,978
AA1K	1,507,611
VO1MP	1,383,684
W3BGN	1,271,403
W9RE	1,196,460
K1RX	1,181,448

Single Operator Low Power (SOAB LP)

K1BX	767,808
KU1CW	568,452
W3LL	526,008
N5AW	472,320
N4TZ	403,680
N1PGA	390,852
K2PS	380,673
W1CTN	323,856
K7SV	302,382
N4XL	269,028

Single Operator QRP (SOAB QRP)

K4CIA	102,465
W6QU	
(W8QZA, op)	62,886
N1TM	45,318
VA3DF	32,625
K3TW	29,484
WA8WV	25,347
N8XA	24,948
KA5PVB	19,032
K5KLA	18,585
K5ZE	17,388

Single Operator 10 Meters (SOSB-10)

K4WI	3,672
NA4CW	2,301
W6GMT	1,692
K4JRB	1,089
KM6Z	1,020
K14ETD	540
KE5SNJ	285
W5MK	180
WA0FQK	72
W4GRW	27

Single Operator 15 Meters (SOSB-15)

NR5M	57,288
KC7V	24,300
AC5O	21,432
N8PR	18,963
W0VX	14,706
W7UPF	12,540
KC6R	11,556
KE3WM	10,989
K0RH	9,078
W4SUL	7,560

Single Operator 20 Meters (SOSB-20)

K2XA	431,244
W7WA	317,349
N4PN	217,536
VO1HE	158,730
VO1KVT	113,610
W8TWA	94,536
W7BJN	90,936
W9NY	88,068
K2MFY	77,517
WR2G	76,050

Single Operator 40 Meters (SOSB-40)

W6YI	68,175
N4QV	29,568
W0DBGZ	21,021
AA4VV	16,218
K8DJC	16,215
AD8J	13,395
W3TMZ	9,912
K7AO	9,711
VA3XH	7,104
W8JMF	6,630

Single Operator 80 Meters (SOSB-80)

N8DX	25,311
N3YD	19,824
K4KZZ	13,104
WA2AOG	11,376
K8OQL	4,801
KU4BP	2,430
NA4M	2,430
W19H	1,932
W09S	1,725
K16PG	575

Single Operator 160 Meters (SOSB-160)

KT1V	12,282
W2MF	9,936
K5RX	5,967
WF2W	3,060
W4SVO	2,940
K1HAP	1,725
WJ9B	1,650
KK4SI	1,386
W3GH	1,254
W2VO	1,140

Single Operator Assisted (SOA)

K11G	1,590,228
K3WW	1,282,272
N3KS	1,007,244
AA3B	1,000,518
K3PP	963,534
N8TR	938,304
N3AD	821,700
VE3UTT	
(W1AJT, op)	751,230
N4ZC	709,794
W1GD	650,925

Multioperator Single Transmitter (MS)

K9RS	1,734,768
N1MM	1,399,035
W1QA	
(@NC11)	1,243,620
K5NA	1,120,038
W1ZA	1,093,869
W6WB	740,955
W3MF	688,848
N1FD	612,360
W3GQ	575,640
N7AP	539,760

Multioperator Two Transmitters (M2)

WE3C	3,005,298
N3RS	2,535,888
KB1H	1,657,710
W4RM	1,607,040
K0TV	1,324,929
K2AX	1,029,756
NE3F	901,740
W2ZQ	762,390
W2CG	651,210
VE3RM	648,870

Multioperator Unlimited Transmitters (MM)

K3LR	4,043,754
W3LPL	3,691,749
W1UE	2,591,016
K1CX	2,516,616
K1TTT	2,328,900
W4ML	1,601,613
W3PP	1,562,775
N6RO	1,106,040
K7ZSD	873,042
W0AIH	673,017

Note: The table of Regional Winners is available on the expanded version of this article at www.arrl.org/contests.

80 and 40 meters show a steady, long-term increase in both QSO and multiplier totals for both HP and LP stations.

Figure 1 shows that as solar conditions change, so does the choice of category by the single operator station. Reversing a trend, total LP entries (the red bars) were up this year and HP entries down. In the face of poorer conditions, that was somewhat surprising.

