There hasn’t been a contest in recent memory that kept so many band indicators stuck on 6 meters. Regardless of rig, antenna or power output, if you were on the air during this contest weekend and were tuned to 50 MHz, you were busy making plenty of contacts in numerous grids. Stations in the middle of the country had an advantage with propagation in all directions. Twenty-two percent of the 1202 log entries had totals of over 100 grids on 6 meters. Forty logs showed 200 or more 6 meter grids and two Single Operator, High Power (SOHP) stations and one Multioperator (MO) had over 300 6 meter grid multipliers. With 1202 log entries representing 237,386 contacts, the activity set some all-time records and this is not even a high sunspot number year. Only 23 of all submitted logs lacked a 6 meter entry.

Record Setting Activity

Looking back over the records since VHF contest scoring has moved from EARL section or grid square multipliers, the records set this year are likely to last for many years to come. This was clearly a big scoring year as there were 39 section category records broken! [A table of the new records is available in the online version of this article. — Ed.] These records have been faithfully managed by Curt, K9AKS for the past 10 years. The plan is to have these records posted on the ARRL Web site in the near future.

In the Single-Operator, Low Power (SOLP) category, Dave, K5RQ, in WCF made 1172 QSOs, besting the previous record set in 2006 by K9MU. Webster, WY3X, had fewer QSOs on 6 meters, but beat the previous SOLP record also held by K9MU by scoring 268 grids on this band. For the SOHP entrants, George, K5TR, topped the old record by 253 contacts, making 1883 6 meter QSOs in 310 grids. That’s just about 1 contact per minute for the entire 33 hours of the contest. Former ARRL President K5QE’s MO team with a total of 295 grids beat the previous record for this category of 269 grids. The K5SO team ran a close second with 292 grids on 6 meters. I hear a drum roll for the efforts of the K5QE MO team that managed to put 1834 contacts on 6 meters in their logs with 337 grid multipliers that tops their two previous year efforts when their team also set records in this category.

This year’s 1202 entries surpass last year’s total of 1135 by a nice margin. Of course, when the bands are productive, more operators are encouraged to submit their logs. As I have discovered and mentioned many times before, there are usually twice the number of active stations on for the contest activity than there are logs submitted. Taking a look at the 6 meter QSO totals, you can see that there were over 1800 contacts on just one band in the K5QE log.

DX Activity

We were all pleased to see the increased number of XE stations active and submitting their logs this year. All 8 were active on 6 meters and added a total of 1649 contacts on that band. Hector, XE2K, was also active.
on the microwave bands were up as much as 100%. This was largely due to the efforts of a team of 9 Rovers each equipped with at least 10 bands, traveling together across 9 grids on the West Coast, working each other and some fixed stations. Operating within the confines of the new Rover category rules, they kept contacts between each other below the maximum of 100.

Although there were reports of modest 2 meter tropo and E openings, those reports are far out-shadowed by the sporadic E (E₃) conditions on 6 meters. Mike, K7ULS, on Powder Mountain in Utah caught some 2 meter openings with QSOs to OK, KS, WI, MI and IN. He managed this in spite of 60 MPH winds and snow in June. The Multi-operator team at KA2LIM in FN12 in upstate NY reported a 2 meter QSO as far south as Alabama in EL49. Tom, N4HN, reported a 2 meter contact from EM95 North Carolina to EM25 in Oklahoma. Marshall’s team at K5QE also reported working many FN grids from their STX QTH with an extended 2 meter E opening to the NE. Their 2 meter grid count also benefited greatly from the EME activity contribution of an additional 28 grids.

Comedy, Tragedy or Drama — The Show Must Go On

With all the planning and rehearsals, stations were primed for action. There was the “almost tragedy” as Sebastian, W4AS, experienced a power failure four minutes before the start of the contest. Luckily it lasted only a minute and he had three more minutes to regain his composure and get everything restarted.

The KA2LIM team reported visits by Murphy with problems on their 432 MHz station. They attempted to raise their microwave tower, succeeded in having the mast bend a bit, and in the attempt to get it straighter wound up having it bent over. Lest this comedic scene be lost, they snapped a picture of it to use as their contest QSL card.

