

2016 ARRL January VHF Contest Results

Some things change, while others stay the same.

ARRL Contest Branch

There were two major VHF contest rule changes adopted in 2015. The first change allowed operators in all entry categories to use spotting networks to arrange QSOs, including self-spotting. In many contests, the use of such technology is only permitted in the Multioperator and Single Operator Unlimited categories. This rule first took effect in the 2015 June VHF Contest, and seems to have been well received. After both the June and September 2015 contests, many operators commented that the new rule made it a lot easier to set up meteor-scatter skeds, aim their antennas in the right direction to snag new stations calling CQ, or arrange marginal QSOs.

Bob, K2DRH, reported:

The evening was interesting with many meteor scatter QSOs being set up online, but I'm still glad I made some primary *WSJT* skeds before the contest. Unfortunately, my last sked of the night with K1TEO was a bust when my 6 meter final gave up the ghost. Took me over an hour to recover with another old and much lower power brick (about 50 – 60 W), by which time my Internet provider went down (for about 3 hours) forcing me to give up and go to bed.

Luckily, the bands were in a lot better shape on Sunday — not really good, but much more like flat instead of depressed. Six meter scatter seemed really good to the East, but hardly anyone could hear me 6 db down from normal when I called. I

set up a few skeds with some of the stations on ON4KST [The **ON4KST.com** chat room. — *Ed.*] and was particularly impressed when K1SIX could still hear my puny 6 meter output on CW.

Mike, W3IP, observed, “The chat rooms and packet clusters were definite pluses that kept interest and activity up.”

The other change, in effect for the first time in this contest, removed the long-standing rule prohibiting the use of 146.52 MHz simplex for making contest contacts. The goal of this change was to allow casual FM-only operators to discover contesting and add more activity by getting them involved. Did it have the desired effect?

In terms of producing more QSOs, yes and no. Top Single Operator entrant Jeff, K1TEO, made 297 QSOs on 2 meters across all modes, compared to just 247 in the 2015 con-

test. However, further south, KA1ZE/3, N3HBX, and K1RZ all made slightly fewer QSOs on 2 meters this year. Top Unlimited Multioperator station N3NGE was also down slightly at 334, compared to 347 last year. As far as the long-term intent of attracting more FM-only operators to VHF contesting, we'll have to wait and see.

Jim, KO9A, summed up the changes by saying, “The new rules sure do help smaller stations get more contacts in the log. Great fun working *WSJT* QSOs with a little online coordination and discovering ‘new’ local hams on 146.52!”

January Conditions — No Major Changes

As is often the case in January, there were few propagation enhancements. Only a handful of stations reported any 6 meter E_s at all. Lefty, K1TOL, reported from Maine, saying,

Any Other Bands, er, Details?

Full results for this contest, including the complete score listings, more tables, more photos, and discussions, are available at www.arrl.org/contest-results-articles.



N6NB says this photo is about going off into the sunset, literally and perhaps figuratively. [Wayne Overbeck, N6NB, photo]

Division Winners

Single Operator, High Power

Atlantic	K1RZ	253,935
Central	W0UC	59,508
Dakota	W0GHZ	37,444
Delta	WB4JGG	1,855
Great Lakes	KU8Y	67,095
Hudson	N2GHR	49,640
Midwest	W0LGQ	7,119
New England	K1TEO	299,730
Northwestern	KE7SW	13,350
Pacific	WA6OSX	10,944
Roanoke	W3IP	79,112
Rocky Mountain	WB2FKO	4,320
Southeastern	N4TWX	6,897
Southwestern	N6NB	39,184
West Gulf	K5LLL	39,008
Canada	VE3ZV	49,476

Single Operator, Low Power

Atlantic	WA3NUF	116,370
Central	K2DRH	111,220
Dakota	WB0HHM	1,992
Delta	N4QWZ	51,430
Great Lakes	N8BI	8,288
Hudson	WB2SIH	55,616
Midwest	K0DAS	4,320
New England	AF1T	65,384
Northwestern	KE0CO	9,200
Pacific	K6ATZ	1,824
Roanoke	K4FJW	3,162
Rocky Mountain	NJ7A	693
Southeastern	KX4R	28,583
Southwestern	W6IT	3,978
West Gulf	K5TRA	8,694
Canada	VA3ST	18,720

