

A Magic Band Marvel — 2006 June VHF QSO Party Results

A record setting event for a growing group of glorious ops!

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Can words describe the phenomenal June VHF QSO Party of 2006? With another substantial increase in participation, hot-hot-hot 6 meter conditions, and a splash of 2 meter E_s, records set on this weekend will remain for many years to come.

A question was raised on the VHF contesting reflector¹ by a relative newcomer to VHF contesting, asking which bands they needed to operate to have a successful experience in a VHF contest. The answers were overwhelmingly focused on some 6 meter capability, rationalizing that if the band was open, it would be difficult to find operators on the other bands, except for the multi-ops. The June 2006 VHF QSO Party was a clear validation of that advice, as the magic band (6 meters) was wide open for major periods of the contest, with the exception of a few peripheral geographic areas having limited propagation. Amateurs with rigs that had 6 meter capability, but no specific 6 meter antenna quickly found out that they could load all sorts of metal and still make contacts. This seemed to prove the old “wet noodle” adage — when the band was open, your power and antenna were not a significant consideration. Stations with QRP power were making long haul contacts with small dipoles just a few feet off the ground. And if you also had 2 meter capability and were in the right geography, you could have enjoyed an hour of E_s on Sunday between New England and the upper Midwest.

There were 1047 total logs submitted, 207 more than last year's event. Low Power single-op entries were 608, up from 468 in 2005. High power single-op entries num-

bered 183, another jump up from the 165 last year. With an increase over last year of 7 percent, 96 rovers took their rigs on the road for the weekend. There were 38 QRP entries, a 25 percent annual increase, and another 38 Multi-ops (M) and 77 Limited (L) entries, representing more than 400 additional participants.

Did we set any records? You bet! Records were set in 29 ARRL sections. Old records were topped in 58 categories or

In the Low Power category, Justin Glasener, K9MU, had 6 meter totals of 1094 points in 229 grids. Forty-six logs showed over 500 contacts, and 198 stations worked 100 grids or more on the band.

It's quite interesting which bands were heavily operated. Six meters was the single band operated by 232 entrants, while 2 meters was the single band of another 24 operators. Both of these bands were used by an additional 168 operators, while 187

entries included 6 and 2 meters and 432 MHz. The popularity of the newer rigs that cover HF, plus 6 and 2 meters and 432 MHz, was obvious. There were 16 entries that included 6 and 2 meters, and 432 and 1296 MHz, which likely represented stations with the TS-2000X.

A quarter of all the entries used 222 MHz, and this band remained popular in both the narrow band and FM modes. Twenty eight of the logs showed stations equipped through 24 GHz, and a total of 17 entries showed contacts using laser. About half of all the log entries had 100 or less contacts. Many of these stations were in low VHF station densities, oper-

ated fewer bands, or for shorter periods due to other commitments.

Contact numbers on 144 and 432 MHz suffered due to all the effort single operators poured into their 6 meter time, yet there was enough activity to keep the scores of the well-equipped stations in the high scoring numbers with all of the points and multipliers that the higher bands provided. Six meter contact totals reported in the log submissions numbered over 143,000 — more than double the 2005 aurora-enhanced activity. Two meter contact numbers were down by 7000. Contacts on 222 MHz were about the same as last year, but 432 MHz had a drop of 2000. Contact numbers on the higher bands remained about



Bruce Junkin, K17JA, operates QRP in central Oregon.

ARRL sections. A new national single-op high power record was confirmed, and 19 new ARRL Division records were set.

Outstanding Conditions and Performance

Some of the stations in the middle of the country bagged over 200 grids on 6 meters, and over 1000 contacts on that band in their logs. The Mt Frank Contesters, K9NS, from Illinois, had 1272 contacts in 258 grids in the Limited category. The RPI Amateur Radio Club, W2SZ, had 1168 contacts in 257 grids, while the Delmarva VHF and Microwave Society, K8GP, scored 1140 points in 262 grids in the Multi-op category.

¹The VHF Contesting Reflector can be found at vhfcontest@contesting.com.

Top Ten

Single Operator, Low Power

K2DRH	522,205
K9MU	408,078
NØVZJ	251,328
WB1GQR	228,270
AF1T	221,312
KB8U	206,980
W3SZ	195,517
N9ISN	194,256
NØLL	159,094
N9DG	126,027

Limited Multioperator

K8NS	805,805
W3SO	640,782
W4IY	486,595
W3DOG	351,325
AA4ZZ	310,517
K5TR	276,000
W2MMD	254,254
KB1DFB	212,058
W4NH	207,515
KM5PO	184,212

Multioperator

K8GP	2,060,142
W2SZ	1,985,360
W3CCX	1,156,243
K5QE	673,554
K3YTL	569,734
WØEEA	400,150
N2PA	386,468
KBØHH	247,505
N2NK	239,776
N2BJ	219,150

Single Operator, High Power

K1TEO	854,556
K3EAR	825,000
WB9Z	391,680
K1RZ	385,030
KA1ZE	368,861
W4RX	342,305
K8EB	300,425
K3DNE	239,616
K5AM	239,320
K1TOL	216,144

Single Operator, Portable

KA1LMR	120,042
K6MI	84,410
K9AKS	66,044
N7IR	40,608
W9SZ	21,922
WB6FFC	20,559
KV1J	19,885
KG4LEV	16,206
N8XA	15,045
WB2AMU	12,267

Rover

N6MU	510,224
W6XD	473,215
N6TEB	292,115
N6DN	261,450
K2TER	197,253
WØQZ	131,100
K9ILT	130,131
VE3NPB	118,594
WYØX	113,399
K2QO	106,641

the same as last year, buoyed by the activities of the rovers and multi-ops.