Zack, W9SZ, a long-time rover, found himself in a tragi-comedy when he rushed to get his rover ready. He was beset with a downpour just as he was about to hit the road. Compounding his troubles were missing parts as he rushed to get moving. To add to his luck, he was hit with another storm on Sunday. He managed to get everything packed and stowed just as the 30 mph winds hit and rain started. Needless to say there was a lot of mud to clean out of his vehicle and gear. The WA7JTM MO team in Arizona loved the 6 meter opening, but also had to manage against big winds and snow flurries in AZ!

The team of Kim, KB1DFB, and Jay, W1UJ, had a great time with their LMR (Last Minute Rover) setup. They lashed a series of halos and squals to a bar over the cab of their pickup and operated from popular New England grids. The key to their enjoyment was the density of activity in their geography and the elevations they chose.

Brian, ND3F, and David, N3XUD, teamed up as Rovers and encountered some stormy weather that made them pack up and move almost as soon as the activity started. When they got to their last grid they found their stack of radios had fallen over and the amplifiers were not able to be keyed. Brian quickly assessed the situation and resolved it by pulling out the RCA connectors used to key the amps. He used the old “touch-to-talk” method of grounding the center pins in color sequence when running the bands.

The Fourlanders Contest Team in the North Carolina mountains experienced a seized pulley in the cooling portion of their large field generator that then started to steam up and was shut down. Their high power operation went to low power using back-up generators. Lessons learned — always have a plan B and spares.

### Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affiliated Club Competition</th>
<th>Club Name</th>
<th># of Logs</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<td>Unlimited Club</td>
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<td>Spokane DX Association</td>
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<td>1,242</td>
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</table>

### Running the Bands

The excitement on 50 MHz is often to the dismay of the Multioperator stations that sit on the other bands seeking contacts and to the rovers who are trying to do several things at once; drive, operate multiple bands and encourage their contacts to “run the bands.” This year’s contact totals on 144, 222 and 432 MHz reflect that angst as those bands were down 20% in total QSO numbers from last year. The surprise though is that totals...
make this a fun weekend. Always remember that it takes two to make a QSO! Even with the finest equipment, best operators and superb conditions, there has to be activity to make this weekend of on-the-air action engaging. 132 SOLP and 12 SOHP logs submitted had 25 contacts or less so if you think you had a thin log, you were in good company. Seven SOLP and 7 SOHP logs had over 1000 QSOs. Some concentrated on a single band to get those numbers, while others used 10 bands to make those totals.

In the SOLP category, Bob, K2DRH, in IL again topped the list with 374k points with his 8-band effort. In second place from SC, Webster, WY3X, garnered 315k points using only bands ABD racking up 1,009 6 meter contacts in 268 grids. Vic, WB4SLM, in GA placed third with 310k with another big 6 meter effort, yet finding enough time to add contacts and grid multipliers on bands through 2.3 GHz. In 4th place, Rich, W5SXD, from NTX had 299k with a 6 band station but the basis of the high score was again an over-1,000 QSO result from 6 meters. Rounding out the top five is Dave, K5RQ, from WCF with a single-band 6 meter total of 255k from 1172 QSOs in 218 grids. Rounding out the Top Ten for SOLP we have N0LL, K4LY, N3LL, AE5T and K4WI, with scores between 243k and 252k. The small margin of difference was the mix of QSO points on the higher bands and their additional multipliers, since all of them had quite substantial 6 meter contact and grid totals.

George, K5TR, rocked the SOHP world with 702k points based upon 1883 QSOs and 310 grids on 6 meters plus an additional 87 QSOs on bands BCD along with 41 grid multipliers. In second place, Jeff, K1TEO, managed 579k with contacts on bands through 10 GHz. Third place went to Dave, K1RZ, with 481k, also a 10 band effort. Both Jeff and Dave had similar 6 meter totals in the 500 contact range, giving the indication that 6 meter E was not the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast as much as it did the rest of the country. The one exception to that is Lefty, K1TOL, in ME, who turned in a single-band log with 1121 6-meter QSOs in 216 grids, capturing 10th place in SOHP. Ivars, KC4PX, from SFL ran up a score of 475k for 4th place, with a huge 6 meter run of 1507 contacts in 314 grids, and 1 additional 2 meter contact. Fifth place was captured by Herb, K2LNS, operating the WA2PGK station in EPA and garnering 473k points, also with a 10 band station. K2EK in NPL placed 6th with 326k on a strong 6 meter total of 1316/241. W6OAL from CO was in 7th place with 265k and an 8 band effort. In 8th place from STX we had W3UUM with 259k and 9th place from NTX was WDSK with 251k, again with lots of 6 meter contacts from the E, epicenter.

