Results, June VHF QSO Party

Is the termination of a good tropo opening on a moonlit night, during the June VHF QSO Party, considered a brilliant de-duct-ion?

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Depending upon the location from which one participated in the latest running (June 10-11, 1978) of the June VHF QSO Party, band conditions for the annual bash might be described as “superb” or “dismal” (see the disparity in the Soapbox comments later on), “best condx in years” or “worst ever.”

Then taking into account that the number of entries received at 464 was 23 fewer than the number of entries received in 1977, and that 11 new all-time division records (compared to 16 in 1977) were set, one might be led to think that the most recent June outing was only a fair-to-middlin’ exercise, at best.

Don’t you believe it.

Not one, but two operators were able to best the all-time single-operator high score and three, count ‘em — uno, dos, tres — multioperator stations came on to blow away the four-year-old existing multiop mark by healthy margins; ranging from 4k to 20k points.

Single-Operator Accomplishments

The single-operator assault was led by K1MNS. Larry, the number two single op in the 1977 June Party, put it all together with a 75k point score to break the N6NB national solo operator record by over six thousand points. Also surpassing the old record and a scant 2000 points behind ‘MNS, was K1FO, who placed number two in the 1978 and the all-time top ten single-operator listings. These two scores are indicative of how things went, single-op wise, as the 1978 “Top Tenners” had a score that averaged, at 44,207, 10,953 points higher than their counterparts in 1977.

Four divisions all have shiny new all-time single-operator records as a result of the June contest. WA2DPU added 6k points to the 1968 K3IPM record in the Atlantic Division. The New England Division record is, of course, owned by K1MNS, who outscored his own one-year-old best effort in that division. WA4GPM upheld his own 1977 record score by 20k points to retain the top spot in the Roanoke Division. And VE2DFO holds the new Canadian single-op high, as the VE2FYU score from 1977 was a multiop effort, which was erroneously reported as a single-operator entry.

Multioperator Happenings

Not to be outdone by the high-scoring single operators, the multioperator stations took care at aim at some of the existing records and came away with three scores, which were better than the previous all-time best score, and seven new all-time division/DX records.

W2SZ/1, operating from their favorite haunt on Mt. Greylock in western Massachusetts, came away with a score 20,000 points higher than the previous best ever recorded for the June VHF QSO Party. The previous holder of the all-time multiop record was the 1974 WA1MUG group, who have essentially evolved into the W2SZ operation of 1978. Not too far behind and in second place in the all-time multiop standings, by a mere 7000 points is the W3CCX/3 operation, which was the number one multiop in the 1977 June contest. In third place in the multiop standings at 181k points are the operators of station W3BBS.

The 1978 top ten multiop list shows seven “repeaters” from the 1977 list, with K8III, W2YX and W1XM the newcomers. The average top ten multiop score, at 111,581, is 16,600 points higher than the 1977 average.

The new all-time multiop division records include W3CCX/3 bettering their own Atlantic Division record of 1977. The
W9NWE effort tumbled the K9HMB Central Division record of 1975. The Delta Division powerhouse, W4BFB/4, added 26k points to the record that they set last year. The K8III group grabbed the top spot in the Great Lakes Division in posting a score 29k points higher than the old record which was set by WA8BBA in 1975. W2SZ/1, in turning in the highest multiop score ever, also, incidentally, holds the New England Division record. The gang at W4YO added 5k to the 1977 K4CKS score to lead the Southeastern Division. And XE2BC now owns the multiop DX score to beat.

All in all, not a bad showing for a contest that might at first glance, have appeared a study in mediocrity.

N9HH provides an interesting narrative on his group’s efforts to try to break the Central Division multiop record. Take it away, Bill.

"The June 1978 VHF QSO Party is now history, and from our point of view it was an enjoyable, albeit somewhat unusual, event. Our multioperator group did better than ever before, but that isn’t what we consider unusual, since we have been able to make the same claim each time that we’ve entered the June Party. Rather, the strange sensation comes from the condition of the bands.

"Six meters was poor, at least based on past June showings. We had nothing resembling an opening until Sunday morning and then it was a good one, but all to the northeast. That evening the band opened again, but again to the northeast. We are glad that there are lots of 1s, 2s and 3s on 6, because we were at least able to rack up a fairly good contact total. As the band was folding for the last time Saturday night, we caught a little Es to the southeast and picked up three of four multipliers for a total of 40.

"Before the contest started, the group had developed a plan for breaking the existing Central Division multioperator record. We thought 600 contact points in 70 sections would do the trick. We were expecting somewhere between 52 and 55 sections on 6, so with a total of 40, it didn’t look too promising especially after the 59 sections we had in June 1977. We didn’t even hear any of the DX that was supposed to be on, but we were battling our usual noise level, so maybe the DX was there and we just didn’t hear it.

"Two meters was as good as 6 was mediocre. Excellent tropo conditions began at about 0430Z on the 11th. Worked a couple of new states and got 23 multipliers, 10 better than in 1977, almost making up for the slack for 6 meters. Contact totals were up on 2 also, statistically almost directly attributable to being able to use 146.52 MHz, at least in a limited way. Our only serious equipment trouble occurred on 2, and we got hit with a double whammy. Around 0200 on the 11th, two capacitors shorted in the ssb/cw amplifier, leaving us with about 85 watts output for the remainder of the contest. Then about 1400, as I turned on the equipment after catching a little shuteye, a surge from the big 12-volt power supply got the Tempo VHF-1 and we were off 2 fm until late on Sunday afternoon.