Close Finishes

As on any day at the races, there will be some close finishes. These are always fun to look for in the results and this year is no exception:

- 1.6% separates NN3W and K4ZW in the SOAB-HP category
- SOAB-HP competitors W9RE and K1RX were only 0.8% apart
- N3KS and AA3B in SO-Assisted finished with only 0.7% between their scores
- AA4VV and K8DJC in SO-40 were the closest Top Tennessees in the entire competition — a paper-thin 0.018% determining the final place of finish!

The persnickety polar path moved the ionospheric love light south this year as K4CIA walked away with the top SOAB-QRP score from NC. Last year, three of the top five SOAB-QRP positions went to New Englanders and all of the top five were northeast of Tennessee. This year, the number two position swung way out west to W6QU (op W8QZA) before rocketing

back across the continent to CT where N1TM finished third.

The Top Ten in SOAB-LP bounces all over the eastern half of the continent. K1BX was the top station this year with KU1CW putting together a big list of multipliers to take second from near Kansas City. W3LL was third from Maryland before N5AW yanked the fourth spot back to STX and N4TZ held the baton in the Midwest for fifth. The East Coast could not be denied and claimed all of the remaining spots; N1PGA in sixth from WMA, seventh-place K2PS down the coast in SNJ, and W1CTN in CT for eighth. The fourth district finally got a word in edge-wise as K7SV in VA and N4XL in SC finished ninth and tenth.

As in several other recent years, there is VY2ZM (op K1ZM) and then there is everybody else in SOAB-HP. It's not just a killer

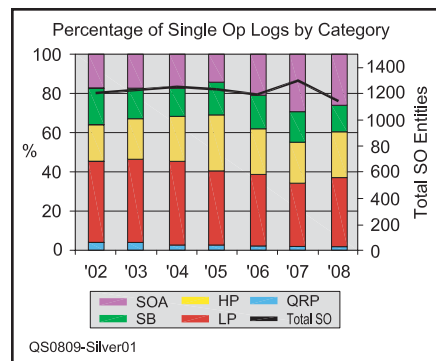


Figure 1 — Distribution of Single-Op logs by category and band, 2002-2008.

location, either, as 'ZM's accuracy is excellent and he keeps the chair warm. One of the closer finishes was turned in by second-place station NN3W in MDC and K4ZW in VA. Only 1.6% separates these two! Two VE3 stations — VE3EJ and VC3E — slugged it out for fourth and fifth position. AA1K filled in the badly needed DE multiplier overseas and took sixth in the process. VO1MP, in rare NL, took advantage of good propagation opportunities to place seventh. Familiar call sign W3BGN appears in eighth spot, while W9RE's big IN signal earned the ninth seat. In another tight finish, K1RX was less than a single percentage point behind 'RE to claim the final Top Ten spot.

The domestic Assisted category remains a battle for stations in the northeast. The Top Ten extends as far west and south as OH and NC. Within those borders, the scores show that it is a competitive and tough category. The oft-needed RI multiplier helped pilot KI1G to the top of Single-Op Assisted this year. K3WW — a familiar call in Assisted categories — placed second in front of one of the tightest races between N3KS and AA3B for third and fourth, respectively. K3PP in fifth, N8TR in sixth, and N3AD in seventh were locked in another duel before the first Canadian, VE3UTT, appears in eighth place. N4ZC in NC and W1GD in NNJ round out this category's Top Ten list.

US-VE Single-Band

It's hardly a surprise that there aren't many 10 meter and 15 meter logs or that 20 meters leads the parade (again). What is unexpected is the steep drop in both 40 and 80 meter submissions. The disturbed conditions probably discouraged operators that otherwise might have put in a serious effort.

Figure 2 illustrates how the single-band entries are distributed. It will be nice to see

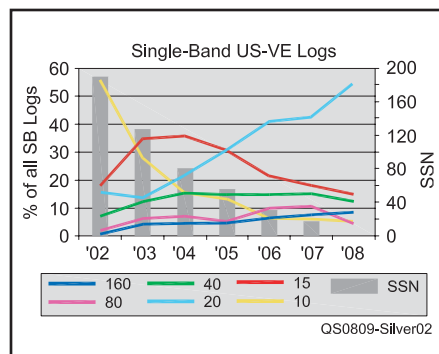


Figure 2 — Single-band US/VE logs, 2002-2008. SSN is an abbreviation for smoothed spot number.