Multioperator Action

The Limited Multioperator (LM) category had 52 entries and the K8GP Grid Pirates topped the list with a score of 675k. Their 6 meter totals were 779/201 from VA, but they bolstered that with a giant total of 463/71 on 2 meters, 115/39 on 222 and 216/44 on 432. Their outstanding 144, 222 and 432 totals were a result of a colossal array of antennas in addition to their station location at 1800 feet ASL (above sea level) and a team of experienced, savvy ops. For 2 meters they employed three Large Vertical Arrays (LVAs) each consisting of eight 6-element Yagi antennas, each stack being set at the major direction of population, with another pair of FO-12 Yagis rotatable atop the 140 foot tower. You can find their whole June VHF story and pictures at the K8GP Web site, www.k8gp.net. In 2nd place, the W5ZK team scored 606k, taking advantage of their AR location in the 6 meter E, with a 1317/295 total on the magic band. NR5M was 3rd with 42k1 from STX, also in the eye of the E, and 1299/239 on 6 meters. The Wopsononock Mountain team of W3SO caught the 4th spot with 408k and their strength was also the contribution of bands BCD as their 6 meter totals were limited to 705/179. Ted, KNSO, in LA turned in a single-band 6 meter entry of 1342/292 to place 5th in the category, although in a sense, he really wasn’t a Multioperator. He dutifully followed the rules and reported his score as a Multioperator as he had the cluster running on his desktop even though he really didn’t need it or use it as he had his hands full working the crowd on 6 meters. [Strong work, Ted! — Ed.]

The top three finishers in the Multiop category are no surprise, as these groups have substantial experience and resources.

W2SZ again dominated with 1.83M and a hefty number of microwave QSOs and grids from their super location in Western MA. K5QE maintained the 2nd spot with growth in their microwave scores and 2 m EME grids. W3CCX placed 3rd again with a solid effort on 12 bands. The K3YTL group had bands through 2.3 GHz and came in 4th. W0EEA was in 5th place using 12 bands and the only 47 GHz QSO. Each of these groups has a Web site that gives more details and pictures about their efforts and clubs. The 63 Multiop logs account for 10% of all the submitted QSOs.

Rover Category Mélange

Rovers are still increasing in numbers and finding great joy in the ability to be operating from coastal and hilltop locations and from otherwise inactive grids. There were a total of 94 Rover entries this year, similar to past June contests. Traditional Rover entries numbered 42, Limited Rovers (RL) 42 and Unlimited Rovers (RU) 10. The LR category allows up to two operators and use of bands ABCD.

Kudos to AI, W5LUA, and Tony, WA8RJF, who manned the W5HN Rover. Their 88k points from NTX topped the RL list. The combination of a 4th band and a few more contacts on bands BCD gave them an 8k point advantage over 2nd place N05LA, operated by Dallas, K1DW, and Ed, N5KGV, who logged an amazing 482 6 meter contacts in 161 grids. I wonder if the rovers really had to move to follow the E. Third place goes to Mike, W6YLLZ, who appears to have tracked along with the SCCC pack rovers and ran up a 61k score with lots of QSO points and multipliers well distributed across four bands. He had a limited 6 meter grid count of 43 that paled in comparison to the others in the top five who all tripled that amount. Tim, AL1VE, drove throughout SD and had 60k for a 4th place finish and Jim, KK6MC, in NM had 59k for 5th place.
They have attracted a few more like par
as a controversial force in the VHF contests.
and making contact with the fixed stations.
and traditional rovers to compete against each
own category. That also allowed the more
group-circling pack rovers, giving them their
it appeared that it was in response to the
of these stations operated across grids in the
and turned in a healthy 60k for 3
Russ with Al, K3WGR, had nine active bands
score also using 10 bands. The NN3Q team
146 grid multipliers. WA3PTV had a 65k
score upon a 10 band station with 551 contacts and
they had a busy rover with a 180k score based
on a 10 band station with 551 contacts and
146 grid multipliers. WA3PTV had a 65k
score also using 10 bands. The NN3Q team
Russ with Al, K3WGR, had nine active bands
turned in a healthy 60k for 3
Russ, VE3OIL, used 11 bands + LASER
and scored 126k. They appeared to track together
The Unlimited Rovers have many options,
and 10 entrants chose this category. Topping
the list was the team of Brian, ND3F, and
David, N3XUD, operating the N31Q rover.
They had a busy rover with a 180k score based
upon a 10 band station with 551 contacts and
146 grid multipliers. WA3PTV had a 65k
score also using 10 bands. The NN3Q team
Russ with Al, K3WGR, had nine active bands
turned in a healthy 60k for 3rd place. All
of these stations operated across grids in the
Mid-Atlantic States area.
When the Unlimited Rover category was added to the possible rover categories, it appeared that it was in response to the
grid-circling pack rovers, giving them their own
category. That also allowed the more
traditional rovers to compete against each other
by making the rounds of several grids and
making contact with the fixed stations.
No matter what your opinion may be about
the West Coast rover group activities, it is clear
that they have established themselves
as a controversial force in the VHF contests.
They have attracted a few more like par-
ticipants to the shorter wavelengths with the
“bands in a box” stations. When it comes to
adding up the numbers of contacts on bands
FGHIJ, they accounted for 57% of all the
QSOs made on these bands. In addition to
6 meter activities monopolizing the weekend,
the reduced number of microwave capable
rovers on the East Coast also contributed to
the limited number of microwave contacts
made by all other stations.