Single Operator, Portable

Atlantic	WX3P	840
Central	W9SZ	624
Dakota	W0IS	15
Delta	NV4B/5	792
Hudson	WB2AMU	767
Midwest	N0JK	20
Rocky Mountain	K0NR	114
Southwestern	A16EA	621
Canada	VA3RKM	48

Single Operator, Three-Band

Atlantic	WA2FGK (K2LNS, op)	42,336
Central	KO9A	9,776
Dakota	K0VG	150
Delta	KD5CKP	9
Great Lakes	KC8UDV	2,016
Hudson	WB2LEB	560
Midwest	K0JQA	672
New England	N1ZN	3,248
Northwestern	K7VIT	1,652
Pacific	N4DLA	588
Roanoke	N4PD	936
Rocky Mountain	K4UB	630
Southeastern	K1TO	198
Southwestern	KG6IYN	9,953
West Gulf	K5ND	1,664
Canada	VE3PCW	476

Single Operator, FM Only

Atlantic	W2EV	5,842
Central	WD9GDB	9
Hudson	W2UIS	1
New England	KB1YSK	224
Northwestern	N7SNW	1
Pacific	N9VM (N1VM, op)	320
Roanoke	KM4KMU	72
Rocky Mountain	W3DHJ	2
Southwestern	KK4OSG	340
Southwestern	K6QCB	96
West Gulf	KO5OK (NL7CO, op)	133
Canada	VA6TDG	136

Multioperator

Atlantic	N3NGE	478,436
Central	N2BJ	3,808
Delta	W4JUJ	135
Hudson	K2AMI	10,760
New England	N1JEZ	27,176
Northwestern	W7PT	672
Pacific	K6ARP	10,800
Southeastern	W4NH	18,720
West Gulf	K5TR	86,135
Canada	K3ELE	23,475

Limited Multioperator

Atlantic	W3ARO	4,950
Dakota	W0VB	1,870
Great Lakes	N8ZM	26,095
Hudson	N2NT	100,395
New England	N1QK	25,482
Southeastern	N4SVC	3,116
Southwestern	W01S	98
West Gulf	K5QE	94,724

Rover

Atlantic	NN3Q/R	92,032
Central	W9FZ/R	42,228
Dakota	KC0P/R	14,534
New England	N1WK/R	4,185
Northwestern	KE7HG/R	5,688
Pacific	K6KV/R	216
Roanoke	K8GP/R	32,184
Southwestern	W7QQ/R	8,399
West Gulf	K5GJ/R	21,518
Canada	VE3OIL/R	41,888

Limited Rover

Atlantic	W3ICC/R	28,482
Central	AC0RA/R	32,706
Dakota	N0SPN/R	261
Great Lakes	K2EZ/R	36,630
Hudson	N2ZB/R	5,075
Midwest	KB0QG/R	1,350
New England	KJ1K/R	3,168
Northwestern	WW7D/R	37,152
Pacific	K6MI/R	6,120
Roanoke	W4PH/R	4,544
Rocky Mountain	AB0YM/R	752
Southwestern	N6GP/R	1,892
West Gulf	AE5P/R	13,188

Unlimited Rover

Delta	WD5DJW/R	36
Northwestern	K7ATN/R	41,831
Southwestern	K6WCI/R	59,568
Canada	VE7AFZ/R	1,495

Top Ten by Category

Single Operator, High Power

K1TEO	299,730
K1RZ	253,935
K3TUF	209,952
WB2RVX	156,800
K3IPM	86,502
W3IP	79,112
WZ1V	77,000
K1GX	68,500
KU8Y	67,095
K3DNE	66,458

Single Operator, Low Power

WA3NUF	116,370
K2DRH	111,220
W3SZ	108,621
N3RG	106,050
WA3GFZ	69,793
AF1T	65,384
WB2SIH	55,616
N4QWZ	51,430
K1KG	49,640
N3YMS	39,798