Sponsored Plaque Winners

Plaque Category	Winner	Plaque Sponsor
W/VE Single Operator High Power Phone	VY2ZM	Frankford Radio Club
W/VE Single Operator Low Power Phone	K1BX	Dauberville DX Association
W/VE Single Operator QRP Phone	K4CIA	Jeffrey Briggs, K1ZM
W/VE Single Operator Assisted Phone	K11G	Pete Carter, K3VW Memorial
W/VE Multioperator Single Transmitter Phone	K9RS	Steve Adams, K4RF
W/VE Multioperator Unlimited Transmitter Phone	K3LR	Western New York DX Association
W/VE 1.8 MHz Phone	KT1V	Butch Greve, W9EWC Memorial
W/VE 3.5 MHz Phone	ND8DX	Jeffrey Briggs, VY2ZM
W/VE 14 MHz Phone	K2XA	Northern Illinois DX Association
W/VE 28 MHz Phone	K4WI	Ralph Fontaine AF7DX
World Single Operator Phone High Power	HC8A (N6KT, op)	North Jersey DX Association
World Single Operator Phone Low Power	P40A, (KK9A, op)	Andy Faber, AE6Y
World Multioperator Single Transmitter Phone	PJ4G	Carl Cook, Al6V/P49V
World Multioperator Two Transmitters Phone	6Y1V	W6NL and K6BL
World Multioperator Unlimited Phone	TI50DX	Stanley Cohen, W8QDQ
World 1.8 MHz Phone	KV4FZ	In Memory of ZL2BT
World 14 MHz Phone	P40V (Al6V, op)	Don Wallace, W6AM, Memorial Award
World 21 MHz Phone	ZX5J (PP5JR, op)	Long Island DX Association
World 28 MHz Phone	LU1HF	North Shenandoah DX Association NS4DX
Asia Multioperator Single Transmitter Phone	JA2ZJW	Yankee Clipper Contest Club
Europe Multioperator Unlimited Phone	9A1A	Operators at K1TTT
North America Multioperator Single Transmitter Phone	V26X	Nick Lash, K9KLR
Oceania Single Operator High Power Phone	KH6LC (N6GQ, op)	W7EW / W7AT
South America Multioperator Two Transmitter Phone	ZY7C	Operators at K1TTT
New England Division Single Operator Low Power Phone	K1BX	CTRI Contest Group
New England Division Single Operator Assisted	K11G	Don Greenbaum
Canada Single Operator Low Power Phone	VE3AD	Contest Club Ontario
Japan Single Operator Low Power Phone	JH4UYB	Western Washington DX Club
W/VE Single Operator High Power Combined Score	AA1K	National Contest Journal
W/VE Single Operator Low Power Combined Score	K1BX	Rochester DX Association K2FR Memorial Plaque
World Multioperator Unlimited Combined Score	K3LR	W2PV Memorial - Schenectady ARA
World Single Operator Low Power Combined Score	VP9/W6PH	C. Sharp, K5DX Memorial by the Texas DX Society

the effect of a solar uptick in a year or two. No, the bar for 2008's SSN is not missing. It's just that the SSN for the 2008 contest was -1. That's right...a -1 value.

Looking at 10 meter scores, distributed in an arc across the southern part of the US, W5MK in seventh place was the northernmost station to make more than a few QSOs. Third-place W6GMT (I wonder to what time zone his clock is set?) and KM6Z in fifth made sure the West Coast was represented and I'm sure that wasn't easy! Congratulations to K4WI with the winning score from AL, followed by NA4CW to his southeast in the SFL section.

The distribution of scores in the 15 meter Top Ten look an awful lot like the scores in the 10 meter Top Ten. No Canadian provinces found here, either, although KE3WM in seventh place from WPA extended the Top Ten farther north than the 10 meter group. Winner NR5M's big aluminum farm played a role in his being able to out-contact KC7V in second place from AZ and N8PR from SFL in third. Centrally located, NR5M was able to pick up counters to both east and west.

