For the 30th anniversary of the UHF Contest, the first weekend of August, 2008, saw UHF and Microwave radio enthusiasts turning on their equipment, spinning their antennas (and for the 30 Rovers, hitting the road) for that 24 hours from 1800 UTC Saturday to 1759 UTC on Sunday. Just shy of 200 logs were received (just missing my personal plea from last year’s results article for over 200 to be submitted). Still, it was an increase over the number of logs received in 2007.

Nearly 11,000 QSOs were contained in this year’s logs, quite close to the number of QSOs reported in 2007, even though 28 fewer logs were submitted then. Among the categories, Single-Operator Low Power remains most popular with 97 logs (half of the total), followed by Single-Operator High Power, with 51 logs (just over a quarter of the logs). Logs from 30 Rover stations (22 classic Rover, seven Limited Rover and two Unlimited Rover), along with 16 Multioperator entries, made up the remainder.

Where the Action Was

For the “where” by band, the “Activity by Band” and “Participation by Band” tables are back for 2008 but now compare 3 years of activity, from 2006 through 2008. In Table 1, Activity by Band, it is interesting to note that even with 194 logs submitted in 2008 (compared to 166 for 2007 and 190 in 2006) QSO totals actually dropped for the 222, 432 and 1296 MHz bands despite a higher number of stations reporting QSOs on those bands in 2008 than for either 2006 or 2007.

To help visualize the “where” spatially, the map of activity in Figure 1 is new for 2008. It shows the grid squares from which contacts were reported as having been made.

Some Notable Contacts

Thanks to a bit of tropospheric enhancement Saturday evening and Sunday morning, quite a number of long haul contacts were made during the contest. The winners for longest distance appear to be the 222 and 432 MHz contacts between AA4ZZ (EM96, NC) and K5QE (EM31, NTX) — over 700 miles according to AA4ZZ’s Soapbox entry! On 902 MHz, K4XR (EM64, AL) and WQPØ (EM19, KS) linked up over a 600+ mile path. A 500 mile range was reached on bands as high as 10 GHz. K2DRH (EN41, IL) and W4ZRZ (EM63, AL) covered nearly 600 miles on 1296 MHz. On 2304 and 3456 MHz, K3SIW (EN52, IL) and K4XR (EM64, AL) made contact over a 500+ mile path. On 5.7 and 10 GHz, W4ZRZ (EM63, AL) and W9SZ (EN50, IL) came close to 500 miles.

Top Scorers by Category

For a fifth consecutive year, it was the “usual suspects” in Single-Op High Power with Mike, KMØT; Don, WW8M, and

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Jeff, K1TEO, finishing in first, second, and third places in that category.

After having been edged out of the top spot for Single-Op Low Power in 2007, Bob, K2DRH, returned to first place, a very familiar spot for him. Todd, KC9BQA, stepped into the second spot for the “A” category in 2008 and Dave, N0KP, as he did in 2007, finished out the “Top 3” for Single-Op Low Power.

Three operators of Team Papa Fox piloted their K1JR club call to achieve the top national score in the Multi-operator category. This was a first-time “Field Day” style operation for them and is described in a nice sidebar to this article in the Web version of the results. AG4V added packet as a second operator to finish in second place for Multi-op and four members of the Chippewa Valley VH7 Contesters operated using their club call, K9CVC, finishing in third place.

With two new Rover categories, the landscape changed a bit and though activity in the Upper Midwest remained strong as a fifth “Rover Mania” effort was initiated by the Northern Lights Radio Society, activity in California produced the top scores for Rovers in 2008. Though it has spurred a bit of discussion on e-mail reflectors, a group of California rovers got together and, among them, made the top scores for 2008 in the classic Rover category as well as in the new, Rover-Limited and Rover-Unlimited categories. Wayne, N6NB, led the way in the classic Rover category with eight bands and visiting ten grids. Rob, K6GTOA, chose the four bands from 2.3 GHz through 10 GHz and visited 10 grids to establish the first top score in the Rover-Limited category. In Rover-Unlimited, Mike, WA6YLZ (along with co-pilot/driver John, N6MU) traveled with eight bands through 10 grids to set the top score for that new category. Jon, W0ZQ, claimed the number two spot in Rover, traversing seven grids with eight bands, followed by Bruce, W9FZ, who activated eight grids with six bands. In Rover-Limited, second and third places were claimed by your author, John, K9JK, and Mel, KC0P, respectively, although both only visited four grids with three bands. Second place in Rover-Unlimited was claimed by Jim, AF6O, with his Saturday-only effort that traveled through six grids with eight bands.

Regional Highlights

The Northeast Region was the top source of logs with 50 received in 2008 (compared to 47 in 2007). K2KIB topped the 24 “A” category entries, and K1TEO led the 15 SOHP entries. W3KWH was first among the five Multi-Op entries from the Northeast. Six Rover logs were received from the region; five were classic Rover, led by WA3PVT/R, and W3BC/R (+WA3UFN) was the sole Rover-Limited entry.

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Forty-one logs were submitted from the Southeast Region for 2008, an increase of 14 for the region from 2007. AA4ZZ and W4ZRZ topped their respective “A” and “B” categories as they did in 2007, leading 20 and 15 entries in those categories for 2008. AG4V topped the four Multi-Op entries from the region and N8UM/R claimed the top Rover score of the region’s two entries, both of which were classic Rover.

The Central Region’s log count for 2008 slipped to 35 from 44 in 2007. The national Single-Op Low-Power top-scorer K2DRH led the 21 Low Power entries from the region. Among seven “B” category logs, WW8M was the top scorer. Of three Multi-Op entries from the Central Region, national winner K1JR was the best. Four Rover entries included regional high scores from N9TTR/R among three classic Rover entries and K9JK/R was the one entry limited in Rover.

The log count from the Midwest Region grew to 45 in 2008 (eight more than 2007) and included K9CVC, the national top scorer in Single-Op High-Power, leading eight Midwest Region entrants in that class. In the “A” category, N0KP toppled the 22 Single-Op Low-Power logs. Among three Multi-operator entries from the region, K0BHJHH claimed the top score. The dozen Rover logs received from the Midwest Region was the highest regional count, consisting of nine classic Rover entries, led by W0ZQ/R, and three Rover Limited entries led by KC0P/R.

Log submissions from the West Coast Region increased by more than 40% from 16 in 2007 to 23 for 2008. The group of California Rovers mentioned above represents five of the seven additional logs for 2008. Within the Single-Operator entrants, ten were Low Power and six were High Power with VE7DNG and N7EPP claiming the top spots, respectively. N6SJV was the best (and only) Multi-Op from the region. There were six Rover logs received from the region, split equally between Rover, Limited Rover and Unlimited Rover with two entrants in each of those subcategories. The leaders were N6NB/R, K6GTOA/R and WA6YLZ/R, respectively.

**What will 2009 Bring?**

According to the 2009 ARRL Contest Calendar, the dates are set as August 1-2, 2009. “We came close to crossing the 200 log hurdle but fell just short so I will repeat my goal from last year to surpass that number. (Subliminal message…>200 Logs, >200 Logs, >200 Logs, >200 Logs).” Thanks to all who participated in 2008, and here’s hoping that most, or ideally all, of you can return in 2009 (and submit your logs, too!). Again, I’ll close with Bill Sea-breeze’s famous directive to “Listen for the weak ones!” an especially important aspect for the higher bands.