

By Jeff Klein, K1TEO

2003 September VHF QSO Party Results

What a difference a week makes...

Of all the VHF contests, the September contest offers the greatest opportunity for diverse propagation enhancement. Aurora, tropospheric ducting, and E-skip have all occurred in past September contests. In particular, September is a prime month for tropospheric ducting in much of North America. And September 2003 didn't disappoint with outstanding tropo conditions the weekend *before* this year's contest! Tropo conditions from the Midwest to the Southeastern US and later to the Northeast allowed for record setting DX conditions.

Alas, those conditions did not hold for the contest. Colder, rainy weather prevailed for much of the Eastern half of the country on the contest weekend ending any chance for tropo ducting. While the weather in the Western US was better, competitors generally noted average conditions. Eric, N7EPD did find some enhancement in the Pacific Northwest helping him achieve a new Division record score. And, some New England stations noted tropo ducting to the Canadian Maritime Provinces. Otherwise, as Pete, K9PW (operator at LM K9NS) noted conditions were "average" throughout the country.

2003 Summary

Submitted logs were 521 versus 534 in 2002. Despite the level activity and lack of propagation enhancement, a to-

tal of 18 all-time Division records were set this year. And, the average top 10 score in several categories was significantly higher in 2003 versus 2002. Jim, W4RX, noted great activity levels and the

number of rovers as among the reasons helping his Division-record effort. On the West Coast, K6MI had a big score increase as national leader in single operator portable. John found the Rovers to be

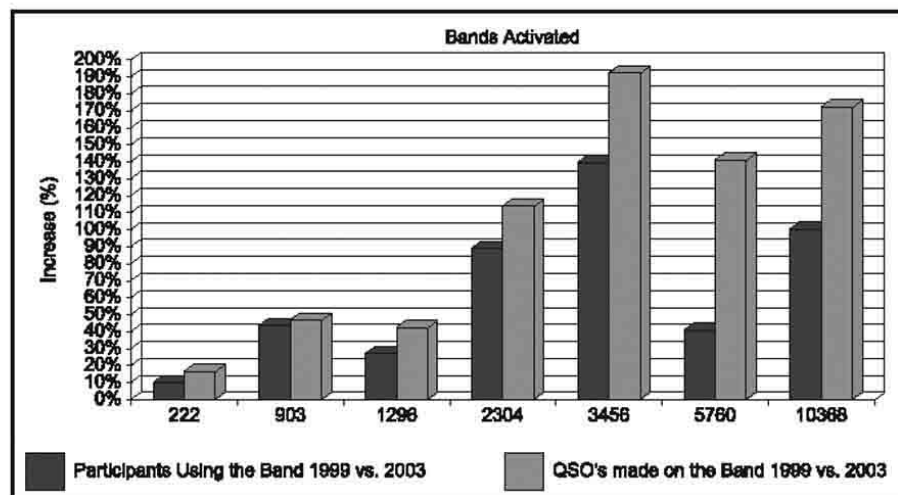
COURTESY AE7RW



Chuck, AC7QN, operates the W7DK station on 144 MHz SSB with Mt Rainier looming in the background.

Expanded Results, Line Score Printouts Available

For complete contest results online, please visit www.arrl.org/contests/results. ARRL members without Internet access may obtain a printout of the complete line scores by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to ARRL Contest Results, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111. Please be sure to include the contest name and year.



Top Ten

Single Operator, Low Power	Single Operator, High Power	Single Operator, Portable	Limited Multioperator	Multioperator	Rover
K1TR 211,662	K3EAR 562,848	K6MI 87,300	K3YTL 381,684	W2SZ 1,830,686	N6NB 378,756
K2DRH 186,504	(KA1ZE, op)	K1ZE 34,776	W3SO 375,947	K1WHS 947,961	N6MU 309,510
N1DPM 123,424	K1TEO 535,800	KF0Q 27,056	K9NS 310,308	W2FU 653,250	W3LY 306,459
WB1GQR 103,897	K1RZ 424,410	N70EP 10,000	AA4ZZ 276,089	N2PA 333,579	W6TOI 198,669
(W1SJ, op)	W4RX 314,825	KA0TP 7,236	W4LY 210,188	W9ICE 156,996	N6TEB 176,326
K4TO 80,106	WA2FGK 256,360	N8XA 7,176	K8CC 140,686	N2NK 150,547	N6DN 142,710
AF1T 76,505	(K2LNS, op)	WB0LJC 5,236	WV8E 127,942	N8KOL 127,534	(+logger)
K5MA 76,049	KM0T 190,080	W9GKA 5,192	W3OR 117,450	W3KWH 120,960	N0DQS 102,440
KB8U 70,626	K1GX 156,672	KQ6EE 4,292	W1QK 110,898	W2EA 109,864	VE3OIL/R 81,190
WA3GFZ 57,680	K2SMN 135,840	KA1LMR 4,250	N8ZM 110,094	K3EOD 107,965	N16M 76,985
KT8O 54,692	WB9Z 112,969				K0PG 72,921
	W0GHZ 108,188				

