

June 2009 VHF QSO Party

Anticipation, Determination, Perspiration —
June 13-15, 2009

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It just wouldn't be an ARRL contest if those three factors weren't present. For some, the buildup is a multi-year project — anticipating that their station, conditions and operating experience will bring them the reward of distinction in *QST*, the winners and leaders listings, a plaque or a certificate: *anticipation*. Others figure they are just in the right geography and the correct operating category with just the right amount of gear and gumption to press on to a chance for an award: *determination*. Then there is the Pareto Rule — with 80 percent of the stations providing the basic communications activity for the joy of VHF on-the-air activity and operating under field conditions, no matter what the temperature or weather may be in their locale: *perspiration*. For the other 20 percent of the stations that got the top scoring listings and certificates, there were plenty of all three ingredients that affected their success.

Much of the feedback from the participants was extremely positive. The newcomers to VHF contesting were absolutely amazed at the 6 meter propagation and levels of activity. Guests and visitors to rovers and portable stations were impressed with the contesting efforts and enthusiasm of the participants.

Make no mistake about it — when it comes to the excitement of contesting and the growth of scores over the past two decades, rovers of every category have been the most controversial and contributory group. The joy of contesting from several coastal or mountaintop locations in the same weekend is enjoyed by a large contingent of score-submitting rovers, as well as the somewhat lesser-documented activities of the “captive” rovers that support a single station.

Many of the perennially high-scoring single- and multi-op multiband stations would not have been able to achieve their score totals without the additional QSO points and grid-band-multipliers rovers provide.

The first thing I notice when looking at the scores after ARRL computer checking is the

number of logs submitted, in order to gauge the participation compared to previous years. This year saw 1135 logs, which included 47 entries from Canada, 4 from Mexico, 7 DX logs from the Caribbean, Venezuela and Brazil, and a 1-contact log from Kenya. This represents a total increase of 61 logs over

last year for a gain of 5 percent. As always, the number of logs submitted seriously underestimates the participation, as we find that K5QE has 1225 QSOs in the log just on 6 meters.

My next gander is at the number of rovers and their category distribution. These categories have experienced the most significant recent rule changes. Classic Rover logs numbered 59, Limited Rover included 37 entries and Unlimited Rovers submitted 6 logs, for a total of 102. Last year we had 95 rover logs, with 61 Classic Rovers, 26 Limited and 8 Unlimited. This may be a limited sampling over only 2 years, but the change in the rules apparently did not discourage rovers and the rules change for participating on the bottom four bands in the Limited Rover category did not have a negative impact on this type of activity.

Single-Operator Low Power entries numbered 693, up 33 from last year. Single-Operator High Power entrants numbered 206, up a notch from 200 last June. Single-Operator QRP entries remained about the same with 33 logs entered versus 35 last year. The Limited Multi-operator category had 56 logs entered, an increase of a whopping 500 percent over 2008's 11 entries in this category. In the Multi-operator category we saw a drop from 72 entrants to only 44 this year.

Conditions

VHF contest participants usually look forward to some 6 meter E_s and they were not disappointed. Although the total 6 meter band QSO count was down by almost 12,000 or 9 percent, there were still a respectable total of 125,000 6 meter contacts in the submitted logs. Eleven stations had 6 meter grid counts over 200, with K5QE netting 251. Another 30 stations spread over a wide path of the Southeast, Central and Southwestern states submitted 6 meter grid multipliers of over 150.

Two meter numbers were up by 2800 or 10 percent. 222 MHz activity increased by



Single Operator, Low Power

K2DRH	401,544
W5SXD	267,029
K9MU	247,248
N3LL	204,156
K5RQ	169,540
WB1GQR (W1SJ, op)	158,588
AF1T	151,380
KC9BQA	143,412
K2EK	132,848
N0LL	132,240

Single Operator, High Power

K1RZ	455,590
K1TEO	373,464
WB9Z	288,864
K9CT	286,080
K8EB	250,160
WD0T	193,060
W4WA	192,000
WA2FGK (K2LNS, op)	179,520
K4QI	178,308
K4SN	177,885

