# Results, 1983 ARRL September VHF QSO Party 

By Edith Holsopple,* KA1KRQ

Target: 1340 feet. Obstacles: Wrong road; no road; this is a road? Where is the top? Climb hills, climb trees, search for the top. VE2DUB finds top. Where is the car? Where is VE2DUB? VE2DUB finds car. Down mountain, up road other side. This is a road? All out. Car clears rocks. Find trail. Test generator - good motor, no juice. Dissect generator - fan disintegrated, wires broken. Hold wires, start generator, solder wires using power from generator. Gets dark. Carry generator up, up, up. Stop. Base camp. Set up 144 MHz. Make eight contacts. Go to sleep 2 A.M. Rain, lightning, thunder, falling branches. Get up. Carry up 50, 220, 432, 10-GHz stations. Start generator. Listen, many signals. Call AFIT. Generator complains, generator balks, spits, seizes, stops forever ... Take down station. Carry all down, down, down. Pack it up. Go home. Lesson learned: You must have light, reliable generator and a drive-up site. - VE2DUB (VE2CUA/2)

VHFers charged on toward improvements and innovations in spite of varying circumstances that might have discouraged hams who are less inclined toward hard work and experimentation. This is the first time that grid squares replaced ARRL Sections in a September VHF QSO Party. Most reactions to the grid squares were enthusiastic. Turnout was excellent, with 436 entries received for this September 10-12 edition of the party. If satisfaction is the reward of hard work, Steve Harrison, KOØU, should be very happy. Here are some of the trials he went through just getting started.

I'd been pushing all the members of the Olathe, Kansas Amateur Radio Club for some time to get involved with VHF SSB/CW, but nobody really wanted to jump into something they didn't really know much about. Only one or two members had ever operated above 6 meters on SSB/CW. It just so happened, however, that AE5W/ $\varnothing$ needed to remove his HF beam and mentioned he would like to try the September QSO Party. So, we got together the 6 -meter gear from a local estate and my own 2-meter stuff, and put up the antennas. Simple, right? Uh-uh.
Getting that Classic 36 tribander down wasn't too hard. The broken rotator was easy to fix, too. But by Saturday morning, Darryl had a meeting elsewhere and we still didn't have any antennas back up. So, it was just myself all day Saturday, putting up the Boomer on one half of the Classic 36 boom (12-ft aluminum and exactly the right diameter for the top
tower bearing) at the top, then the Ringo Ranger on top of that, then the 7 -element vertical FM Yagi, then trying to get the rotator back in place. I finally had to tie the other half of the Classic 36 boom onto the to tie the other half of to Classic 36 boom onto the
tower for use as a gin pole while reinstalling the rotor, and then, finally, came the 4 -element 6 -meter beam.
Each antenna, the gin pole, the feed lines and the mixed-up rotor cable took an hour apiece. And I hadn't even gotten the $7 / 8$-in Hardline unrolled from the $11 / 2$-foot coil that it came in. That took another $11 / 2$ hours and required cutting the coax from the boomer to length and inserting the type N connector on the coax. It was already dark, and lightning was flashing all over the horizon, but not in Olathe yet, and I couldn't see to solder the center pin on the coax. We had begun operating at about 5:30 P.M. or so, but didn't get it all together until around 9 P.M., when I finally slid down the tower for the last time - just when it began raining again.

Other VHFers had equally rocky times getting going. Rain, wind and even snow interfered with more than one station's activity. A weather front ran from the northeastern corner of New Mexico through western Kansas, into eastern Nebraska and through the middle of Wisconsin. Fifteen minutes of solid scatter was reported from Minnesota on 6 meters Sunday morning. Low propagation, as well as a heat inversion, conspired against West Coast operators. Some found 1296 to be sporadically wild, however. East Coast conditions were similarly mediocre. Those who gave


Members of Mecklenburg (Charlotte, North Carolina) Amateur Radio Society set up their station on Roan Mountain in Tennessee using W4BFB as their call. (K4TP photo)
up early were disappointed to discover that they had missed an exciting east-west tropo in the last two hours. Persistence was a hallmark of success in this round.
Leading the single-operator list this year is AA2Z with a very respectable score of 77,319 . The outstanding multiop group W2SZ/1 scored an incredible 462,348. Good show!

Overall, the VHF outing was an enjoyable bash, and now we're looking forward to the January VHF Sweepstakes, to be held later this month. Complete rules appear in December 1983 QST. As usual, September certificates will be in the mail around January 15.