Regional Results

Northeast Region (New England, Hudson and Atlantic Divisions; Maritime and Quebec Sections)			Southeast Region (Delta, Roanoke and Southeastern Divisions)			Central Region (Central and Great Lakes Divisions; Ontario Section)			Midwest 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)		
K1TR 211,662	A		W4SHG 32,200	A		K2DRH 186,504	A		KT8O 54,692	A		VE7DXG 46,632	A	
N1DPM 123,424	A		W4WA 28,392	A		K4TO 80,106	A		N0KP 32,850	A		WA7JTM 20,370	A	
WB1GQR 103,897	A		KD4HIK 22,878	A		KB8U 70,626	A		K0MHC/0 23,800	A		K7MI 18,340	A	
(W1SJ, op)			N4KFT 17,457	A		N9DG 41,106	A		W0UT 20,971	A		KC6ZWT 17,100	A	
AF1T 76,505	A		K0VXM 11,221	A		KE8RO 29,014	A		N0LL 7,076	A		KF6KDA 8,400	A	
K5MA 76,049	A													
K3EAR 562,848	B		W4RX 314,825	B		WB9Z 112,969	B		KM0T 190,080	B		AF6O 53,010	B	
(KA1ZE, op)			K4QI 102,087	B		K8TQK 106,577	B		W0GHZ 108,188	B		N7EPD 34,342	B	
K1TEO 535,800	B		K2UOP 80,798	B		K8MD 74,176	B		K6LL 20,382	B		K6TSK 31,284	B	
K1RZ 424,410	B		KE8FD 54,229	B		K9EA 73,386	B		K0CJ 19,832	B		W6KEX 21,070	B	
WA2FGK 256,360	B		KE2N 34,602	B		W9GA 65,962	B		N0URW 19,502	B		WA7TZY 15,618	B	
(K2LNS, op)														
K1GX 156,672	B													
K1ZE 34,776	Q		K4SV 3,540	Q		N8XA 7,176	Q		KF0Q 27,056	Q		K6MI 87,300	Q	
KA1LMR 4,250	Q					W9GKA 5,192	Q		WB0LJC 5,236	Q		N70EP 10,000	Q	
WB2AMU 2,220	Q					N8OBB 99	Q		N0HJZ 222	Q		KA0TP 7,236	Q	
WA2BAH 864	Q											KQ6EE 4,292	Q	
W8UJ 80	Q											K7TM 602	Q	
K3YTL 381,684	L		AA4ZZ 276,089	L		K9NS 310,308	L		VO1NOW0 2,675	L		AD6JJ 22,650	L	
W3SO 375,947	L		W4LY 210,188	L		K8CC 140,686	L		N6XYO 2,013	L		VA7MM 3,248	L	
W3OR 117,450	L		WV8E 127,942	L		N8ZM 110,094	L		N0KIS 1,204	L		W2VJN 2,244	L	
W1QK 110,898	L		W4NH 86,564	L					AB5K 555	L		W7DK 2,212	L	
N3JFM 91,450	L		W4LJS 22,720	L								KE6GFI 637	L	
W2SZ 1,830,686	M		K4EJQ 39,750	M		W9ICE 156,996	M		W0EEA 18,830	M		W6MMM 38,320	M	
K1WHS 947,961	M		WD4OAR 16,425	M		N8KOL 127,534	M		W5LCC 7,392	M		KF6YYV 24,354	M	
W2FU 653,250	M		AG4V 4,074	M		N2BJ 92,950	M		KC0IYT 4,836	M		N6ZE 5,504	M	
N2PA 333,579	M		N4JQQ 2,592	M		K9RN 66,045	M		KA0MR 4,005	M		W6TE 5,453	M	
N2NK 150,547	M					NG9R 10,988	M		W5AC 3,060	M				
N2MH 55,755	R		W3LY 306,459	R		VE3OIL/R 81,190	R		N0DQS 102,440	R		N6NB 378,756	R	
WA2IID 32,472	R		N4FLM 20,736	R		K0PG 72,921	R		W0AMT 42,877	R		N6MU 309,510	R	
W3HMS 27,720	R		KG4LEV 15,364	R		K9ILT 72,468	R		K10SK 4,898	R		W6TOI 198,669	R	
KB1EKZ 23,246	R		NT4L 8,316	R					N5RUX 3,808	R		N6TEB 176,326	R	
K2QO 15,372	R		AA4GA 6,400	R					K0NY 2,646	R		N6DN 142,710	R	
			K9JK 39,675	R								(+logger)		
			WB8BZK 26,609	R										