Single Operator Portable

KA1LMR	53,361
K6VCR	29,160
KM7W (K1L9A, op)	27,734
K9AKS	24,511
KF4VTT/VP9	18,825
W9SZ	12,400
K9QVB/9	12,231
WB2AMU	8,906
N2YTF	7,200
N6FD	5,964

Limited Multi-operator

K9NS	666,551
K5TR	502,128
K8GP	425,754
W3SO	335,070
AA4ZZ	312,018
W5ZM	271,183
KA2LIM	218,892
W4IY	176,600
W1QK	175,680
KB1DFB	165,540

Multi-operator

W2SZ	1,768,746
K5QE	1,324,182
W3CCX	713,507
K3YTL	409,738
W4NH	341,217
W0AUS	323,180
W0EEA	259,845
KB0HH	249,780
W0KVA	154,000
N6VI	139,568

Rover

VE3NPB/R	130,548
W1RT/R	128,790
VE3SMA/R	97,240
N5AIU/R	75,720
N2CEI/R	64,538
KC3WD/R	62,504
WA2IID/R	56,250
AE5P/R	51,948
K2QO/R	50,958
W0ZQ/R	45,428

Limited Rover

W6YLZ/R	104,580
KO4MA/R	58,112
WA0VPJ/R	48,037
AG4V/R	27,927
AF6AV/R	25,275
W3DHJ/R	23,760
K6EU/R	22,800
N4JDB/R	15,312
KC2QZF/R	13,184
KC0PON/R	12,782

Unlimited Rover

W6TE/R	101,277
K5RNT/R	30,750
KR0VER/R	24,003
N1LF/R	24,000
K4GUM/R	13,065
N3XUD/R	10,200

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The Three Generation Rover Team of N3XUD/R. From left: Angel All, KB3STA; Dave All, N3XUD, and Bill All, N3KKM, operating from a mountaintop site in Western Pennsylvania. This was Angel's first contest since getting her license in April and she helped her family team to a 6th place finish in the Unlimited Rover category.

800 contacts or 13 percent. 432 MHz contacts rose by 1000 or 9 percent. Microwave contact numbers were significantly lower this year. A 25 percent decrease, from 8100 to 6100, is almost entirely attributable to the lack of team or group rover entries that were microwave-equipped.

Many stations reported 2 meter EME QSOs and the top two Multi-operator stations found the multipliers very valuable. The moon was workable for North American stations from 0430 UTC until 1900 UTC Sunday. There was also decent 2 meter E_s in the early hours of Sunday morning from the southwest toward the east and northeast into KY, TN, SC, NC and GA.

Single-Operator Categories

Maintaining his top spot in Single-Op Low Power (SO-LP) for yet another year, Bob, K2DRH, in IL topped his previous performance with a score of 401,500 and came close to the score of the top entry in Single-Operator High Power. His score is attributable to excellent QSO totals on 6 meters with 200 grid multipliers on that band and a bevy of contacts on the next three bands with rather thin totals on the microwaves through 3 GHz. In 2nd place, Rich, W5SXD, with a six band setup from NTX section, scored 267,000 points. Rich reported, "Great contest and shakedown cruise for rebuilt station." Third place went to Justin, K9MU, in WI, also with a six band station, netting 247,000 points. N3LL and K5RQ, both from WCF, were in 4th and 5th places respectively, both having substantial luck with the 6 meter conditions. Stations placing 2nd through 5th were not in last year's Top Ten for this category.

In the Single-Operator High Power (SO-HP) category, Dave, K1RZ, made it to the top, moving up from 3rd place last year, scoring 455,600 with his 10 band station from

the MDC section. Taking advantage of the 6 meter activity combined with the density of East Coast stations and rovers, he snapped the winning streak of Jeff, K1TEO, from CT who was in 2nd place this time with 373,500. Our 3rd place winner was Jerry, WB9Z, with a score of 288,800, edging out the 4th place scorer, Craig, K9CT, whose total was 286,000, both from IL. Erwin, K8EB, in WI was in 5th place with a 10 band entry from MI. Neither K9CT nor K8EB were in the Top Ten SO-HP standings last year.