**Portable Operations**

Single-Operator Portable entries get a
lot of respect from me as they venture out to
locations where they can hear well, but can
transmit low power only, restricted to 10 W
and required to use a portable power source,
portable equipment and antennas. For several years, Chris, KA1LMR, in NH has been on
the top of the QRP list, and his score of 115k
with a 6 band effort put him there again. He
had 389 contacts in 120 grids on 6 meters.
This is a testament to what can be done when
the band is making its magic. A long way
back in 2nd place, Curt, K9AKS, had 38k
using 4 bands in CO, capturing 238 QSOs on
6 meter with 129 grids. Jory, KJ5RM, was 3rd
in QRP with his NTX score of 19k on bands
ABD. W4RXR was 4th from VA with 11k on
5 bands. Rounding out the top five of the 20
entries in this category was Ken, WB2AMU,
in NLI with a 4 band entry of 10k.

**Aggregate Club Scores**

Adding all the club entry logs together
totaled 508. Considering that there are many
MO entries in the club category, I estimate
that 50% of all the contesting submitting logs
are also members of ARRL Affiliated Clubs.
Uncontested in the Unlimited category
with 58 contributors, the Society of
Midwest Contesters amassed 1.4 million points.
In the Medium category, the Southern
California Contest Club scored 2.8 million
points, with 2.2 million of those points scored
by their pack rovers. All told they had 21
contributors. The Potomac Valley Radio
Club was second in the category by a mere
90k points and had a 2.7 million total represen-
ting 34 participants. The Florida Contest
Group with their 18 stations produced a 3rd
place score of 1.4 million. The Murgas ARC
topped the Limited Club entry list again,
with the score of WA2FGK as their main
contributor. Their three stations had almost
1 million points total. The 2nd place club in
the Limited Club category was the Chippewa
Valley VHF Contesters and their 4 entries
totaled 320k. In 3rd place we had the Eastern
Connecticut ARA with 6 logs and 135k total
score. What is remarkable about all the club
entries is that they have stimulated growth of
VHF and microwave activity and generated
greater group participation in these and other
on-the-air events. Any of the clubs listed
represent a brotherhood of helping hands and
technical support. If you are a VHF/beginner,
or merely seeking to improve your station
or operating skills, these clubs are excellent
resources. Information about these clubs and
contacts can be gleaned by looking at the
ARRL Affiliated Club listings or using an
online search engine.

In Closing

I am grateful to all the stations for send-
ing me reports of their successes and their
frustrations. Without all of the reports and
posts on the ARRL Soapbox, it would be
difficult to make a contest summary. Even
if you didn’t see mention of your call and
activity here, as space no longer permits
all entries to be listed in *QST*, take solace
in the fact that you were a participant in one of
the most exciting June VHF QSO parties of the
decade. I would also like to thank Jani, my
XYL, for her editing skills and support.

Complete contest results including all
submitted line scores are available on the
ARRL Web site under “On the Air”: click
the Contests link. If you missed the magnifi-
cent, regional and QSO leaders,
and a complete table of all the
new Section-level records in the
online version of this article at
www.arrl.org/contests.

**More Results Online**

You can find additional com-
mentary, regional and QSO leaders,