

2014 ARRL September VHF Contest Results

2014 will go down as a good year — conditions were interesting and activity continues to head in the right direction.

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As with most VHF+ contests, stations in the right place at the right time had some extra fun. Those not experiencing enhanced conditions still had the opportunity to put their stations to the test, say hello to friends, work some new grids, and experience the thrill of a distant and unexpected station. Submitted logs were up for the third year in a row and keeping that trend going would be a shot in the arm for VHF+ contesting.

Band Conditions

As is usually the case, band conditions varied widely around the country during the contest. News reports a few days before the contest spoke of large eruptions from the Sun, sparking hope for a major aurora during the contest. The K index did soar to 7 on Friday night, but that did not lead to the hoped-for aurora. Instead, solar activity helped create some interesting conditions over the weekend in the form of E-skip (E_s), Trans-

Equatorial Propagation (TEP), and E_s -to-TEP combined propagation between North and South America.

Saturday afternoon there was a very strong E_s opening from Florida to the Northeast and Midwest. Florida stations enjoyed working stations one after another for a few hours. Florida station KD2JA reported “feeling like rare DX” as he enjoyed the pileups during the opening.

As the opening progressed, the E_s linked with TEP to create some exciting north-south paths. CX9AU was particularly active from South America and was able to work many grids in North America while the band was

open. He worked many stations in the Midwest, plus a few in Florida, Texas, Mexico, and the Caribbean. Other US stations, including K3ZO and K1RZ in Maryland, worked paths to Argentina. Down in Texas, W3XO was working into Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Mexico, and Puerto Rico.

The Sun continued to work some additional magic on Sunday as there was more E_s late in the contest. W3XO moved the beam west and worked quite a few stations in Arizona and Southern California. Likewise, Multioperator station K5QE in eastern Texas found the band open as well. Overall, it is always nice to have 6 meter propagation during the September contest, and while not the

Club Competition

Category	Logs	Club Name	Total
Medium	28	Potomac Valley Radio Club	827,961
	22	Mt Airy VHF Radio Club	541,784
	15	North East Weak Signal Group	510,961
	23	Society of Midwest Contesters	238,626
	11	Yankee Clipper Contest Club	219,299
	30	Pacific Northwest VHF Society	173,301
	9	Badger Contesters	170,428
	4	Carolina DX Association	168,812
	11	Contest Club Ontario	149,576
	12	Northern Lights Radio Society	107,951
	6	Michigan VHF-UHF Society	73,840
	3	Frankford Radio Club	63,362
	3	Niagara Frontier Radiosport	62,932
	6	Florida Contest Group	44,713
	3	Rochester VHF Group	33,740
	5	CTRI Contest Group	31,214
	6	Bristol (TN) ARC	20,193
	4	Northern California Contest Club	15,847
	5	DFW Contest Group	4,363
	8	Arizona Outlaws Contest Club	1,402
3	Minnesota Wireless Assn	182	
Local	5	Granite State ARA	18,329
	5	Bergen ARA	9,738
	5	Raritan Bay Radio Amateurs	9,458
	4	Winona ARC	8,587
	3	Florida Weak Signal Society	8,525
	3	Grand Mesa Contesters of Colorado	3,424



Can 667 elements carry the day? Almost! Bob, K2DRH, put up this new tower in Illinois carrying two-thirds of one thousand elements and nearly pulled off a win over his rival, Ed, K1TR. That would have been some victory from the Midwest! [Bob Streigl, K2DRH, photo]

type of widespread E_s opening we often see in the June contest, it added some extra excitement to this year's event.

Going into the contest weekend, the propagation prediction maps did not indicate there would be any significant tropospheric enhancement on the bands. As we saw in 2013, sometimes these prediction programs miss the possibilities. With more stations on, particularly from mountaintops, openings that might otherwise go unnoticed are found. That was the case this year, especially for those at high points in the Appalachian Mountains and in various parts of the

Midwest, down to Tennessee and Arkansas.