Single Operator, Portable

WX3P	840
NV4B/5	792
WB2AMU	767
W9SZ	624
A16EA	621
WA7JTM	510
K6PFA	130
K0NR	114
KC2JRK	112
KM6NY	112

Single Operator, Three-Band

WA2FGK (K2LNS, op)	42,336
KG6IYN	9,953
KO9A	9,776
K2AA/100 (KV2R, op)	8,288
WB2EOD	5,712
KC2THQ	5,520
N3XF	3,939
N3ALN	3,718
KB3OZC	3,496
NE2U	3,425

Single Operator, FM Only

W2EV	5,842
K2SI	1,500
N2SCJ	924
KK4OSG	340
N9VM (N1VM, op)	320
W7AIT	238
KB1YSK	224
VA6TDG	136
KO5OK (NL7CO, op)	133
K6QCB	96

Multioperator

N3NGE	478,436
K2LIM	118,002
K5TR	86,135
WA3EHD	37,459
N1JEZ	27,176
VA3ELE	23,475
W4NH	18,720
KE1LI	17,950
K6ARP	10,800
K2AMI	10,760

Limited Multioperator

N2NT	100,395
K5QE	94,724
W8ZCP	32,096
N82M	26,095
W1QK	25,482
W3ARO	4,950
W3HZU	4,920
N4SVC	3,116
W0VB	1,870
W3MEL	1,530

Rover

NN3Q/R	92,032
K1DS/R	50,640
W9FZ/R	42,228
KA9VVQ/R	42,090
VE3OIL/R	41,888
KF2MR/R	34,440
K8GP/R	32,184
K0BAK/R	30,060
K2TER/R	25,311
K5GJ/R	21,518

Limited Rover

WW7D/R	37,152
K2EZ/R	36,630
AC0RA/R	32,706
W3ICC/R	28,482
AE5P/R	13,188
WD5RAH/R	11,680
KD5EUO/R	7,200
K6MI/R	6,120
N2ZB/R	5,075
N6MTS/R	5,040

Unlimited Rover

K6WCI/R	59,568
K7ATN/R	41,831
K6VHF/R	4,674
N6ZE/R	2,000
VE7AFZ/R	1,495
WD5DJW/R	36

"No Aurora, no backscatter, no tropo enhancements, no E_s, puny scatter burns of 1–2 seconds or less — a typical 'slog it out/butt-in-chair' type of January Contest on 6 meters."

Greg, KX4R, in Georgia reported some nice tropo openings to Texas, Louisiana, and points west, and managed to snag XE2OR in DL98 on 432 MHz. NV4B/5 got in on the action from Woodall Mountain in Mississippi and managed three 2 meter QSOs with Texas, including a 144-222-432 sweep with George, K5TR, at a distance of 665 miles while running only 10 W to modest antennas! Speaking of K5TR, Sara did all the 6 meter operating

while George took the high bands and was rewarded with good tropo to the east on Saturday night and Sunday morning, working out past 1000 miles on 144, 222, 432, and 1296 MHz.

Russ, KB8U, spent a lot of time chasing WSJT QSOs and said, "I think I could have had a higher score on SSB or CW, but I wanted a change of pace and I had fun. I also worked three Europeans on EME on moonrise with JT65B."

A Change for Wayne

Wayne, N6NB, did something completely different this year. In his own words:

Until 2016, I roved or was in the Single Operator, Portable category every January since I wrapped up my career as a university professor and retired at the end of 2002. Usually I operated with other rovers.

This year, I stayed close to home for the first time in 14 years. I did a part-time Single Operator, High Power effort at my house in Panorama Heights, 3 miles from home in Tustin, California.

A highlight was following K6FGV/R and K6WCI/R (with N6TEB) as they roved from the four grids near Mojave back to their home grids in Los Angeles. We worked over the San Gabriel Moun-

Regional Leaders

Boxes list call sign, score, and class: R = Classic Rover; RL = Limited Rover; RU = Unlimited Rover; SOHP = Single Operator, High Power; SOLP = Single Operator, Low Power; SOP = Single Operator, Portable; SO3B = Single Operator, 3 Band; SOFM = Single Operator, FM Only; LM = Limited Multioperator; UM = Unlimited Multioperator.

