On December 12-13, 2009, thousands of Amateur Radio contesters tuned to the highest frequency amateur HF band, perhaps uncertain about what they’d find. Operating between 28 and 29.7 MHz can be a capricious endeavor at this low point in the solar cycle. Without reliable F layer propagation, would there be anyone to work? This year, wide-spread sporadic E was observed in most of North America east of the Rocky Mountains on Sunday afternoon.

The ARRL 10 Meter Contest is also the perfect time of year to try meteor scatter communications. The Geminids meteor shower typically peaks from December 12-14. Stations all over the world noted meteor scatter at work. Henry, KC2TA describes what a meteor burst sounds like: “Openings that did happen were at times EXTREMELY brief. A station would be S9+40 for all of two letters of the call — then gone!” If you’ve never made a meteor scatter QSO before, give it a try in 2010.

Activity

Activity in the ARRL 10 Meter Contest improved in 2009. A total of 2,061 logs were entered, an increase of about 9% from 2008. Two-thirds of the increase came from DX stations, particularly from Europe which now accounts for 53% of all DX logs. Logs from Canada were down 13%. In the United States, although there were 72 more logs overall, activity was slightly down in about half of the divisions. We can now say with certainty that this was the first solar cycle minimum in which the overall number of logs stayed above 1,000 every year.

Records

For the second year in a row, no world, continental, or overall W/VE records were set. (For a complete listing of ARRL 10 Meter Contest records see www.arrl.org/contests.) Fifteen new DXCC entity records were set and, just like last year, four new W/VE section records were set; three in QRP categories and one in a Low Power category.

W/VE Categories

Three Canadians — VA3DF, VE3MMQ, and VE3KZ — one in each of the Single Operator, Mixed Mode categories, made the listings, the best results for Canada since 2006.

Single Operator, Mixed Mode (SOMM)

After second place finishes in 2007 and 2008, Manuel, W2MF won the W/VE SOMM QRP category with 51,520 points and a new record. Second (33,852 points) went to Doug, VA3DF. Third (21,894 points) went to Dan, WG5G of South Texas.

In the SOMM Low Power category, the top score went to Toni, N0NI (219,200 points) in Iowa from 686 QSOs to 100 different multipliers. Second went to Bill, VE3MMQ with 118,320 points. Richard, K9OM took third (113,730 points) from North Florida.

With 1165 QSOs in the log, Scott, NE9U, operating from WØAIH (408,250 points) in Wisconsin, won the SOMM High Power for the second time in three years. Last year’s victor, John, WE3C, operating from Eastern Pennsylvania, took second (275,988 points). Jerry, WB9Z (275,000 points) in Illinois was third.

Single Operator, Phone-Only (SOPH)

W/VE Activity in the SOPH QRP category grew by over 50%, with 31 entries. Winning the category was Rick, KB5KYJ from West Texas with 218 contacts and 33 multipliers for 14,058 points. John, KE2OI (6402 points) of Southern New Jersey took second with exactly 100 QSOs. Third place finisher Jory, KJ5RM was close behind with 6048 points.

Three new faces took the top spots in SOPH Low Power. Bud, W3LL (33,024 points) won from Maryland with 346 contacts to 48 multipliers. Mike, N5MT (31,648 points) from South Texas, took second with 342 QSOs and 46 multipliers. Third went to Jeff, AC5O (24,768 points), just edging out Charles, WB9PUB’s 24,140 points.

In the SOPH High Power category, the top five stations all made over 1000 contacts and 100,000 points, and all were from two sections, South Dakota and South Texas. Ed, WØSD moved up from a third place result in 2008 to win with 1235 QSOs to 64 multipliers for 156,928 points. Finishing in second for the second year in a row, 10 meter specialist Chuck, W5PR shook off the flu to make 149,034 points from South
Texas. Third went to another South Dakotan, Arliss, W7XU (143,232 points).

Single Operator, CW-Only (SOCW)

Three new calls were at the top of SOCW QRP. James, N0UR of Minnesota won with 177 contacts to 35 multipliers for 22,968 points. Dennis, K4ZJ (22,464 points) came in a close second from WW4LL in Georgia. Third went to Dave, W7FB operating as W0MHS to make 15,840 points from Missouri.

Winning the SOCW Low Power category, Clint, AEGST of South Texas made 482 contacts to 82 multipliers for 80,808 points. Second went to David, KSUZ (72,928) of Arkansas, who made over 350 contacts. Bryan, W5MX of Kentucky took third (71,280).

Rebounding from his fifth place finish in 2008, Richard, K5NA won the SOCW High Power category with 220,248 points from South Texas. In second was Allen, N2KW (163,432 points) of Western Massachusetts, one of the best results for a New England station. Down one position from last year, third went to Bob, N4BP (147,728 points) of South Florida.

Multioperator, Single Transmitter (MOST)

The four-operator team at NX5M earned its fifth consecutive victory in W/VE MOST. The team made 1345 contacts and 116 multipliers for 437,552 points from South Texas. Earning second place was a four-person team at K1LZ (323,782) in Eastern Massachusetts. The three-op team at KDØS (280,052 points) in South Dakota came in third.