Two stations in the right place at the right time were W8SPM and N4QWZ. W8SPM headed up to a favorite location, 4800-foot Spruce Knob in FM08, West Virginia. Entering Single Operator Portable with its 10 W maximum power limitation, Sam was able to work an amazing 76 grids (as shown in the map generated by K1RA) and many QSOs. Despite his minimal setup, the band conditions on 144 MHz were so outstanding that he was able to work as far west as Kansas and Oklahoma, as far north as Wisconsin, and as far to the northeast as Maine. "I always hoped just one time to get great conditions, and I think this was it." With these tremendous results, he was able to take the top spot in the category, despite only operating on one band.

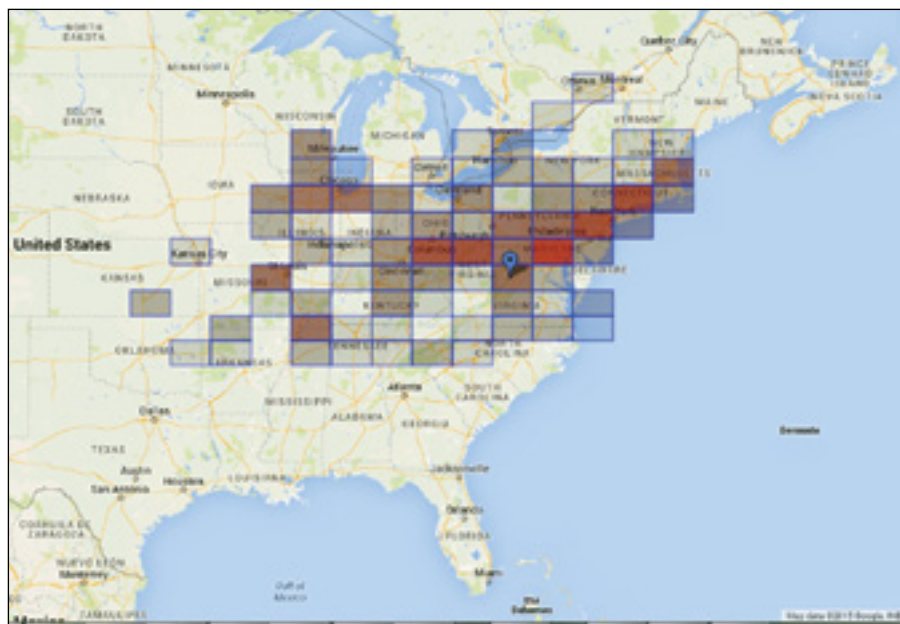
Todd, N4QWZ, has long been a top competitor in the Single Operator, Low Power (SOLP) category. Todd was definitely in the right place in this contest as he put a steady signal into the northeastern US for much of Saturday and Sunday evenings. Jeff, K1TEO, noted that he has lived at the same location in FN31 (CT) for over 25 years and only had tropo propagation to Todd's area on 2 meters and up a handful of times. Yet in this contest, Todd was S-9 over the 800+ mile path both Saturday and Sunday evenings and was also worked on 222 and 432 MHz. Despite Todd's potent signal being heard for several hours, not a single other station in his area was heard by Jeff. Todd's best DX was to

K1WHS in Maine, almost 1000 miles to the northeast. He also worked W2SZ on 902 MHz for a new state on the band and a fine-business 800-mile QSO. N4QWZ also did very well on 222 and 432, working many of the same paths as on 2 meters.

In the East, powerhouse Multioperator station W2SZ used their elevation to work the enhancement to a far wider degree than anyone else in the area. Using their usual Mount Greylock location, they managed a good number of long-haul QSOs on all bands to the west and southeast. This helped them achieve higher than normal grid totals, particularly on 144, 222, and 432 MHz, and another win in their category.