West Coast Region (Pacific, Northwestern, and Southwestern Divisions; Alberta, British Columbia, and NT Sections)	Midwest Region (Dakota, Midwest, Rocky Mountain, and West Gulf Divisions; Manitoba and Saskatchewan Sections)	Central Region (Central and Great Lakes Divisions; Ontario East, Ontario North, Ontario South, and Greater Toronto Area Sections)	Southeast Region (Delta, Roanoke, and Southeastern Divisions)	Northeast Region (New England, Hudson, and Atlantic Divisions; Maritime and Quebec Sections)
W7QQ/R 8,399 R	K5GJ/R 21,518 R	W9FZ/R 42,228 R	K8GP/R 32,184 R	NN3Q/R 92,032 R
KE7IHG/R 5,688 R	KC0P/R 14,534 R	K9VVO/R 42,090 R	W4PH/R 4,544 RL	K1DS/R 50,640 R
VE7JH/R 3,500 R	N0HZO/R 13,760 R	VE3OIL/R 41,888 R	WD5DJW/R 36 RU	KF2MR/R 34,440 R
K7GEN/R 1,856 R	KC0IYT/R 6,084 R	NJ9R/R 240 R	W3IP 79,112 SOHP	K0BAK/R 30,060 R
KE7MSU/R 1,725 R	K0MHC/R 1,218 R	K2EZ/R 36,630 RL	N4HB 17,040 SOHP	K2TER/R 25,311 R
WW7D/R 37,152 RL	AE5P/R 13,188 RL	AC0RA/R 32,706 RL	W4WSR 15,732 SOHP	W3ICC/R 28,482 RL
K6MI/R 6,120 RL	WD5RAH/R 11,680 RL	K9JK/R 2,660 RL	NG4C 8,823 SOHP	N2ZBH/R 5,075 RL
N6MTS/R 5,040 RL	KD5EUO/R 7,200 RL	W9II/R 2,112 RL	N4TWX 6,897 SOHP	AB2YI/R 4,770 RL
NT6S/R 2,600 RL	KD5IKG/R 1,560 RL	N9GH/R 930 RL	N4QWZ 51,430 SOLP	KJ1K/R 3,168 RL
N6GP/R 1,892 RL	KB0QGT/R 1,350 RL	KU8Y 67,095 SOHP	KX4R 28,583 SOLP	W2MC/R 1,392 RL
K6WCI/R 59,568 RU	K5LLL 39,008 SOHP	W0UC 59,508 SOHP	K4FJW 3,162 SOLP	K1TEO 299,730 SOHP
K7ATN/R 41,831 RU	W0GHZ 37,444 SOHP	VE3ZV 49,476 SOHP	K4YRK 1,456 SOLP	N25.935 SOHP
K6VHF/R 4,674 RU	W0ZQ 12,195 SOHP	K8TQK 26,037 SOHP	KN4SM 990 SOLP	K3TUF 209,952 SOHP
N6ZE/R 2,000 RU	K0SIX 10,746 SOHP	K9EA 22,413 SOHP	NV4B/5 792 SOP	WB2RVX 156,800 SOHP
VE7AFZ/R 1,495 RU	K5AIH 10,472 SOHP	K2DRH 111,220 SOLP	KD4NOQ 28 SOP	K3IPM 86,502 SOHP