"The other suggestion I’d like to make is either allow use of .52 any time, all the low vhf activity area. My personal opinion is also allow use of .52 any time, all the way, or eliminate 146 to 148 MHz from the contest. But if you keep the limited use rule, we’d like to suggest that the period be slightly longer, say six hours, so one could set up a particular portion of each hour for .52 and have enough to go the whole contest. In our case, we try to monitor .52 the first 10 minutes of each hour, if the frequency is clear and an operator is available.

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November 1978  85
is that multops be allowed to use the whole contest period. One of the advantages of the multiop (although it doesn’t seem to work in this particular operation) is the greater availability of fresher operators for a longer period of time. The required ‘off time’ seems to negate this.

“All in all, a fine-business affair. We seem to have met our goal of bettering the old multiop record by about 10 percent, I believe. Of course, the way that we did it didn’t resemble our plan, but what the heck. Guess that just shows that it is pretty hard to plan a contest.”

Guess that just about wraps it up for this time, except to acknowledge the able assistance of Tom, K1KI and Arlene in the preparation of this report.

Soapbox

There is only one conservative comment for the June 1978 VHF QSO Party: WOW! The pileup of stations trying to work NC on 2 meters was as bad as if I were low-band DX. (K1FJM/4) I tried my best with 1 watt on 2 meters. (WA2YE1) Both 6 and 2 seemed better than normal from here, although the Es on 6 seemed to favor the W1s and the boys out west and south . . . I would like to compliment K2UOP/4, K4MSG and K4LHB (all within one mile of each other) for their signal quality and operating courtesy. All of us were able to operate 6 meters within 30 kHz or so without any real trouble. (W3YV/4) Just a token effort this year, since we were all tied up with the K2UYH EME DXpedition. (WA0CSL) We had very heavy winds (80 plus mph) on Peavine Mt., Nevada. Six meters didn’t do too much for us, but on 1296, we worked K6UQH (a distance of 214 miles) for a first QSO between California and Nevada. (W6YKM) I suggest that each of the Maritime Provinces be counted as individual sections and large provinces, such as Ontario and Quebec be divided into several sections such as eastern and western Ontario, and eastern, central and western Ontario to promote vhf activity. At present, there is no incentive to work stations in western Ontario after having worked a station in eastern Ontario and yet the province stretches from W2 to W0 land. (VE2DFO) Worst weekend in years. Heard XE2BC, but too weak to attempt QSO. Heard one burst from W7KFS/VY1 (VE7ASM) Had a great time in my first contest. Was fun using solar power, but I had to wait for direct strong sunlight before I could transmit. (WA6OYS) Doubled my score, seems the quagi really works. Hope for four stacked next year and a little more power. (VE3GLD) Six meters didn’t open up nearly as much as it had the past several years. It opened to California at the beginning of the contest, then again on Saturday evening to Nevada, Oregon and Idaho as well as to the Midwest at the same time. Sunday the band was mostly dead, but did produce a double-hop opening to VE1 and New England around mid-afternoon. Nothing else was heard at this time until W1/VE1 signals disappeared and the band opened to southern CA and Mexico. The band was dead for the rest of the contest. (WA5QCP) The closest local was 180 miles north of me. Didn’t even work my own state for a multiplier. (W7KN) I sure wish that there were more stations on 223.5 fm simplex — Please! (WA2ANZ) Two meters provided extended openings into the Midwest with 20 over ssb signals for several hours . . . sure glad to hear all that 2-meter activity. (AA4R) The Sunday (11 June) Es opening was chaos! QRM was so bad that 6-meter ssb operations were forced up as high as 50.250 MHz. Yup, almost 4 percent of the 6-meter band was in use! (WA1UXQ) On Saturday, a news crew, including a cameraman, from WBRE-TV in Wilkes-Barre, PA, arrived on the scene and did its thing. On the 6:00 news the following Monday there was a three-minute news item of our effort . . . In order to provide for operator comfort and safety, it was necessary to shoot one member of the native wildlife population — namely a rattlesnake. (W3BBS) We have all waited for one like this and this year we really got one . . . a contest that had a real good tropo opening. This contest clearly will be the time that many of the old all-time section and division records will come tumbling down. We were able to better the all-time record score, set while we were still WAIMUG, and by a good bunch too. I have heard
rums that the W3CCX group did about as well as we did, and it will be verry interesting to see who came out on top. No matter who is the winner, the vhf bands have benefited from this last bash. For a change, weather conditions cooperated with us very nicely. Wonder of wonders, no one got wet on the mountain this time. The bountiful supply of sunshine and light winds permitted us to go all out and erect our antennas in their largest versions.

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The highlight of the contest was working XE2BC on 2 meters, a first to XE-land for me, but not for Nevada to Mexico. The first Nevada-Mexico QSO on 2 meters was made by WB7EME on fm several years ago. Meteor scatter was unusually excellent on Sunday morning to provide a host of new sections here on 6 meters. Unfortunately, 6-meter and 2-meter activity peaked at the same time so we missed opportunities for 2-meter sections. (K7ICW) Probably would have worked more stations on 432, but for antenna alignment problems. Many ops just don’t know where we are, and with highly directive arrays that usually spells no contact. (W1AIM) Six meters was poor most of the contest, very short openings, had to work hard to get our 58 sections. The 2 meter and 3/4 part was super. Had the tropo to the northeast giving us 20 sections on 2 meters and 6 sections on 34 meters. We had lots of guys confusing us with N5KK, some thinking we were the same station and tuning past us. (N5KW) [The N5KK-N5KW clash in the OK section is a rather interesting rivalry (you would really need a scorecard to tell the players apart). N5KK came out on top this time, but look out next time cuz the

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