The Single-Operator QRP (SO-QRP) entrants are a small but dedicated group of amateurs who make special efforts to get to rarer grids or higher locations with limited power on one to eight bands. Although his score was 53,300, down from the 78,000 of 2008, Chris, KA1LMR, was first in this group as he has been for many years, with an eight band effort from NH. Tom, K6VCR, was 2nd from SDG, also using eight bands, with a score of 29,000. Chris, KL9A, operating under the call KM7W, claimed 3rd place from MT with 27,700 from 283 QSOs on 6 meters and 98 grid multipliers. Our 4th place winner was Curt, K9AKS, with a score of 24,500 and a five band station in SD. Doug, KF4VTT/VP9, made it into the 5th spot with 251 QSOs in 75 grids from Bermuda, while spending less than 3 hours operating!

Multi-operator Categories

K9NS, with their 666,500 score, won the Limited Multi-operator (LM) category; they had a good balance of contacts and grid multipliers across the bottom four bands. Their eight operators started off with a bang and logged 164 contacts in the first hour. Over 1000 6 meter QSOs in 231 grids propelled their great score. That effort bumped K5TR into 2nd place this year, as his four band team of two ops totaled 402,000, down 30 percent from their 2008 score. The 11 person K8GP crew operating from VA slid back into the LM category this year with a score of 425,700. The effort and cost for the trek to Spruce Knob, WV was a limiting factor. The Wopsonock Mountain seven person team at W3SO captured the 4th spot with 335,000 points, while the AA4ZZ crew of nine was 5th with 312,000.

The Unlimited Multi-operator (UM) category saw W2SZ again as top scorer, with almost 1.77 million points. Their totals were 2141 QSOs and a multiplier total of 483 grids of which microwaves contributed 432 contacts and 183 grids. Continuing to press them for the 2nd year in a row was 2nd place K5QE, with their nine operators amassing 1.324 million points with remarkable 6 meter numbers. They had a total of 2002 QSOs and 498 grid multipliers, but their microwave contribution was limited to 177 QSOs and 70 multipliers.

Affiliated Club Competition

	Entities	Score
Unlimited Club		
Society of Midwest Contesters	57	1,687,500
Medium Club		
Potomac Valley Radio Club	36	1,823,783
Nacogdoches ARC	7	1,465,974
North East Weak Signal Group	24	1,387,075
Mt Airy VHF Radio Club	11	947,154
Northern Lights Radio Society	22	939,327
Florida Contest Group	19	832,953
Central Texas DX and Contest Club	6	657,094
Florida Weak Signal Society	12	485,129
Grand Mesa Contesters of Colorado	9	458,483
Badger Contesters	17	455,913
Contest Club Ontario	13	441,966
Carolina DX Assn	8	358,348
Rochester VHF Group	10	353,142
Pacific Northwest VHF Society	20	332,530
Northern California Contest Club	22	250,034
Yankee Clipper Contest Club	14	171,143
Tennessee Contest Group	14	152,875
Southern California Contest Club	4	144,061
Rochester (NY) DX Assn	3	135,025
Alabama Contest Group	9	103,137
Arizona Outlaws Contest Club	11	97,666
Frankford Radio Club	6	79,652
Central Arizona DX Assn	3	57,443
Utah DX Assn	3	39,644
Mad River Radio Club	5	39,402
Contest Group Du Quebec	8	36,089
North Texas Microwave Society	5	21,197
South East Contest Club	4	20,287
CTRI Contest Group	3	19,125
Maritime Contest Club	3	10,003
Minnesota Wireless Assn	6	9,153
Local Club		
Mt Frank Contesters	4	697,990
Murgas ARC	4	595,634
Chippewa Valley VHF Contesters	4	427,949
Eastern Connecticut ARA	4	177,618
10-70 Repeater Assn	3	55,109
Schenectady Museum ARA	4	28,470
Burlington County Radio Club	5	19,171
Raritan Bay Radio Amateurs	7	17,195
Ventura County Amateur Radio Society	4	13,815
Spokane DX Association	3	11,058
Dauberville DX Assn	3	10,996
Portage County Amateur Radio Service	6	10,274
Meriden ARC	3	6,710
Low Country Contest Club	4	2,629

In 3rd place again, the W3CCX Packrats scored 713,500 with a 12 band effort, complete with a visit from Murphy who wrought havoc with the transmit amplifiers for 6 meters, 2 meters, 70 centimeters and 23 centimeters. The 12 hams at K3YTL were next in line with a 4th place finish and 405,000 points using six bands from their usual FN11 perch. W4NK came in 5th, a newcomer to this year's Top Ten in the UM category.