## SOAPBOX

I think guys should spread out more instead of crowding the top 10 kHz of the CW band. We have lots of room, so let's use it (W1CNU). The band was really worked out on Sunday, although conditions were good. My apologies to everyone I couldn't hear on Sunday night, as I lost two different tuner-mounted GaAsFETs and was left with a $6-\mathrm{dB}$ noise figure (K1FO). Grid-square multiplier system was a unique incentive to turn antennas more frequently. Pleasantly surprised at the level of VE station activity on all bands
. . Thank goodness it didn't rain more than a half hour ... no fun operating from leaky tents on a mountaintop in the heavy rain (W1QI). Super contest! Great to be able to work so many 4-land stations (WA1YKN). Think grid squares was a great activity maker and definitely improved the test. However, it hurt to hear W2SZ working W8/9/ø, and I could only hear W2s (W1JR). The contest was very good but closed in for the Philadelphia area in general. Other areas to the north enjoyed some good ducting to the west ... The grid-square system, generated by Europeans possibly because of the political setup, does not seem to apply
to this country. The contests have always been set up on the basis of ARRL Sections (as it should be with an ARRL-sponsored event) . . . there are many who still are trying to work states, and one likes to know what state he is working, instead of finding out after the contest is over (W2EIF). Good fun, but overdriven linears on mountains are unfair to others. I'm not talking about receiver overload here (W1IUN). I never thought we would ever make more contacts on 2 meters during the last two hours of a contest than during the first two, but we did (W1TKZ). The big guns made it difficult for me to work the water pistols . . . I couldn't even hear most of the stations others were working (WB1FSV). Band conditions were horrible, hard to make any contacts. Rig broke down, so had to borrow an IC551D. XYL and I really like using the grid-locator exchange (WA5YOU). The grid-square system is the way to go ... Propagation never really opened up here. . I forecast a tremendous opening "tomorrow" night (WD5IKD). No stations heard from Colorado, Oklahoma, the Pacific Northwest or California ... I had to listen to the Sunday evening news to reassure myself that California really hadn't finally slid into the ocean (W5FF). I operated the entire contest off my solar-charged battery, except for the antenna rotators. I have a 30-W ARCO solar panel and two surplus 7-W panels feeding a $105-\mathrm{AH}$ deep discharge battery
(N5ACP). Sure enjoyed the earlier quitting time on Sunday P.M., since I had to get up early Monday to start my week (WB5KTC). I'm sure getting tired of multi-oping with "Murphy." He "fixed" three rigs this mime (WA5VJB). A lot of people did not know their time (Waise, and I could not use them (KA5OCN). The front-end overload, poor selectivity and signal-mixing problems of today's generation of 2 -meter all-mode rigs is just not acceptable, and we hams should demonstrate this by being smarter shoppers (N5TM). I was able to cut 80 ft of coax by running the station from my attic. It was hot, hot and hot. The best thing about this contest was when my wife, KA5QEQ, decided to get on and make a few SSB contacts (WDSFEH). Conditions - terrible! Activity - low! But still fun (WA4CQG)! I was told by some of our local 6 -meter enthusiasts of long standing that I would be considered a serious 6-meter "freak" when I confirmed at least 40 states (N4DLE). This was my first contest, and I found it very interesting (N4ECZ). Our first effort from Putnam Mt. . and probably our last. We had to quit operating numerous times to kill hornets and spiders, and to chase rats and lizards (WA4LIT) $\ldots$ after 30 hours of static and radio noise, a direct hit of lightning may have been a break from the monotony ... Special tnx to those who did give me a contact (WB4SLM). During first minute on air, XYL informed me that I had TVI. ...

## Division Leaders

| Single Operator Division |  |  | Multioperator Division |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Call | Score | Division | Call | Score |
| VE3BFM | 21,995 | Canadian | VE3LNX | 48,645 |
| AA2Z | 77,319 | Atlantic | K3YTL | 182,252 |
| W90EH | 45,720 | Central | W9CFS | 9499 |
| WOXG | 7040 | Dakota | KC®P | 112 |
| W5RCI | 7076 | Delta | W4BFB | 80,372 |
| WD8ISK | 33,488 | Great Lakes | W8VP | 109,769 |
| WB2Q0Q | 29,880 | Hudson | WA2SNA | 79,976 |
| KOTLM | 16,400 | Midwest | NOLL | 26,196 |
| K1PXE | 39,468 | New England | W2SZU1 | 462,384 |
| K7HSJ | 1995 | Northwestern | N7NW | 8720 |
| W6YKM | 12,880 | Pacific | WB6KBZ | 28,026 |
| WD4GXN | 15,677 | Roanoke | N4DT | 19,516 |
| KADMQA | 1872 | Rocky Mountain |  |  |
| WD4JQV | 4500 | Southeastern | WD4IIS | 50,094 |
| K6LMN | 3477 | Southwestern | W60AL | 38,678 |
| K5SW | 13,248 | West Gulf | KJ5Q | 2904 |