K2XA's winning SOAB-20 QSO total on the ENY-EU circuit held off the challenge from another 20 meter stalwart, W7WA's strong WWA score in second place. Third place is found in GA in the person of N4PN, before a pair of Newfoundlanders, VO1HE and VO1KVT, placed fourth and fifth from their perch on the North Atlantic. (Check out VO1KVT's QSL on www.qrz.com.) Moving west again, W8TWA placed sixth from MI and then the spotlight moved all the way back to EWA as W7BJN finished seventh. The final three spots are occupied

by W9NY, K2MFY, and WR2G, all from the northeastern quadrant of the US.

Congratulations to W6YI for the highest single-band finish by any West Coast station this year, convincingly taking the top spot on 40 meters with one of the only two top scores that was higher than in 2007! 40 meters is another band that can be relatively eclectic in propagation, but Asian participation is crucial to stations west of Kansas City. As the high bands go, so do the Region III callers, so it is not surprising to see the remainder of the 40 meter scores from farther east, beginning with N4QV in second place from SFL. The exception is WDØBGZ in third place from CO again this year. The photo finish between AA4VV and K8DJC for fourth place came down to three points — the equivalent of a single QSO! OH was also a hot spot on 40 meters with K8DJC, and W8JMF in fifth and tenth place, respectively. AD8J, W3TMZ, K7AO, and VA3XH shouldered aside the Ohioans for sixth through ninth places, respectively.

The top three 80 meter stations from 2007 weren't on 80 meters in 2008, having moved to other bands or not participating. As a result, only seven SO-80 entries were made and the top score, by ND8DX in OH, was only 20% of last year's winning score! In what should have been a low-band year, competition was surprisingly light. Nevertheless, the top two stations, ND8DX pursued by N3YD, both found 59 multipliers and that's a good weekend's work, to be sure. K4KZZ was third from NC, beating WA2AOG in WNY.

160 meters was the other band on which



All smiles after pushing to a difficult 2nd-place finish in SOAB-QRP, Bill, W8QZA, operated at W6QU from San Diego.

scores improved. KT1V added almost 20% to last year's winning total to take home the winning score on this difficult band. Another score larger than the 2007 winner was submitted by second place finisher W2MF. K5RX moved up two places from last year to finish third as the only Top Ten finisher from west of the Mississippi River.

Multi-Operator

Teams from all across the US were represented in this M/S, from NH (N1FD) to EB (W6WB). The top three finishers (K9RS, N1MM, and W1QA in first through third) were all from the northeast, although K9RS in WPA finished substantially ahead of the challenging teams. K9RS had big numbers on 160 and 80 meters, while the higher bands were much tighter. The fourth-place K5NA team put in a strong showing from STX and finished just ahead of W1ZA in VA. W6WB placed sixth all the way across the country in the EB section by dint of good 40 meter and 15 meter (and even 10 meter) totals. The average number of operators in the Top Ten M/S entries was 3.1 this year. I don't know about you, but I could certainly use an extra 0.1 operator at times!

No station in the M/2 Top Ten was very far from the Atlantic this year, sprinkled from VA to NH, with VE3RM as the sole Canadian representative in any of the multioperator Top Ten. Last year, the muscular station of KC1XX dominated the M/2 category, but Matt's Marauders decided to take a year off from ARRL DX Phone. That threw the field open and some very motivated teams responded. WE3C prevailed over N3RS for the top spot, reversing the finishing order for these two stations last year. In third, KB1H appeared and edged W4RM right behind in fourth. Requiring a few more operators to keep all of those emitters emitting and filaments filamenting, the average M/2 team size was 6.

The K3LR machine in far-Western Pennsylvania kept their winning streak going at five this year. Tim's Team really makes the station play well, especially on 20 meters, and so outlasted their archrivals at W3LPL. Following K3LR and W3LPL were a pileup of New England stations with W1UE finishing

third ahead of K1CX (4th) and K1TTT (5th). Each of those three took home the bacon on 160, 80, or 20 meters and virtually tying on 15 meters. W4ML (VA) and W3PP (DE) had a real mid-Atlantic donnybrook, with W4ML prevailing to take sixth place. Out on the West Coast, N6RO in the EB section and K7ZSD a little further north in OR duked it out for eighth and ninth places, respectively. Long-time multi-multi competitor W0AIH rounded out the Top Ten from WI.