Rover Categories

The Limited Rover (RL) category was modified this year to include only the lowest four VHF bands. Of the 37 stations in this category, 17 used those four bands and 15 used bands A, B and D (6 meters, 2 meters and 70 cm). The winner in this category was a hustling Mike, W6YLZ, accompanied by John, N6MU, scoring 104,500 while covering 11 grids. Andy, KO4MA, with Dave, AJ4LU, also a four bander, was 2nd with 58,000, covering an aggressive 22 grids across 1300 miles in three states. John, WA0VPJ, took 3rd place with another four band swing through eight grids, amassing 48,000. Steve, AG4V, capped the 4th spot with a 28,000 effort that also included eight

Northeast Region (New England, Hudson and Atlantic Divisions; Maritime and Quebec Sections)			Southeastern Region (Delta, Roanoke and Southeastern Divisions)			Central Region (Central and Great Lakes Divisions; Ontario Section)			Midwestern 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)		
WB1GQR	158,588	A	N3LL	204,156	A	K2DRH	401,544	A	W5SXD	267,029	A	KG6IYN	84,056	A
(W1SJ, op)			K5RQ	169,540	A	K9MU	247,248	A	N0LL	132,240	A	VA6AN	65,798	A
AF1T	151,380	A	K2EK	132,848	A	KC9BQA	143,412	A	K0SIX	107,168	A	NU6S	56,924	A
K1KG	116,382	A	N4QWZ	127,470	A	W09S	70,468	A	W5ROK	98,212	A	K6XN	32,928	A
WB2SIH	97,812	A	NJ2F	123,546	A	W9GKA	60,750	A	(WA8ZBT, op)			WJ0F	22,256	A
W3PAW	88,954	A							KA0FPQW	86,784	A			
			W4WA	192,000	B	WB9Z	288,864	B	WD0T	193,060	B	W7CE	106,505	B
K1RZ	455,590	B	K4QI	178,308	B	K9CT	286,080	B	K5LLL	156,136	B	N6EQ	82,615	B
K1TEO	373,464	B	K4SN	177,885	B	K8EB	250,160	B	W5D5K	148,938	B	N6KN	82,416	B
WA2FGK	179,520	B	WB4SLM	159,384	B	W9GA	138,866	B	W6OAL	141,168	B	K7CW	79,344	B
(K2LNS, op)			KB5AAB	129,990	B	K8MD	129,920	B	K5AM	132,880	B	W7EW	51,072	B
N3HBX	127,600	B												
WA1T	120,805	B	KB5YZG	2,352	Q	W9SZ	12,400	Q	K9AKS	24,511	Q	K6VCR	29,160	Q
			KC8KSK	522	Q	K9QVB/9	12,231	Q	KC0ATQ	3,552	Q	KM7W	27,734	Q
KA1LMR	53,361	Q				K9OM	1,650	Q	KC8CUI	2,009	Q	(KL9A, op)		
WB2AMU	8,906	Q	K8GP	425,754	L	A19I	1	Q	W0SJE	1,911	Q	N6FD	5,964	Q
N2YTF	7,200	Q	AA4ZZ	312,018	L				N7QF	490	Q	KC6MIE	935	Q
VA2NU	2,432	Q	W5ZN	271,183	L	K9NS	666,551	L				K7TOP	779	Q
W3MEO	150	Q	W4IY	176,600	L	N8ZM	148,526	L						
			W4TP	104,650	L	N9TF	48,498	L	K5TR	502,128	L	WA7JTM	82,810	L
W3SO	335,070	L				W9VW	31,527	L	W0VB	84,488	L	AD6J	29,681	L
KA2LJM	218,892	L	W4NH	341,217	M	NG9R	23,205	L	W0LSD	72,691	L	VE6AO	25,415	L
W1QK	175,680	L	N4JQQ	64,253	M				N0EO	66,165	L	W7JLC	20,806	L
KB1DFB	165,540	L	K4AC	58,344	M	VE3WCC	134,816	M	W5KFT	57,658	L	K7WA	11,178	L
K2BAR	154,198	L	W4YCC	30,849	M	N8KOL	110,580	M						
			K4RSV	5,977	M	N9UHF	95,160	M	K5QE	1,324,182	M	N6VI	139,568	M
W2SZ	1,768,746	M				KB8O	39,552	M	W0AUS	323,180	M	VA7ISL	91,504	M
W3CCX	713,507	M	N2CEI/R	64,538	R	N2BJ	38,822	M	W0EEA	259,845	M	W6TV	61,920	M
K3YTL	409,738	M	KC3WD/R	62,504	R				KB0HH	249,780	M	N6TEB	51,900	M
W2FU	131,596	M	W5AKBH/R	462	R	VE3NPB/R	130,548	R	W0KVA	154,000	M	W6AB	26,695	M
W3KWH	27,750	M				VE3SMA/R	97,240	R						
			KO4MA/R	58,112	RL	KF8QL/R	29,646	R	N5AIU/R	75,720	R	KE6QR/R	12,200	R
W1RT/R	128,790	R	AG4V/R	27,927	RL	W9FZ/R	26,433	R	AE5P/R	51,948	R	K6LMN/R	10,653	R
WA2IID/R	56,250	R	N4JDB/R	15,312	RL	NE8I/R	21,513	R	W0ZQ/R	45,428	R	K7MDL/R	2,530	R
K2QO/R	50,958	R	KD5IKG/R	8,001	RL				WR0I/R	10,812	R	KH7Y/R	320	R
WA3PTV/R	28,288	R	A14GR/R	3,838	RL	W9YOY/R	8,436	RL	KA0KCI/R	10,428	R	K7IP/R	273	R
KB1EKZ/R	26,240	R				K8DOG/R	6,862	RL						
			N1LF/R	24,000	RU	N8OC/R	5,452	RL	WA0VPJ/R	48,037	RL	W6YLZ/R	104,580	RL
KC2QZF/R	13,184	RL	K4GUN/R	13,065	RU	N9UX/R	4,838	RL	W3DHJ/R	23,760	RL	AF6AV/R	25,275	RL
W3HMS/R	11,520	RL				K9GY/R	1,829	RL	KC0PON/R	12,782	RL	K6EU/R	22,800	RL
									N5TIT/R	8,479	RL	N6ORB/R	11,679	RL
									AA0KW/R	8,316	RL	K6JRA/R	8,514	RL
N3XUD/R	10,200	RU												
									K5RNT/R	30,750	RU	W6TE/R	101,277	RU
									KR0VER/R	24,003	RU			