"the life of the party," providing half his QSOs and multipliers. Newer modes of operation such as WSJT are also helping competitors increase their scores.

Without a doubt, one of the biggest changes impacting VHF contesting scores is the number of bands activated by participants. Looking at the last five September contests shows that total QSOs made by all log submitters has stayed fairly level (though log submissions are down). However, QSO points are up a good deal. The use of 50, 144 and 432 MHz, the three bread and butter bands, has stayed relatively flat over the last five years. The vast majority of testers are on 6 and 2, and over three-quarters consistently operate

on 432. But the other bands have seen increases in usage and in some cases an explosion of activity! Looking at the chart on the previous page, we see a nice increase in 222 MHz participation and large increase on 903 and 1296. From 2304 MHz on up the rates show nearly double the number of participants and in some cases more than double. And, QSO totals on these bands are up even a larger percentage. The availability of equipment for these bands has clearly made a difference and as is typical on VHF and above, activity breeds activity. Ever creative and energetic VHF testers continue to find ways to keep their scores going up and at the same time multiplying the fun!

Nationwide Perspective

It took a much higher score to place near the top of each category in 2003 versus 2002 results. 2001 Low power champ K1TR came back to regain the title from 2002 leader, K2DRH. Ed and Bob both topped DRH's September 2002 score in a close battle. The SOLP category was highly competitive this year with average scores up nearly 50% for the top-ten. And the tough competition was widespread—six new Division records were set in this category. Great job guys!

In the Single-op High power category, Stan, KA1ZE, operating the K3EAR station in Southeastern Pennsylvania, took

top honors and set a new all time record for single ops in the process. With the help of station owner Walt, WA1HHN, Stan reconfigured the usually multioperator station to allow a single operator, 12 band effort. Stan combined his excellent operating skills honed over many successful VHF contest efforts with the great station to set the record without the benefit of enhanced conditions. Congratulations Stan! K1TEO gave Stan a battle with his second place finish and defending champ K1RZ placed third setting a new personal record with his effort. The top five all scored over a quarter-million points as the competition really heated up this time. Special note to KM0T, WB9Z and W0GHZ for making the top 10 from the Midwest despite poor conditions in their area of the country.

Defending champ K6MI led the way in the single op portable category, more than doubling his score from the prior year. K1ZE beat MP's 2002 score to finish second. In his third try at the category, KF0Q finished third.

The Limited Multioperator category saw the closest competition of the categories as K3YTL defeated their Pennsylvania challengers at W3SO by a razor thin 6000 points. Hats off to both groups for a great job! The Easterners better watch out in the future as HF superstation competitors from the Midwest are challenging from K9NS and K8CC. And the boys from the mountains of NC, at AA4ZZ saw their score go up 40% from 2002 to hold on to fourth place for the second straight year.

In the Multioperator category, the MGEF group at W2SZ did it again with a winning effort of over 1.8 million points. They were chased by an outstanding effort from Down East with Dave and his crew at K1WHS improving their score by over 60% from the prior year. A major effort at improving the microwave set-ups at the WHS site really paid off, with outstanding grid totals on the bands at their location. The Rochester VHF Group was well represented in this category as W2FU repeated their third place 2002 standings and N2PA was fourth. The W9ICE group moved up a few notches to place fifth this year.

The rover category saw great competition this year as 3 stations broke the 300k barrier! Wayne, N6NB, led the way breaking the all-time record with over 378k. Travelling companion N6MU finished second just ahead of W3IY. Competition was fierce in this category, especially in California with 6 of the top 10 scores from W6-land.