Others on mountaintops also enjoyed extended contacts, including Limited Multioperator (LM) stations W4NH in EM85, Georgia, and W4IY in FM08, Virginia. W4NH worked many stations in the Midwest beyond normal range, extending as far as K2DRH and K9AKS in EN41, several stations in Wisconsin, W8MIL in northern Michigan, and their best DX of over 800 miles to W2SZ in FN32. W4IY was even more exposed to the duct propagation, probably experiencing similar conditions as fellow FM08 station W8SPM, albeit with more power and bigger antennas. Both worked as far as NØIRS in EM29, Kansas, a 900+ mile path. They also worked into Arkansas, western Illinois, and Wisconsin. Their log shows a number of QSOs into the Chicago area, over 600 miles away.

Top Ten	
Single Operator, Low Power	Single Operator, FM Only
K1TR 162,688	K7NIT 1,157
K2DRH 143,325	KA6AMB 243
WB1GQR (W1SJ op) 109,678	K6QCB 224
N4QWZ 96,418	N9VM (N1VM op) 182
KX4R 66,898	WX4ET 135
K1KG 63,600	K2SI 72
AF1T 62,016	KK6DCM 52
N3RN 53,648	N0JP 1
WB2JAY 38,475	NØQWT 1
W9GA 37,800	NØNUO 1
Single Operator, High Power	Limited Multioperator
K1TEO 297,929	K8EP 170,502
K1RZ 267,066	W3SO 165,597
K3TUF 128,816	AA4ZZ 165,197
W3IP 93,024	W4IY 115,984
K8TRK 88,356	W2LV 97,785
K1GX 82,010	W4NH 84,923
W4ZRZ 75,096	N2NT 60,170
WØUC 71,820	W1QK 46,314
WB2RVX 52,326	N8ZM 39,237
N3HBX 48,816	N3MK 27,990
Single Operator, Portable	Multioperator
W8SPM 14,972	W2SZ 766,080
W7LUD 12,604	K1WHS 251,036
K7ATN 7,552	K2LIM 182,546
WB2AMU 1,430	W2EA 168,840
VE3AAQ 805	K5QE 64,974
KØNR 780	N2BJ 21,888
WA7JTM 680	W1XM 19,323
KD7WPJ 230	K6HS 14,749
KQ2RP 180	W4AS 14,160
AC2GJ 117	WA3EHD 13,496
Single Operator, 3-Band	Rover
WA2FGK (K2LNS op) 28,301	K8GP 194,112
KB8U 19,847	VE3OIL/R 72,000
N1ZN 10,047	WA3PTV 53,037
K9AKS 9,120	NN3Q 47,775
K5VIP 5,512	W9SNR/R 44,884
K15YG 3,990	AG4V/R 42,024
K6MI 3,726	KA9VVQ/R 35,150
N1IBM 3,042	KF8QL/R 32,400
N9TF 2,712	KF2MR/R 22,192
WB2EOD 2,236	W1AUV/R 19,734
	Limited Rover
	NF2RS/R 61,600
	WW7D/R 32,118
	WB2SIH/R 23,892
	AL1VE/R 20,294
	N2ZBH/R 16,820
	K9JK/R 13,426
	K9GY/R 11,118
	NL7B/R 10,920
	K8DOG/R 5,412
	KØBAK 5,382
	Unlimited Rover
	N2SLN/R 54,500
	NØLNO/R 21,321
	W3HMS 10,868
	KJ1K 8,460
	K2TER 6,545
	KB2YCC 1,071
	AF6AV 56



Sam, W8SPM, was able to work an amazing 76 grids on 144 MHz using only 10 W of power in the Single Operator Portable category. (Darker colors indicate more QSOs in a grid.) [Andrew Zwirko, K1RA, image]

Regional Leaders

A/B/Q – Single Operator, Low Power/High Power/Portable; 3B – Single Operator, 3-Band; FM – Single Operator, FM Only; L/M – Limited/Unlimited Multioperator; R/RL/RU – Classic/Limited/Unlimited Rover