N6NB 39,184 SOHP	K5TRA 8,694 SOLP	VA3ST 18,720 SOLP	N4PD 936 SO3B	WA3NUF 116,370 SOLP
KE7SW 13,350 SOHP	WB5ZDP 5,208 SOLP	K9MU 14,472 SOLP	K1TO 198 SO3B	W3SZ 108,621 SOLP
K7YDL 12,558 SOHP	K0DAS 4,320 SOLP	W9GA 13,734 SOLP	WJ1T 12 SO3B	N3RG 106,050 SOLP
N7EPD 12,282 SOHP	N0LL 3,741 SOLP	VA3ZV 11,799 SOLP	KD5CKP 9 SO3B	WA3GFZ 69,793 SOLP
WA6OSX 10,944 SOHP	WB0HHM 1,992 SOLP	W9SZ 624 SOP	K4IMP 6 SO3B	AF1T 65,384 SOLP
KE0CO 9,200 SOLP	K0NR 114 SOP	VA3RKM 48 SOP	N3FQ 6 SO3B	WX3P 840 SOP
W6IT 3,978 SOLP	N0JK 20 SOP	KO9A 9,776 SO3B	KK4OSG 340 SOFM	WB2AMU 767 SOP
KG7P 3,288 SOLP	W0IS 15 SOP	KA9VDU 2,759 SO3B	KM4KMU 72 SOFM	K6PFA 130 SOP
K6ATZ 1,824 SOLP	K5ND 1,664 SO3B	WD9EXD 2,394 SO3B	KK3Q 18 SOFM	KC2JRK 112 SOP
W7KKE 1,568 SOLP	K0JQA 672 SO3B	KC8UDV 2,016 SO3B	N3DCJ 6 SOFM	KQ2RP 80 SOP
A16EA 621 SOP	K4UB 630 SO3B	K8RO 1,675 SO3B	N4SVC 3,116 LM	WA2FGK (K2LNS, op) 42,336 SO3B
WA7JTM 510 SOP	K0D5QAQ 180 SO3B	WD9GDB 9 SOFM	W4NH 18,720 UM	K2AA/100 (KV2R, op) 8,288 SO3B
KM6NY 112 SOP	K0VG 150 SO3B	N8ZM 26,095 LM	W4JUJ 135 UM	WB2EOD 5,712 SO3B
KG6IYN 9,953 SO3B	KO5OK (NL7CO, op) 133 SOFM	VA3ELE 23,475 UM		KC2THQ 5,520 SO3B
K7VIT 1,652 SO3B	W3DHJ 2 SOFM	N2BJ 3,808 UM		N3XF 3,939 SO3B
N6KW 700 SO3B	K5QE 94,724 LM			W2EV 5,842 SOFM
WB7FJG 645 SO3B	W0VB 1,870 LM			K2SI 1,500 SOFM
N4DLA 588 SO3B	WC0AAA 12 LM			N2SCJ 924 SOFM
N9VM (N1VM, op) 320 SOFM	K5TR 86,135 UM			KB1YSK 224 SOFM
W7AIT 238 SOFM	KC5MVZ 350 UM			NY1Z 15 SOFM
VA6TDG 136 SOFM				N2NT 100,395 LM
K6QCB 96 SOFM				WA2CP 32,096 LM
WU0I 40 SOFM				W1QK 25,482 LM
W01S 98 LM				W3ARO 4,950 LM
K6ARP 10,800 UM				W3HZU 4,920 LM
W7PT 672 UM				N3NGE 478,436 UM
				K2LIM 118,002 UM
				WA3EHD 37,459 UM
				N1JEZ 27,176 UM
				KE1LI 17,950 UM