Affiliated Club Competition

"ARRGGGGGH" — W8JUI

This year's club totals were almost the same as last year — 56 entries — but total numbers of member scores are up again this year — 1464 as opposed to 1451 last year. The contest clubs, in the face of tough conditions, are doing a great job of getting more people on the air and submitting their logs. This will pay big dividends for all us when

Affiliated Club Competition

	Score	Entries
Unlimited Category		
Frankford Radio Club	129,067,251	158
Yankee Clipper Contest Club	121,365,369	181
Potomac Valley Radio Club	70,285,920	160
Northern California Contest Club	29,592,405	84
Society of Midwest Contesters	27,370,548	70
Contest Club Ontario	19,559,412	58
Florida Contest Group	14,368,032	75
Minnesota Wireless Assn	13,126,503	64
Tennessee Contest Group	9,343,602	56
Medium Category		
North Coast Contesters	21,736,962	24
Central Texas DX and Contest	14,121,693	14
Carolina DX Assn	11,293,344	43
Mad River Radio Club	10,012,443	27
Hudson Valley Contesters and DXers	9,871,614	38
South East Contest Club	9,469,722	25
Rochester (NY) DX Assn	9,351,762	8
Willamette Valley DX Club	7,176,978	19
Southern California Contest Club	5,540,436	34
Order of Boiled Owls of New York	4,950,528	13
Alabama Contest Group	3,908,805	22
Western Washington DX Club	3,870,183	22
Grand Mesa Contesters of Colorado	3,798,036	21
CTRI Contest Group	3,551,784	12
North Texas Contest Club	3,375,546	16
Central Arizona DX Assn	3,314,928	24
East Coast Canada Contest Club	2,647,044	7
Texas DX Society	2,491,317	3
Contest Club Du Quebec	1,551,993	9
Utah DX Assn	1,351,659	14
Western New York DX Assn	1,002,057	7
BC DX Club	954,882	4
Eastern Iowa DX Assn	598,506	9
Bergen ARA	492,717	13
Alberta Clippers	437,544	4
Redmond Top Key Contest Club	305,685	11
Oklahoma DX Assn	262,302	4
Saskatchewan Contest Club	238,764	4
Magnolia DX Assn	29,205	5
Local Category		
Maritime Contest Club	4,570,449	8
Central Virginia Contest Club	1,977,831	3
Southern California DX Club	622,377	5
Sterling Park ARC	555,042	4
North Hills Amateur Radio Contest	538,146	4
Low Country Contest Club	406,323	5
South Jersey DX Assn	405,735	8
Northern Illinois DX Assn	389,841	4
Spokane DX Association	378,117	7
Salt City DX Assn	362,616	3
West Park Radiops	336,960	9
Southeastern DX Club	174,204	7
Austin ARC	151,656	3
Mother Lode DX/Contest Club	144,573	7
Northern Rockies DX Association	119,457	3
Metro DX Club	102,540	10
10-70 Repeater Assn	93,636	3
Hazel Park ARC	43,308	3
Arrow Communications Assn	8,268	3
Portage County Amateur Radio	4,122	3

the solar cycle resumes its upwards journey. Why not make it a mission for your own contest club, to encourage participation not only in the contest, but in the club, too! Last year's shift of entries in favor of the Local category has somewhat reversed this year, with 19 Local and 28 Medium entries.

In the Unlimited category, the Frankford Radio Club (FRC) pushed aside the Yankee Clipper Contest Club (YCCC) to win the gavel. Even though the FRC had fewer logs than YCCC, the FRC's participation went up, while YCCC's went down. Getting all the club members on the air really helps! YCCC was followed by the Potomac Valley Radio Club (PVRC) in third place. Fourth and fifth places traded hands this year with the Northern California Contest Club (NCCC) ahead of the Society of Midwest Contesters (SMC).

In the Medium category, the Central Texas DX and Contest Club took a run at the North Coast Contest Club, but the results are the same as last year; The North Coasters retain their gavel with a strong turnout of members submitting their logs. The Carolina DX Association made a big jump up to third this year followed by a charging Mad River Radio Club, both clubs having increased the number of log submissions dramatically.

Changing from Medium to Local category, the Maritime Contest Club grabbed a gavel! They were followed by a new club, the Central Virginia Contest Club who found themselves second when the shooting stopped. The Southern California DX Club was present, too, holding onto third place.