grids on four bands. Bob, AF6AV, operated in only two grids but managed to capture 5th place with 25,000, operating four bands in southern CA.

In the Classic Rover (RC) group, top dog was Murray, VE3NPB, who with Russ, VE3OIL, as his rover partner, covered nine grids using 12 bands and added 381 QSOs with a phenomenal 172 grid multipliers for 130,500. This is the first time they have topped a Rover category in the June contest. Just 1800 points behind, John, W1RT, and Christophe, ON4IY, were in 2nd place with 128,800. Our 3rd place scorer was another Ontario, Canada based rover, Steve, VE3SMA, also manning a 12 band station through seven grids for 97,200. Johnny, N5AIU, and Lon, AE5BN, captured 4th place with their eight band activity through 10 grids of the southwest.

The top Unlimited Rover (RU) score was reported by David, W6TE with help from John, K6MI. As part of the Southern California pack rove they activated 10 grids and made 471 QSOs for 101,277. Dustin, K5RNT, and his spouse, Amanda, K5AMW, who chose this category to avoid competition with other Texas rovers in the Classic Rover group. Their six bands, coupled with a 14 grid rove earned them 30,700 for 2nd place. Third place in this category was Eric,

KR0VER (don't you think he has one of the cleverest vanity calls?) who with nine bands across seven CO grids scored 24,003 points. I emphasize Eric's score down to the last digit as Les, N1LF, from AL had 24,000 points for

Holding the Channel

You may recall that the VHF QSO Party started on the same day that all television stations in the US changed to digital signals. For a year prior to the change over, W7DTV, the Skyline Tower Amateur Radio Club, a group composed primarily of broadcast engineers involved in the Skyline Tower master broadcast site in Portland, had planned to operate a 6 meter station using the now-surplus broadcast antennas with a fantastic signal from the six bay Super Turnstile antenna at 1570 feet Height Above Average Terrain. As reported by Ev, W7EEH, with only a short window of time between the changeover and contest start, the group didn't expect such a high receive noise level, limiting the site's effectiveness, but it was a memorable experience just the same.