Andrea, K2EZ, put in a lot of driving during her Rover effort! [Andrea Slack, K2EZ, photo]

tains (up to 10,000 feet in elevation) on all bands through 10 GHz.

Wayne took full advantage of his station's capability on all bands and had the highest Single Operator score on the West Coast.

Rovers and Portables

Roving around multiple grid squares or hill-topping can be challenging in January in much of the country, due to weather conditions.

Alex, K6VHF/R, shared, "We got snow and dust storms, rain, and beautiful sunny blue skies. From 300 feet up to 8000 feet of elevation, high desert to flats, flooding, and icy roads. So many adventures in less than 48 hours."

Darryl, WW7D/R, posted the top score in the



Darryl, WW7D, used this impressive setup in his 10-grid roving trip. [Darryl Holman, WW7D, photo]



Who knew that the Rovers had their own road? [Photo courtesy of James Duffey, KK6MC]

Limited Rover category by activating 10 grids in the Pacific Northwest, including a SOTA (Summits on the Air) activation. He tells the story of blizzards, road-closing warnings, and more at <https://ww7d.wordpress.com/2016/02/15/ww7dr-roves-the-2016-arrrl-january-vhf-contest>.

Of course, Murphy has a special place in his heart for the rovers and portables. Tom, N2YTF, also did a combined SOTA and VHF Contest rove. He said:

I worked the contest after hiking up to the castle on SOTA summit W1/HH-002 Mt Carmel, operating portable at 50 W with my IC-706MKIIG on 2 meters only. It was 29° F with a steady blowing wind, and after hiking up I was exposed on the top of the “viewing castle” on Mt Carmel in Sleeping Giant State Park, in Hamden, Connecticut.

I worked K1TEO right off the bat...and then I heard some weak stations, but I couldn't work them. Fifteen minutes of voice keying and still nothing when I finally noticed that I had not connected the coax to the back of the rig! I don't know if it was the rock solid finals in the rig or the low temps, but the rig was undamaged, and once I connected the coax the band came alive...imagine that!

Wyatt, ACØRA/R, activated 17 grids. He said:

[I] had more than my share of problems as well. First, I lost the front end in my FT857 before the contest even started. Not too big a deal, but I had to swap everything to my FT817. Secondly, a few hours into

the contest, after 600 miles of no issues, my 6 meter Moxon fell apart. I got really lucky with that one, as a farmer stopped by to assist reassembly with a ladder, but I killed an hour messing with it and talking to him.

Affiliated Club Competition

Club Name	Logs	Score
Unlimited Category		
Mt Airy VHF Radio Club	70	2,148,212
Medium Category		
North East Weak Signal Group	19	628,638
Potomac Valley Radio Club	22	453,314
Roadrunners Microwave Group	6	167,411
Northern Lights Radio Society	17	163,904
Contest Club Ontario	12	147,424
Society of Midwest Contesters	15	129,541
Rochester VHF Group	22	129,195
Pacific Northwest VHF Society	32	124,892
Frankford Radio Club	8	111,165
Badger Contesters	3	97,500
Southern California Contest Club	7	61,423
Yankee Clipper Contest Club	8	37,753
South Jersey Radio Assn	7	21,411
CTRI Contest Group	3	15,175
Florida Weak Signal Society	4	9,788
Northern California Contest Club	8	3,268
Contest Group Du Quebec	3	2,126
Florida Contest Group	5	1,941
Willamette Valley DX Club	6	1,911
DFW Contest Group	3	1,798
Arizona Outlaws Contest Club	4	583
Minnesota Wireless Assn	3	141
Local Category		
Eastern Connecticut ARA	4	23,948
Bergen ARA	3	18,661
Granite State ARA	3	12,572
Six Meter Club of Chicago	9	12,322
Lodi ARC	4	11,786
Portage County Amateur Radio Service	3	8,420
Contoocook Valley Radio Club	4	6,872
Pottstown Area ARC	3	5,605
West Valley ARA	6	5,562
Bristol (TN) ARC	3	3,370
Mobile Sixers Radio Club	3	2,529
Alaska VHF-Up Group	3	551
Raritan Bay Radio Amateurs	3	328

Extreme Roving

Andrea, K2EZ, has apparently set a new roving record for the total number of grid squares activated — 27! She said:

This was my fourth rove since my first last January. New for this rove was a new logging system, improved antennas, better DC power to the rigs/amps, and lower loss feedlines. I also set ambitious plans to activate a large number of grids.

All the work and preparation paid off with another personal best.

By the time of the closing bell, I had activated 27 grids from Central Pennsylvania down to Houston, Texas. I covered almost 1700 road miles this rove through six states, four ARRL divisions, and seven ARRL sections.

One of the amusing moments occurred on Sunday, around 7:30 pm local time, when I was in EM12 a bit south of Dallas, Texas. At that time I worked K5TR. When I sent them my grid as EM12, I got a query asking to verify the grid because they had me last logged that same day in EM66. Well, I was in EM66 earlier that same day.

Club Competition: Some Changes

In the Affiliated Club Competition, once again the Unlimited winner was the Mt Airy VHF Radio Club. In the Medium Club Category, the Northeast Weak Signal Group vaulted from 3rd place last year to the top spot this year, with the Potomac Valley Radio Club close behind. The Eastern Connecticut ARA had the highest aggregate score of all Local clubs.