DX Overview

"Conditions were poor, and that explains why I didn't work a single CA on any band! I changed a few diapers, however. A first for me, HI." — CT1EAT

Just as in the US and VE logs, there are some very closely spaced scores to be found all through the various category Top Ten tables:

- HQ9R and VP9/W6PH were neck and neck in SOAB-LP, only 1.2% apart
- KP2BH and LU3CT, also SOAB-LP, were even closer at 0.3% separation
- In SO-Assisted, EA5KV and PY4OG finished just 0.5% apart
- On 20 meters, ZV5K and IT9STX almost finished in a dead heat, with 0.04% between them

Whenever I put a QRP DX station in the ARRL DX log, I have to smile, especially if they are running a pileup! The SOAB-QRP winner this year was CO6LP from nearby Cuba who used 40 and 20 meters to outdistance the competition. Moving up to second and third are F5BEG and IK5RUN from Europe. Switching to the other direction, three JA QRPers finished fourth (JA1CG), fifth (JA2DLM), and sixth (JR4DAH) — all familiar calls to contesters and DXers.

All of the SOAB-LP Top Ten could be found by pointing the beam south to the Caribbean and South America. P4ØA operated by KK9A ran his string of wins to four this year with a solid victory over HQ9R (op WQ7R). Only K3LR with five straight wins has a longer active streak in this contest. All of the first four scores were made by traveling operators. VP9/W6PH just missed out on second place on his annual visit to the Island of Shorts. G3TBK traveled to the Caribbean, piloting J88DR to fourth place. The resident operators then take over, with HK6P in fifth place, followed by 8P6EX, YV5EAH, and CE1KR. KP2BH and LU3CT finished close to a dead heat, with KP2BH's better multiplier total carrying the day.

In SOAB-HP, HC8A displaced 8P1A operated by W2SC from last year's top spot in the SOAB-HP category. Both ops generated an Imperial Ton of QSOs, but N6KT found some extra multipliers on every band and grabbed 10 meter openings unavailable in Barbados. Two more Caribbean calls, KP2M (op N2TK) and TO5A finished third and fourth before the Pacific made an appearance in KH6LC operated by N6GQ. The Caribbean and Central America divvied up sixth through eighth in the person of NP2I, HQ2W (op HR2DMR) and V31XX (op HP1WW), respectively. PY2NY was ninth from South America and Europe's sole Top Ten representative, EA4KR, was in tenth place.

Without a large team making the trip this year, WE9V decided to run PJ2T in the SO-Assisted category and ran away with the show, making almost 9 times the score of his nearest competitor and breaking a 9-year-old record in the process! The second and third places calls, PY2EX and PY5QW, are also new to the category, followed by a regular, EA7RU, in fourth. Europe's extensive spotting network also helped another repeating Top Tenner, DLØWW, to fifth place and EA5KV to sixth. The next four places bounced back and forth between Europe and South America as PY4OG, EF1W, LU7YZ, and YT6M complete the Top Ten.

DX Single-Band

There was nary a sign of a 10 meter signal from north of the equator this year — not even close. But yet, there were plenty of QSOs to be had from the South Americans, as always. LU1HF repeated as the top SOAB-10 score, breaking the 1000 QSO mark and even *improving* his score from last year! That would not have been my prediction, so extra credit is due for this fine score! One of the many PP5 and PY5 calls whose number has increased thanks to WRTC-2006, PP5NW finished second. A parade of Argentinians followed in third through seventh as LU9DAG, LQ5H, LU4DX, LU6FOV, and LU6DU plied the bands and giving us all a few 10 meter contacts. CX4DX's reliable signal was there for

another multiplier and eighth place. LW1HR and PY2SRB completed the Top Ten in ninth and tenth places.

Only three 15 meter stations from north of the equator (YV1CTE, KH7Y, and HK3JJH) managed to break into the Top Ten and no Europeans were present in the Top Ten at all. PP5JR operated the big ZX5J station and won the category quite handily with a nice score. There was a real log jam of multipliers at 59, so all three of the top places were determined by QSO totals. LS1D (op LW9EOC) and ZX2B (op PY2MNL) placed second and third. Still in South America, but quite far north of the winners, YV1CTE came in fourth and PY5HOT (must be the weather?) was fifth. From Hawaii, KH7Y brought some 15 meter aloha to the airwaves to claim the sixth position and then the bands went back to Argentina and LU2QC in seventh. A35RK adjusted his lava-lava and topped 1000 QSOs to place a welcome eighth. South America finished out the table with HK3JJH and PY2DN.