4th place, only three points behind! Les covered four grids with 10 bands, making a lot of use of the feedback he got from his questions on the VHF Contesting reflector.

Steve, K4LIG, with his roving partner, now his spouse, K4LIG, placed 5th in RU with 13,000 using four bands across six grids. His soapbox included this note, "If you haven't been fortunate enough to have yours [spouse] along on a roving adventure, you're really missing out. It made a so-so rove into another great memory."

In 6th place was the three generation team of Dave, N3XUD, his dad Billy, N3KKM, and his 11 year old daughter Angel, KB3STA. They garnered 10,200 while traversing four grids. They reported, "Angel pretty much settled on 6 meters as that is where most of the action was. Her dad taught her well and she handled the pileups like she had been doing it for a long time."

So where was the group of California based multiband team rovers? Some participated on a limited basis, but did not submit logs. Their calls appeared in the logs of others who did submit for scoring. Duffey, KK6MC, editorialized in a post on the VHF Contesting reflector (lists.contesting.com/ mailman/listinfo/VHFcontesting), "The new rules appeared to curtail the coordinated roving activity from California, as only one

Sponsored Plaque Winners

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of numerous clubs and individuals, we are pleased to announce the winners of a sponsored ARRL June VHF QSO Party plaque. The ARRL wishes to thank the plaque sponsors for their continued commitment to the ARRL Plaque Program. Without their support and dedication, the Plaque Program would not be possible.

Category	Plaque Sponsor	Winner
Overall Single Operator High Power	Southeastern VHF Society	K1RZ
Overall Single Operator Low Power	Mike Coogan, KB7ME	K2DRH
Overall Single Operator QRP Portable	Mount Frank Contesters, K9NS	KA1LMR
Overall Multi-operator	Randy Stegemeyer, W7HR	W2SZ
Overall Limited Multi-operator	K1TEO, W2GKR, W2GKO, KA1FVG	K9NS
Overall Rover	Southeastern VHF Society	VE3NPB/R
Atlantic Division Rover	Potomac Valley Radio Club	K2QO/R
Midwest Division Limited Multi-operator	Gene Gabry, N9TF	KD0HGA
Northwestern Division Single Operator QRP Portable	Mike Coogan, KB7ME	KM7W (KL9A, op)
Northwestern Division Multi-operator	Randy Stegemeyer, W7HR	K7AWB
Pacific Division Multi-operator	Jim Davis, NN6EE	W6TV
Roanoke Division Rover	Potomac Valley Radio Club	KC3WD/R
Southeastern Division Single Operator High Power	Southeastern VHF Society	W4WA
Southeastern Division Rover	Southeastern VHF Society	N2CEI/R
Southwestern Division Single Operator High Power	WSUWB — In Memory of John Chambers, W6NLZ	N6EQ
West Gulf Division Single Operator High Power	North Texas Microwave Society	K5LLL
West Gulf Division Rover	North Texas Microwave Society	N5AIIU/R

Un-sponsored plaques may be purchased by the plaque winner. If you wish to purchase an un-sponsored plaque or order a duplicate plaque, contact ARRL Contest Branch Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X, at 860-594-0232 or by e-mail at kx9x@arrl.org. The cost for plaques is \$75 (includes shipping).

call from the 15 or so that have participated in that activity over the past few years appears in the logs submitted. It is a shame that there were eight 10 band VHF/UHF stations that appeared to be dormant in this year's contest. I think that this is a bad sign. With that activity, rover activity would have been at a new high. I hope that some of these stations found their way into fixed, portable, or other rovers."

