

Editorial

Fun and satisfaction can be found in the strangest of places.

Going The Distance

Most of my contesting has been in the form of full-time competitive efforts. That's just the way I learned to do it from the beginning. I usually try to operate the entire length of a contest, if it's 36 hours or less, and as many hours of a 48 hour DX contest as I can tolerate when running Single Operator All Band. I do occasionally enjoy being the casual operator, just handing out contacts for fun. There are also times that my schedule simply does not permit a full-time effort. Contesting satisfaction comes in many forms. I like competing all out the best, though, because that's where I discover what my station (and the op) are really capable of accomplishing. Going fulltime in a contest changes the game for me. I have more invested in the contest, more skin in the game.

A special satisfaction comes from an all-out effort, something I don't find available from any other means. Some of my radio pals actually think I'm crazy for putting my mind and body through the grueling exercise of a radio contest. I know some fine operators who don't understand why I would choose to operate a radio when I am exhausted, my ears are ringing and my body is cramping up. They say, "That can't possibly be fun!"

To me, making it through the tough times is just part of the challenge, and a source of genuine satisfaction. Those difficult times test my mettle and my skills, and force me to learn how I handle things under stress. The truth is that the grueling moments usually don't last forever. It seems that for every time I just couldn't take it for one more minute, there were an equal number of times that the situation improved

in short order. Hanging tough when the going gets tough leads to moments of "I'm glad I stuck it out" and other such feelings, which I don't get from operating part time. By the way, more time in the chair is also one of the most effective means to rise in the standings.

I'd like to encourage those who haven't attempted to operate for an entire contest period to give it a try some time. If the weekend-long contests are too much to consider, then pick a shorter event, such as a state QSO party or one of the *NCJ*-sponsored events. Make a decision to operate the entire operating period, and arrange your schedule to permit it. Arrange to take care of all family and business responsibilities, so that you can focus on the contest and nothing else. Try leaving nothing on the field and give it your most for the full duration, even when the going gets tough. If it just gets to be too much, try a short break, and then come back to it after taking a few minutes to cool off. Try operating a contest full-time and see if it doesn't make the game of contesting a bit more interesting for you.

Busted QSOs

A production error in the July/August *NCJ* caused part of an article to be omitted from the printed edition. The "Footswitch for the Future" by Katsuhiro "Don" Konodou, JH5GHM, lost parts of the following paragraph, presented here in its entirety.

"It would have been easier to use plastic materials, but I went with metal instead; a foot switch should be durable and heavy enough to stay in place. As opposed to my final version, the first prototype had longer square aluminum stock extending along

each side of the pedal proper. It was quite uncomfortable, because the edges of the square stock touched my foot very easily and stressed me out. So, I used shorter pieces of square aluminum stock on either side of the pedal, using a bandsaw to cut a "flap" along one side and further trimming the stock below each flap to create a slight flare. The flaps then are bent to cover the front of the square stock pieces. L brackets secure the shape. (see Figure 1.)"

The full text of the article will appear on the *NCJ* website, and the original article with additional info by JH5GHM is available on his QRZ.com web page.

In This Issue

WØYR describes the remote contesting setup at K4VV. KE2VB tells the tale of his Caribbean contest adventure. SMØJHF offers us a glimpse of contesting in Hungary. K8MM describes his road trip as K8MAD in the Michigan QSO Party. K1DS tells us about the Packrats latest award recipients. On the technical side, N6NC presents his 40 meter parasitic array, KØSM takes an in-depth view of RTTY bandwidth, and VA7OJ describes a new method of measuring receiver performance under crowded conditions. K5RC brings us the tale of the W7RN super station, whose towers have finally grown to full height. We also feature some photos from the 2013 Dayton Hamvention® courtesy of K8CX. Our regular columnists again bring you tips and information you won't want to miss, including a guest article by former *NCJ* columnist W6WRT and a profile of another one of the contesting community's stalwarts, N4BP. We hope you enjoy this issue!