On 20 meters, returning to the station that

DX Multi-operator results and Top Ten tables are available in the expanded Web version of this article at www.arrl.org/contests.

helped jump-start the many-membered Caribbean contest expeditions, AI6V not only won, but set a new record in the process from P4ØV. Right behind P4ØV, IV3IYH decided that if 20 meters would not come to Europe, then he would go to where 20 meters was hot and placed second from HT2N. Another record fell in third place, as KH7B displaced a long-time record set back in 1989. HI3TEJ drove the HI3T station to a nice score in fifth place. Finding two extra multipliers to make the highest total of any station in the SOSB category, HK1X placed fifth, while nearby, 4M5IR was running up enough points to place fifth. Passing the baton to Europe, TM1W (op F5HRY) placed sixth, following by South Americans, LS2D (op LU1DK) and ZV5K. We close out the Top Ten with a second European, IT9STX.

Five active continents had a place in the 40 meter Top Ten! Africa, nearly shut out of Top Ten's entirely, led the charge with a winning score (and a record) from AO8A on the Canary Islands. Swinging all the way 'round, ZL3A's potent signal blanketed North America and put the Kiwi's in second place. Europe was next as F6CTT maneuvered TM5C to third place. Not content to stay in one region, the Top Ten list then jumped to South America where PR7AP is in fourth place. CT2ITR and S53S (op S52X) finished fifth and sixth. YV6BXN was sandwiched in

between pairs of European scores for sixth place, with IR2C (op IK2NCJ) and EA3BOX in seventh and eighth. Our jaunt finishes in South America, where PY6KY and PY1NB were the ninth and tenth place scores.

The disturbed conditions and higher-than-usual absorption really hurt 80 meters. At a time of the solar cycle when this band should shine, it took a big hit right around the time of the contest. There were not nearly as many Europeans and northern stations, like KL7RA, represented this time around. Stations in or around the shores of the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico filled up the top half the Top Ten list for 80 meters. ZF2AH took advantage of proximity to the US and VE to finish first, hotly pursued by KP4KE on another island. XE2K, last year's winner, was also on-hand in third, and Cuba was represented by CM6CAC. On the south shore, YV5LMW finished fifth. West Africa was close enough for CT3DZ to place sixth and HP3AK snagged the seventh spot. Two northern Europeans with good stations finished eighth and ninth; GM3PPG (op G4BYB) and SN3A. A far South American, LU1FDU, made enough long-haul contacts to finish tenth.

Down, but not out, 160 meters continues to attract a crowd. KV4FZ led all comers on this band with a score not far reduced from last year's first-place finish. CM6RCR was nearly NVIS to the southern US and so did quite well, finishing second. Out in the center of the Atlantic, CU2AF tapped into the big East Coast population and finished third. Somewhat hampered by tropical noise, LU2DVI/H was fourth. There was some joy in Mudville as the rest of the 160 meter Top Ten is populated by Europeans; DF2UU, ES5RW, F6KCP (op F5VHN), UA2FT, HA8BE, and EU3AR all made a few QSOs. You may think that the 1 QSO and 3 Mults of tenth-place finisher EU3AR is a typo, but the QSOs represent the total remaining after log checking removed QSO points for miscopied exchanges.

Concluding Remarks

Contesting in these low-flux times is a "character-building experience" and we all like to think of those "best of times", fuzzy around the edges in our memories, of contest weekends when the pileups were bottomless and DX answered every CQ. But the same excitement hits at the starting bell regardless of the level of flux, the boasts just as big, the triumphs even a bit sweeter in adversity, and the jests and ripostes just as sharp afterwards. Yet, if you need something to revitalize your contesting spirit, there is a guaranteed tonic — become a contesting Elmer. Take the opportunity to offer encouragement and guidance to newcomers. After all, these are their "best of times"!

Keep it ever so — see you next year!

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