Regional Highlights

Regional top scores are summarized

Affiliated Club Competition

Medium Category		
North East Weak Signal Group	2,317,932	20
Potomac Valley Radio Club	1,687,673	23
Rochester VHF Group	716,636	10
Society of Midwest Contesters	662,447	14
Northern Lights Radio Society	611,179	22
Yankee Clipper Contest Club	403,522	6
Mt Airy VHF Radio Club	325,328	5
Carolina DX Assn	288,316	4
South Jersey Radio Assn	212,753	4
Mad River Radio Club	172,436	5
Contest Club Ontario	171,068	10
Pacific Northwest VHF Society	160,254	19
Badger Contesters	152,207	11
Western States Weak Signal	115,982	8
Northern California Contest	88,115	4
Tennessee Contest Group	25,860	3
Lawton Fort Sill ARC	6,128	8
Local Category		
Delaware Valley VHF Society	96,837	5
Rappahannock Valley Amateur	69,790	3
Dominion DX Group	28,881	4
Dauberville DX Assn	5,849	3

in the accompanying table. Additional detailed breakdowns are available in the web report.

Northeast Region

As usual, top Northeast scores are highly competitive on the national level. In addition to scores noted in the national summary, SOLP stations N1DPM, WB1GQR, AF1T and K5MA were among the overall Top 10, as were WA2FGK and K1GX in the SOHP category, W1QK in Limited Multioperator and Multioperators W2EA and K3EOD. N2MH led the rovers in the Northeast with a score of 55k.

Southeast Region

W4SHG led the way in the SOLP category followed closely by W4WA. SOHP station K4QI just missed a National top-10 score with 102k. The ML category was especially competitive in the Southeast with AA4ZZ, W4IY and WV8E all among the national leaders.

Central Region

In addition to K2DRH's national no. 2 score for SOLP, K4TO and KB8U were no. 5 and no. 8 respectively. SOHP was very competitive with Jerry WB9Z topping Bob K8TQK by 6k. N8XA and W9GKA fought it out for top SO- Portable, with XA winning by a narrow 2k. LMs K9NS, K8CC and N8ZM and Multioperators W9ICE and N8KOL made the national top 10. VE3OIL led the way for Rovers in a close victory over K0PG and K9ILT.

Midwest Region

KT8O led the way for SOLP and managed to make the National top 10 list as did KM0T and W0GHZ for SOHP. KF0Q had a fine effort in SO- Portable followed by WB0LJC. W0EEA led the multiops while Gene, N0DQS, did his usual great


job to lead the rovers breaking the 100k mark, followed by W0AMT.

West Coast Region

VE7DXG's excellent 46k score topped the SOLP category followed by WA7JTM, K7MI, and KC6ZWT. AF6O led the SOHP category, while the AD6IJ and W6MMM crews topped LM and Multioperator, respectively. N7OEP, KA0TP and KQ6EE, all part of the national top 10, followed K6MI's winning SO-portable effort. The West Coast rovers really shined with five 100k plus efforts out of the region from N6NB, N6MU, W6TOI, N6TEB and N6DN.

Affiliated Club Competition

This year 21 clubs competed for the bragging rights in the Medium and Local categories. For several years the Potomac Valley Radio Club has finished first with the Northeast Weak Signal Group placing second. Without the big score usually provided by the K8GP Multioperator station (they sat it out this time) the NEWS Group was able to surpass the PVRC to take top honors. The Rochester VHF Group, Society of Midwest Contesters and The Northern Lights Society all finished tightly bunched in third-fifth for the Medium Category. The Delaware VHF Society took top honors in the Local category.

The name of the game in VHF contesting is to get on the bands and have fun. And getting on even more bands appears to add to the fun as noted earlier. So, as we head to spring and summer, figure out what band to add to your station and increase the fun in the 2004 September contest. And, keep your fingers crossed that perhaps enhanced conditions will land on the *right* weekend this year! But one thing is for certain, you gotta be in it to win it—and have fun! See you on the bands this summer. 

STRAYS

QST congratulates...

♦ Ben Mackenzie, K8IRY, who has received the prestigious Pioneer Award from the Airline Avionics Institute. The avionics industry's highest award for individuals, it is awarded for outstanding personal achievement. It is presented on an as-deserved basis, and has been awarded only seven times since 1967. Ben was nominated for the award by several of the largest avionics equipment manufacturers, NASA and by major airlines.—Michael A. Johnson, K7RZU