Northeast Region (New England, Hudson, and Atlantic Divisions; Maritime and Quebec Sections)			Southeast Region (Delta, Roanoke, and Southeastern Divisions)			Central Region (Central and Great Lakes Divisions; Ontario East, Ontario North, Ontario South, and Greater Toronto)			Midwest Region (Dakota, Midwest, Rocky Mountain, and West Gulf Divisions; Manitoba and Saskatchewan Sections)			West Coast Region (Pacific, Northwestern, and Southwestern Divisions; Alberta, British Columbia, and NWT Sections)		
K1TR	162,688	A	N4QWZ	96,418	A	K2DRH	143,325	A	K0SIX	10,260	A	AF6RR	12,954	A
WB1GQR			KX4R	66,898	A	W9GA	37,800	A	KK0Q	6,650	A	KE0CO	11,730	A
(W1SJ op)	109,678	A	K4FJW	10,248	A	N9DG	33,345	A	WB5ZDP	3,528	A	WA6OSX	8,541	A
K1KG	63,600	A	KD2JA	8,528	A	WZ8T	19,462	A	N0LL	3,450	A	K7YDL	7,227	A
AF1T	62,016	A	WC4H	8,326	A	VA3ZV	12,110	A	AA5AM	3,040	A	K2GMY	5,760	A
N3RN	53,648	A	W3IP	93,024	B	K8TQK	88,356	B	KF0M	10,496	B	N7EPD	20,708	B
K1TEO	297,929	B	W4ZRZ	75,096	B	W0UC	71,820	B	K5LLL	7,261	B	KD7TS	14,455	B
K1RZ	267,066	B	W4RX	36,920	B	K9EA	43,989	B	K0AWU	5,145	B	KE7SW	13,104	B
K3TUF	128,816	B	K1HTV	22,022	B	K9CT	28,245	B	W3XO/5	4,464	B	W7FI	9,024	B
K1GX	82,010	B	WD4MGB	9,625	B	VA3ST	28,078	B	KA0RYT	4,429	B	KC6ZWT	6,162	B
WB2RVX	52,326	B	W8SPM	14,972	Q	VE3AAQ	805	Q	K0NR	780	Q	W7LUD	12,604	Q
WB2AMU	1,430	Q	KC8KSK	12	Q	KB8U	19,847	3B	N0JK	30	Q	K7ATN	7,552	Q
KQ2RP	180	Q	K5VIP	5,512	3B	K9AKS	9,120	3B	K15YG	3,990	3B	WA7JTM	680	Q
AC2GJ	117	Q	WA4LDU	1,075	3B	N9TF	2,712	3B	N0AT	108	3B	KD7WPJ	230	Q
N1PRW	33	Q	KJ4VTH	675	3B	WB9TFH	2,208	3B	K5KBV	70	3B	KX7L	98	Q
KC2JRW	16	Q	KG4KVZ	416	3B	KO9A	2,112	3B	K5YM	64	3B	K6MI	3,726	3B
WA2FGK			KM4ID	400	3B	N8ZM	39,237	L	N6KL	49	3B	WB6HYH	1,380	3B
(K2LNS op)	28,301	3B	WX4ET	135	FM	W9RVG	18,928	L	N0JP	1	FM	W6JK	1,357	3B
N1ZN	10,047	3B	K8EP	170,502	L	N2BJ	21,888	M	N0NUO	1	FM	N7IR	1,298	3B
N1BM	3,042	3B	AA4ZZ	165,197	L	K9P	11,394	M	N0OWT	1	FM	K0VIZ	480	3B
WB2EOD	2,236	3B	W4IY	115,984	L	N9IO	240	M	W5CSC	6,812	L	K7NIT	1,157	FM
K1KT	2,030	3B	W4NH	84,923	L	K3WA	192	M	W0VB	532	L	KA6AMB	243	FM
K2SI	72	FM	N3MK	27,990	L	VE3OIL/R	72,000	R	K5QE	64,974	M	K6QCB	224	FM
W3SO	165,597	L	W4AS	14,160	M	W9SNR/R	44,884	R	W0NE	8,480	M	N9VM		
W2LV	97,785	L	N4JQQ	7,375	M	KF8QL/R	32,400	R	K5GZR	2,065	M	(N1VM op)	182	FM
N2NT	60,170	L	N4DW	902	M	NE8I/R	19,630	R	KC5MVZ	1,102	M	KK6DCM	52	FM
W1QK	46,314	L	K4QE	90	M	VE3WJ	19,520	R	KA9VVQ/R	35,150	R	W6RKC	728	L
K1PRO	3,429	L	W4WNT	28	M	K9JK/R	13,426	RL	KC0SKM/R	14,575	R	K6HS	14,749	M
W2SZ	766,080	M	K8GP	194,112	R	K9GY/R	11,118	RL	KC0P/R	4,756	R	W6TV	7,744	M
K1WHS	251,036	M	AG4V/R	42,024	R	K8DOG/R	5,412	RL	N0HZO/R	4,582	R	KF7PCL	435	M
K2LIM	182,546	M	KB4JHU/R	840	R	VE3RKS/R	56	RL	K0BBC/R	4,172	R	KF7CQ	42	M
W2EA	168,840	M	W5VY	2,146	RL				AB0YM/R	1,978	RL	KA7RRA	1,968	R
W1XM	19,323	M	K6PFA/R	1,647	RL				KB0QGT	846	RL	WW7D/R	32,118	RL
WA3PTV	53,037	R	WA4JA/R	475	RL				W3DHJ/R	720	RL	AL1VE/R	20,294	RL
NN3Q	47,775	R							WB0NIU	6	RL	NL7B/R	10,920	RL
KF2MR/R	22,192	R							N0LNO/R	21,321	RU	N6ZE	3,692	RL
W1AUV/R	19,734	R										K6LMN/R	420	RL
N2QIP/R	8,352	R										AF6AV	56	RU
KA3KSP	130	R												
NF2RS/R	61,600	RL												
WB2SIH/R	23,892	RL												
N2ZBH/R	16,820	RL												
K0BAK	5,382	RL												
W2MC/R	1,210	RL												
N2SLN/R	54,500	RU												
W3HMS	10,868	RU												
KJ1K	8,460	RU												
K2TER	6,545	RU												
KB2YCC	1,071	RU												

