

From the Editor

Welcome to the Fall Contest Season, the exciting part of the ham radio contest season! The CQ World Wide RTTY contest kicks off in just a few weeks. That's the first "official" event on my contest club's calendar for our intramural competition. I bet it is for your club as well.

I trust you were able to make station improvements, repair antennas and enhance your station somewhat to make your contesting more enjoyable and more competitive this year? I have been busy at my station, working to enhance the automation that Gary Sutcliffe, W9XT, talked about in the July/August edition of "Contest Tips, Tricks, & Techniques." I also installed a triplexer to work with my Yagi stacks and high-power band-pass filters to protect my rigs' front ends. It was amazing to see my antennas offer the flexibility that triplexers bring.

I also had the fun of recovering from major lightning damage, which struck unexpectedly on a June Saturday afternoon. The damage occurred despite my adherence to the excellent recommendations of Ward Silver, NØAX, in his newest book, *Grounding and Bonding for the Radio Amateur*. The strike took out a significant portion of my station but my homeowner's insurance company, The Travelers, did an amazing job of assessing and handling my claim quickly, and got me back on the air. I had contacted my local agent several years ago to make sure my station was covered. If you have not scheduled your equipment and antennas on your home's policy, you might speak with your homeowner's policy agent about what you should do.

I enjoyed the summer contests and hope you did as well. I was particularly pleased with the IARU HF Championship event, where Europe was open until late on Saturday evening on 20 meters. I made more DX contacts on 10 and 15 meters in the short time I operated than I had on the prior CQ and ARRL DX contests combined! And all of this happened on CW at the bottom of Cycle 24 from the upper Midwest. We are so fortunate to have superb receivers and antenna technology available for contesting now. It makes contesting even during low SFI periods more enjoyable.

Full Contest Results

Several wrote about my decision to drop full contest results (i.e., "line scores") from the *NCJ* printed edition, and most asked me to reconsider. They explained how much they enjoyed seeing their call signs in print, even if their score was not at the top of the heap. I understand those sentiments, as I like seeing my call sign in the list as well. I decided to see what we could work out.

As you may recall, we have been working to add more content to each *NCJ* issue, to stimulate interest in contesting by newer, less-experienced contesters as well as to promote contesting within the next generation of radio amateurs. I spoke with QST Editor Steve Ford, WB8IMY, at ARRL Headquarters, and we have been granted 8 more pages for three issues per year. This expansion is more than enough to allow us to publish the scores and all call signs as well to continue our focus on publishing content that, we hope, stimulates the growth and understanding of contesting. We're also working on more standardization in how contest results are presented and in which issues.

We will still post contest results articles on the *NCJ* website as soon as they are available, so you can see them in advance of the print issue. I want to thank Managing Editor Rick Lindquist, WW1ME, and ARRL Publications Manager Steve Ford for their work and advice, as well as those of you who asked me to reconsider.

Thank You to K6UFO

Mark Aaker, K6UFO, has been penning "Remote Contesting" for the past year. His column has appeared in six issues, and I'm confident these have helped all of us learn more about remote operation and its application to contesting. Mark is taking a break from the column for now, and I'd like to thank him for his work and contributions. Mark will remain as the NAQP RTTY Contest Manager, and I am sure he will continue to assist us behind the scenes with other things, as he so ably does with his usual modesty.

Welcome Ned Stearns, AA7A

ARRL Southwestern Division Vice Director Ned Stearns, AA7A, starts a new column this edition, "New and Emerging Technologies for Contesters." An accomplished contester, DXer, antenna designer, and electrical engineer from Scottsdale,

Arizona, Scott is part of the VooDoo Contest Group (www.voodoocontestgroup.com) along with Lee, KY7M, featured in the book by Roger Western G3SXW, *Contesting in Africa, Multi-Multi on the Equator*. As an aside, I strongly recommend the book for non-contest weekend reading, as it is entertaining, educational, and insightful with regard to how some of the rarest DXCC entities have been activated at some risk to the operators' well-being and safety.

This Issue

In this issue, we're publishing a new contest idea submitted by John Dunker, W9WR, for your review. If you like John's idea, pass along your comments to the ARRL Contest Advisory Committee. This issue includes several feature articles designed to help all levels of contesters improve their skills. We hear from Al Dewey, KØAD, and Pat Barkey, N9RV, about tactics for improving scores and winning. Both are former *NCJ* editors and superb contesters. Ken Low, KE3X, has contributed an article about the Potomac Valley Radio Club (PVRC), one of America's premiere contest clubs. I think you will be inspired by his report on their work and efforts to promote contesting and recruit new contesters! Well done PVRC.

Deputy *NCJ* Editor Fred Regennitter, K4IU, offers two articles this issue. Most of you may not realize that Fred contests with wires up at 40 feet in his back yard due to neighborhood tower restrictions. Despite that, he does exceedingly well, using what he describes as "Limited Station Contesting." His story should inspire those who feel they cannot compete and win without a big station and Yagi stacks. Fred also interviews Ria Jairam, N2RJ, ARRL Hudson Division Director and an avid contester, about where she sees contesting heading in the next few years. Andy Faber, AE6Y, a WRTC 2018 participant and Aruba contest station owner, offers his tips on more effective SSB tactics.

We hope you find this edition helpful and enjoyable. Thanks for reading *NCJ* and subscribing.