DX Categories

Single Operator, Mixed Mode (SOMM)

Braco, E77DX took the overall DX victory in the SOMM QRP category with 5084 points. Second place went to Nikolay, LZ3ND, operating as CT7/LZ3ND from Portugal. Arsenie, YO8DPD took third with 41 contacts from Romania. Vitor, PY2NY, the first place winner last year, came in fourth and the top entry from Asia was Kiyo-haru, 7K1CPT of Tokyo, who finished fifth.

In the SOMM Low Power category, seven of the Top Ten scores were from South America. Alejandro, LU5WW enjoyed a repeat victory from his Patagonia station with 535 contacts and 136 multipliers (220,320 points). A close second went to Javi, LU5SF, operating from the Buenos Aires area as LUQ0F (214,008 points). Alex, PY2SEX took third with 144,072 points from Campinas.

The top non-South American score was made by Heijo, EA8OM (29,998 points) in the Canary Islands.

The top three scores in the SOMM High Power category also went to stations from South America. Pedro, C5X5B, who has hosted Multioperator efforts in recent years, won as a Single Operator with 560,880 points from 934 QSOs and 180 multipliers. Second went to Jesus, AQ5F, operating from the Buenos Aires area as LUQ0F (214,008 points). Alex, PY2SEX took third with 144,072 points from Campinas. The top European score was sixth place finisher Ben, DL6FBL (120,840 points), operating from DR1A in western Germany.

Single Operator, Phone-Only (SOPH)

The top three DX results in the SOPH QRP category came from stations on three different continents. The winner was Dario, LU3DR (5280 points), operating with his AY0DX call sign from Tanbirl. Second place went to Dario, IT9SSI (4284 points), using I9UJA from the coast of northeastern Sicily. Francisco, T9GANF of Guatemala City, last year’s winner, took third with 4096 points. The best result from Oceania or Asia was sixth place by Tom, VK4ATH (536 points) in Queensland.

Just like last year, eight of the top ten DX scores in the SOPH Low Power cat-
category came from South America. Winning, however, was the same North American — Tino, H33CCP — who finished with 389 QSOs in 36 multipliers for 34,488 points. A very close second went to Mauricio, PY2CX (33,984 points), operating as ZV2C from Sao Paulo. Operating at LU1UM in La Pampa, Alex, LU2UF took third with 33,604 points.

In the SOPH High Power category, one station had a score far above the others. Alan, PY2LSM (140,760 points) won from Sao Paulo, working 697 QSOs and 102 multipliers. Juan, LU4DX (92,310 points), operating as 5Y4DX from Buenos Aires, took second. Third place went to last year’s winner, Bob, LU2FA (32,230 points) operating as LR2F from Rosario. The top European score was from Cortesi, IZ4DPV (30,528 points), who finished in fourth from IK4JQO.

**Single Operator, CW-Only**

Eight of the top scores in the SOCW QRP category went to European stations in 2009, with five from Eastern Europe. Overall DX victory went to Kulenko, US5VX (4224 points) from southeastern Ukraine. Janko, S59D (3312 points) took second for the second year in a row. To the north and east near St Petersburg, third place went to the second year in a row. To the north and east near St Petersburg, third place went to Alex, LU2UF taken second for the second year in a row. To the north and east near St Petersburg, third place went to the top European, Jose, EA5GS (47,808 points) in Valencia.

**Multioperator, Single Transmitter (MOST)**

In the DX MOST category, eight of the top ten scores came from stations in South America. Winning the contest for the second year in a row was the CW5W team in Cerro Largo, making 574,560 points. Second went to the team at ZK5J (531,840 points) in the state of Santa Catarina. Daniel, LU3CT and Silvio, LW9EOC teamed up together using the LT1A call sign to take third (417,960 points).

**ARRL Affiliated Clubs Competition**

More clubs than ever are getting into the 10 meter action as 60 clubs qualified. There were 25 clubs in the Local Club category, 6 more than in 2008. Last year’s third place club, the Midland Amateur Radio Club moved into the top spot from Texas for the second time in three years. The Central Virginia Contest Club came in second with 8 logs and a total of 129,012 points. The Lincoln Amateur Radio Club came in a close third with 120,384 points from four logs from Nebraska.

The most popular category was Medium Club. Twenty-nine clubs qualified and three scored over 1,000,000 points. The Frankford Radio Club won for the second year in a row, with 1,160,678 points from 17 logs. The Yankee Clipper Contest Club moved up two spots from last year to come in second with 39 logs, the most of any Medium club, and 1,079,780 points. The Central Texas DX and Contest Club came in third and was the only club to average over 100,000 points per log.

Six clubs entered the Unlimited Club category (three more than last year). The Potomac Valley Radio Club just edged out the competition to claim victory. Sixty-one club members combined to score 2,048,194 points. Moving down one spot, the Florida Contest Group fell short of victory by just 2.2%. The Minnesota Wireless Association had enough entrants to qualify as an Unlimited Club and finished third.

**Are You Ready for Next Year?**

A major change is in store for the 2010 ARRL 10 Meter Contest (December 11-12) as the 32 states of Mexico will count as multipliers, using three-letter state abbreviations. Check out the Web site of the Grupo DXXE (www.dxxe.org) for information on Mexican stations and their contest activity. While there have been many changes to the contest rules over the past 37 years, this one is sure to change its flavor. Will it heat things up for you?

**Expanded 10 Meter Results are online at www.arrl.org/contests!**