

Editorial

Radiosport is Alive and Well at Dayton!

As I think back on Dayton Hamvention® 2009, I am convinced more than ever that contesting is one of the most vibrant and exciting aspects of our hobby. I don't think I've ever had more fun and learned as much as I did during my three days at Dayton. On Thursday, Contest University welcomed more than 230 new and returning students. In addition to the popular classes on advanced contest ethics and contest radio performance, numerous break-out sessions gave students the opportunity to question experts on everything from antennas to advanced RTTY contesting. The new Q&A format made it possible to address topics students were interested in. Tim, K3LR, his staff of "professors" and the CTU sponsors deserve our gratitude for providing this great service to the contesting community.

On Saturday morning, Doug, K1DG, moderated the contest forum and had a few surprises for attendees. Most notable was the announcement of the new *Xtreme* category that will be added to the CQ World Wide DX Contest this year. This new category encourages innovation, including things such as interconnected remote receiving sites, multi-channel CW decoders and fully automated robot stations. Scoring in the category not only will consider the entrant's total score but the contest judges' assessment of the level of ingenuity and innovation. Details are in June 2009 CQ magazine.

K1DG announced another surprise during W4ZR's interesting *CW Skimmer* presentation. Doug reported that the entire 2009 CQ WW 160 Meter Contest was recorded by five geographically dispersed stations equipped with *CW Skimmer*. This essentially means there's a recording of every QSO made in the contest. Several examples were given of how challenges to log checking reports (and subsequent score reductions) can now be verified by allowing the contest sponsors to replay the actual QSO in question. The implications of how this new tool can be used by contest sponsors are fascinating.

There were several opportunities for contesters at Dayton to get their contesting "fix" while away from their radios. For those attending Contest University, the annual "Eyeball Sprint" gave attendees a chance to get their blood circulating after lunch. The Kansas City DX Club's pileup contest in the KCDXA Suite was especially popular this year, with long lines and, at times, a waiting list. The first prize of an HF amplifier certainly helped motivate the participants.

In my opinion, the funniest, and most entertaining "contest" held at Dayton was the "NS Dash" held in the Contest Super Suite

Saturday night. Nearly 40 participants lined up in a triangle and simulated a phone version of the three-band NS Sprint held every Thursday evening. If you want a chuckle, check out the video, www.youtube.com/watch?v=2jlcyzxjH0w.

Perhaps more than anything else, the most exciting part of Dayton Hamvention was meeting, talking and laughing with other contesters every night in the numerous contest suites at the Crowne Plaza. Amateur Radio is a diverse hobby, as it should be. DX, VHF, building gear, public service, digital modes and much, much more are just a few of the areas where hams of similar interest can get together. This is a good thing. I still submit, however, that no group had more fun and showed more energy and passion at Dayton than those involved in radiosport.

W0AIH in CQ Contest Hall of Fame

As editor of *National Contest Journal*, I am somewhat sensitive to skewing content and coverage toward one area or contesting group. Given my lengthy history with the Minnesota Wireless Association, I have to be particularly careful about exhibiting (or appearing to exhibit) any bias toward MWA in our coverage. As MWA members learned of the induction of Paul Bittner, W0AIH into the CQ Contest Hall of Fame, however, it became hard to hold back our pride. For decades, Paul has worked tirelessly to build a world-class contest station in the middle of the "black hole." He has given literally hundreds of casual and serious contesters in the Upper Midwest the opportunity to operate a fully equipped station with some serious antennas behind it.

As a Lutheran pastor, Paul has traveled around the world, using his fellowship with other contesters and DXers to spread both his faith and his love for Amateur Radio. More important, however, is the friendly, welcoming attitude Paul shows everyone who visits the "farm" (as the W0AIH contest station outside Eau Claire, Wisconsin, is called). I remember my first visit to the farm. I arrived early Sunday morning for the second half of the CQ WW CW, and — as was his habit — Paul had been up all night on 160 meters. He welcomed me, sat me down on 15 meters and left for the morning to preach. Of course he was back by noon, none the worse for the wear. Those of us in MWA look at Paul and hope we will have half the energy that Paul has when we enter our seventh decade.

Getting it Right

For 20 years, Denis, W4DC, has been faithfully tracking and publishing ARRL Field Day records in the May/June issue

of *NCJ*. Some careful eyes spotted the fact that the 8A battery category has been listed incorrectly since we started publishing these records. Our article should have indicated that the 8A battery record was set by the Southern California Contest Club (N6IV/6) in 1980 with 3857 QSOs, 12 operators and 27,625 points. Denis assures that this longstanding record will be listed correctly in the May 2010 issue. **NCJ**