## Top Ten

| Single |  | Operator | Multioperator |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :---: |
| Call | Score | Call | Score |  |
| AA2Z | 77,19 | W2SZI | 462,384 |  |
| W9OEH | 45,720 | K3YTL | 182,252 |  |
| K1PXE | 39,468 | W1TKZ | 143,040 |  |
| K3HP | 37,512 | K1TR | 118,701 |  |
| W3P | 37,051 | W8VP | 109,769 |  |
| WD8ISK | 33,488 | W4BFB | 80,372 |  |
| WB2QOQ | 29,880 | WA2SNA | 79,976 |  |
| WA2TEO | 28854 | WB2RVX | 72,653 |  |
| W2EIF | 26,268 | W8DGY | 59,640 |  |
| K1EM | 24,882 | W1QI | 52,290 |  |

turned out to be my 11-year-old TV "going south." Solved TVI problem, bought new TV (KE4WT). Score is low due to stinko condx and also military reserves both days, so 1 missed morning scatter and tropo (K1FJM/4). Tnx fer the grid-square concept, or our multiplier count would have been pitiful (W4BFB). What really blew my mind was WB6NMT working up and down the West Coast on 2-meter sideband mobile!! I guess my elevation of 5000 ft was bouncing signals off the inversion (K6LMN). I was surprised to hear that most of those participating knew all about
the grid-square concept. I was expecting to have to explain it a lot more (WB9LOZ). With highs in the 100 s it was difficult to stay cool ... I kept waiting for the inversion over central California, but it never materialized. Still had a good time (WA@JRB/6) Really liked using grid squares. Why not recognition for the highest score in each grid square? (WA6SLF). I believe we had better DX on two than any other band For some reason, 1296 DX record was exciting For some reason, 1296 DX record was exciting
(W6OAL). Quite different from ARRL Section contest. Also "fake" contacts are not easily gotten via so

Canadians VE2DWG, VE2HAK, VE2DUB, Joe Alonso and VE1BCZ began operations dry and on the rocks. (VE2XL photo)


N4HY is "radioactive" from station K1DS/1 in
Rhode Island.

called scatter modes. The grid square two-way requirement makes the contact more believable. It is interesting that grid-square distribution benefits those inland from the coast . . . where activity is considerably less, station QSO total-wise (K7ICW). Best contact was 60 miles on 1296 with 2 W (K7HSJ). Had to move Saturday morning because of snow Friday night ... only moved a few miles, but it put me in CN87, which I didn't find out till a few days later (WA7UQV). My little station is surrounded by big guns ... each with a kilowatt and four or eight long Yagis. I felt like a VW between two big 18 -wheelers on the freeway (N7DRR). Went all the way up to EN67 to give out a rare one and had no propagation (WB8TGY). Contests such as this show the real potential of low-powered stations. When but in a contest will a very distant station struggle so hard to hear you? But this shows one the actual range that is possible (K8CQA). I discovered the quickest way to stall a 5 -hp gasoline engine is to attach a 70-A automotive alternator to it through a 4:1 pulley, and then key your xmtr with the linear on (WB8DRR). If this is not the friendliest competition known to mankind, I don't know what is! Supplies here included 148 grams of peppermint starlights, four packs of Hubba Bubba gum, three 2-liter bottles of Pepsi and four aspirin (for extremely patient XYL). After XYL saw her second contest in 13 years of living with a ham, she enrolled in a Novice class. If you can't beat them ... (WA3DNM).

## SCORES

Scores are listed by ARRL Section. Within each Section, single-operator, multiband scores are listed first, then single-operator, single-band scores starting with the lowest frequency, and then multioperator scores. From left to right, each line lists: call, score, QSOs, multipliers and bands operated (A - 50 MHz ; B $144 \mathrm{MHz} ; \mathrm{C}-220 \mathrm{MHz}$; D-432 MHz; E - 1296 $\mathrm{MHz} ; \mathrm{F}-2.3 \mathrm{GHz} ; \mathrm{G}-3.14 \mathrm{GHz} ; \mathrm{H}-5.7 \mathrm{GHz} ;$ $1-10 \mathrm{GHz} ; \mathrm{J}-24 \mathrm{GHz} ; \mathrm{K}-48 \mathrm{GHz} ; \mathrm{L}-$ light).
Among the single-operator stations, the overall Section winners and single-band winners are indicated by bold-faced type for the call sign of the Section winner and for the one letter(s) denoting the bands won. For example, in New Hampshire, WA1OUB is the overall example, in New Hampshire, WA1OUB is the overall Section winner as well as the single-band leader on
50 and $144 . \mathrm{ACl}$ is the $220-\mathrm{MHz}$ and $432-\mathrm{MHz}$ leader.


N2DXP finds operating to be a breeze at 6 -meter multiop station K2DEL in Northern New Jersey. (KT2K photo)