Others in the right place for these terrific conditions included K8EP who rode the wave to a top finish in the LM category, fellow LM competitors W3SO and AA4ZZ, and K1RZ operating Single Operator High Power in Maryland.

Club Competition

A total of 21 clubs competed in the Medium Category competition, while there were six competitors in the Local Category. Nearly 45% of all log submissions were tied to a club score. Repeating as the top scoring club was the Potomac Valley Radio Club, with over 800,000 points. They had 28 members submit scores, which was a nice increase from 20 in 2013. The Mt Airy VHF Radio Club moved up a place to second as they topped the 500,000 mark with 22 entrants. They were followed by the North East Weak Signal Group, also over 500,000 points. The top score from outside the Northeast was the Society of Midwest Contesters with almost a

quarter-million points to take 4th place. The Pacific Northwest VHF Society had the most club entrants with 30, helping them to place 6th, generating significant activity in that part of the country.

The Granite State Amateur Radio Association took top honors in the Local category competition. Places two through five were hotly contested, with only about a thousand points separating the clubs. A pair of New Jersey clubs, the Bergen Amateur Radio Association and the Raritan Bay Radio Amateurs, finished in 2nd and 3rd.

Conclusion

Good conditions in some places but not others remind us of the reality of the VHF bands: you have to be on the bands operating so that when you are in the right place at the right time — as W8SPM, N4QWZ, CX9AU, and others were — you are ready to experience the fun of working some great propaga-

tion. Get on and operate in the contest next September 19 and 20 — you may be the one in the right place at the right time!

A special thanks is due to K1RA, who once again created the software for generating the maps used in this contest writeup. Great job, Andy!

More Maps, Detailed Results

There are more contact maps generated specially for this contest and a detailed look at the top finishers in the full results online at www.arrrl.org/contest-results-articles.