New Records

Thirteen section records were set in SO-LP, two of them division records. Rich, W5SXD, in the NTX section now holds the West Gulf Division high score with 267,000, while Rob, N3LL, in WCF with 204,000, set a Southeastern Division record. Four additional section records in SO-HP were set this June by K9EA in IN, K1RZ from MDC, KB5AAB in MS and WD0T in SD.

Surprise of surprises, W5ZN set a record for AR and the Delta Division in the LM category with a score of 271,000. Our own ARRL President Joel, W5ZN, together with our Contest Manager Sean, KX9X, and Membership and Volunteer Programs Manager Dave, NN1N, made this happen. In the Unlimited Multi-operator category, K5QE pushed the envelope in STX

with a West Gulf Division record-setting 1.324 million points. Another Unlimited Multi-operator entry, K4AC, set a new NFL record with 58,000.

There are still several ARRL Section records unclaimed in the SO-QRP Category. This year we have three section records, two of them also division records. Curt, K9AKS, set the SD SO-QRP record with 24,500 from a five band setup. Curt is also the "keeper of the records" and has edited the list of section and division winners posted on the ARRL Contest Branch Web site (www.arrl.org/contests). Chris, KL9A, operating as KM7W, posted 27,700 points in MT to claim the Northwestern Division SO-QRP record. Doug, KF4VTT/VP9, set the "International" SO-QRP Portable record with a single band 6 meter effort from Bermuda, logging an 18,000 total.

Club Participation

There were 45 clubs represented, three more than last year. The Society of Midwest Contesters (www.w9smc.com) was the top and only entrant in the Unlimited Club category with 57 entries and a 1.69 million aggregate score. The three main contributors were stations K2DRH, WB9Z and K9CT,

whose combined scores made up one million of the total.

Topping the Medium Club listings was the Potomac Valley Radio Club (www.pvrc.org) with 36 entries and 1.82 million total score. Their main contributors included K1RZ, K8GP and W3SO. It is no surprise that the Nacogdoches ARC (www.w5nac.com) with eight entrants scored almost 1.5 million points on the strength of the K5QE Multi-operator station that contributed 88 percent of the total. The Northeast Weak Signal Group (www.newsvhf.com) placed 3rd with 1.38 million points and 24 entries, with K1TEO, W1QK and W1RT/R as their leading scorers.

In the Local Club class, the Mt. Frank Contesters took top honors with 698k; almost all of that was made by the K9NS 1st-place Limited Multiop effort. The Murgas ARC (www.qsl.net/k3ytl) was in second with 595,000, including the scores of four stations; two of them, WA2FGK and K3YTL, made up 99 percent of that total. The 2nd place club was the Chippewa Valley VHF Contesters (www.cvvhf.org) with four logs and a 428,000 aggregate; K9MU contributed more than half of that total. Chippewa Valley moved up a notch from last year's 4th spot in this category.

Fun for Everyone

While many of us find amusement assembling and operating a technically demanding radio station, taking lots of gear and antennas on the road or just grabbing a few QSOs when the bands are hopping, VHF, UHF and microwave communications have continued to challenge and inspire. Surplus cell phone base station amplifiers have become more readily available and power for many microwave-equipped stations has increased, allowing for longer distance contacts and more grid multipliers.

We are beginning to see analog TV gear showing up as surplus — a boon to builders and experimenters. It is certainly rewarding to see increasing participation in all divisions of the contest with more youth entering the ranks. The rovers and portable stations have increased the public awareness of the communications capability of Amateur Radio and its significant place in emergency communications. Let's continue to build the enthusiasm and momentum by stimulating more operators to use those neglected bands often considered too dull or too challenging. Share this article and ask your buddies and club members to join in the fun and participate. An extended contest article with more charts and pictures is available at www.arrl.org/contests.

Next year's ARRL June VHF QSO Party is scheduled for June 12-14, 2010 and the bands should continue to be hopping. C U there. 73, Rick

JOHN D'AUSILIO, W1RT



Inside the very clean rover of John, W1RT. John's vehicle is QRV from 6 meters all the way up to the microwave bands. John, along with partner ON4IY, used this vehicle to cover 10 grids and earned 2nd place in the "classic" Rover category.