There were some weather extremes that had a significant impact on regional operations: across Canada (from west to east) there was a cool front, and in the southern US (from west to east) there was a large mass of warm air. A heat wave with temperatures to 100°F had just broken the day before the contest over the Midwest. Disturbances were seen with the jet stream between the two different air masses across the tier of northern states, significant rainfall in Illinois and surrounding areas and fierce winds across the northeastern states.

A bear visited Dave Zeph, W9ZRX, and his wife at their Maggie Valley, North Carolina site prior to the contest, evidenced by the claw marks in their hidden gas can reserved for the generator. Luckily, they were not on the site at the time, and there wasn't a return visit. Summer snows caused grief and a big towing bill for Eric Smith, KB7DQH/R, when he encountered the snow-covered road on the way to Lion Rock, Washington. Luckily the bus was freed and the only damage was to a trail sign.

The soapbox is full of very positive comments on the conditions and all the fantastic escapades of the rovers. Everyone seemed to be having a peak experience, whether with limited setups, expanded stations and antennas or newly acquired gear. We even had feedback from rovers in Alaska who covered grids in the Anchorage area, and making contacts between Stephen Tolley, KL7FZ, and Ed Cole, KL7UW, on

bands up to 10 GHz.

Several posts mentioned the numerous visitors to their stations, and the questions that were asked by the curious. It was a great opportunity to spread the joy of Amateur Radio communication. I personally have used a tri-fold informational handout² for our rover, complete with the URL for the ARRL and our own radio club. Not only is this good exposure and public relations, it may help to recruit a few more hams to our ranks.

Single Operator

For his four-peat, Bob Striegl, K2DRH, in the Illinois section, topped all previous scores in the Low Power class with a new Illinois, Central Division and national record of over 522,000 points. Operating on bands through 3 GHz, he maximized his efforts, aided by his ideal location in the middle of the national 6 meter action. He was closely followed by Justin Glasener, K9MU, in Wisconsin, totaling 408,000 points with 1094 6 meter contacts in 229 grids. Third place was a Dakota Division station, Vince Pavkovich, NØVZJ, from Minnesota, with 251,000 points. The fourth and fifth place winners were Vermont Contest Radio, WB1GQR (Mitch Stern, W1SJ, op), from Vermont, and Dale Clement, AF1T, in New Hampshire. The New England stations were not able to manage the 6 meter contact totals and grids that folks in the middle of the country were able to make. While we certainly celebrate and note the top point scorers, let's recognize the 416 stations in the Low Power single-op category who scored less than 10,000 points, but who made up almost half the entries. They added so much more fun to the event for everyone.

Pete Walter, K9PW, who operated the South Mountain Contest Club, K3EAR, station and Jeff Klein, K1TEO, battled it out in the High Power category for top honors. They ran neck-and-neck across the bands with their contact numbers and grid multipliers. In the final analysis, Jeff, K1TEO, had a few more multipliers, and Pete, K3EAR, had a few more contacts. The difference was a mere 3.5 percent in the final score with Jeff outscoring Pete by 30,000 points. With a score of 854,556, Jeff wears the Triple Crown again, setting a new national, New England Division and Connecticut all-time top June VHF contest score for a single-op high power station. Congratulations on a superlative effort. Third through fifth place stations were Jerry Rosalius, WB9Z, in Illinois; Dave Petke, K1RZ, in Maryland/DC, and Stan Hilinski, KA1ZE, in Western Pennsylvania. These op-

erators all scored within 25,000 points of each other in the 368,000-390,000 point range.

Can the 1,000,000 point goal ever be reached by a single operator? Will conditions ever be this good again for such an extended period during a VHF contest? I am forecasting that this single-op scoring record will stand for several decades. It certainly will be a target that will be hard to beat. Looking over the soapbox from the single-ops, the word "fantastic" was used in about every other comment when describing the 6 meter conditions.

QRP

QRP operators are to be congratulated for their participation, as they added so much challenge. There are still 16 ARRL sections that have not yet had a QRP station operating the June QSO party, so there are records to be established for those open slots. Our top QRPer this year was Chris Merchant, KA1LMR, who with 120,000 points set a New Hampshire QRP record, moving into first place this year, up from his second place finish in 2005. John Morrice, K6MI, who was Chris's top competition last year, squeezed back into second place with his 84,000 points, but he also set a new QRP San Joaquin Valley record. In third place, Curt Roseman, K9AKS, from Michigan showed up with 66,000 points. Gary Hembree, N7IR, from Arizona was fourth with 40,000 points, and in 5th place, with a full 10 band effort

Affiliated Club Competition

Club	Entries	Score
Medium Category		
Potomac Valley Radio Club	36	4,865,861
Society of Midwest Contesters	36	2,997,167
North East Weak Signal Group	18	1,753,398
Mt Airy VHF Radio Club	15	1,716,157
Northern Lights Radio Society	29	1,344,841
Chippewa Valley VHF Contesters	13	1,104,955
Badger Contesters	15	957,857
Rochester VHF Group	6	811,270
Grand Mesa Contesters of Colorado	7	574,225
Pacific Northwest VHF Society	26	532,875
Northern California Contest Club	19	421,603
Carolina DX Assn	6	385,024
Florida Weak Signal Society	11	351,982
Contest Club Ontario	12	317,537
Western States Weak Signal Society	8	316,579
Yankee Clipper Contest Club	11	217,924
Tennessee Contest Group	10	178,037
Bergen ARA	3	174,684
Florida Contest Group	10	130,544
Minnesota Wireless Assn	6	125,747
South East Contest Club	8	118,346
North Texas Contest Club	3	112,162
Mad River Radio Club	7	102,129
Central Arizona DX Assn	3	85,969
Frankford Radio Club	6	81,585
Central Texas DX and Contest Club	5	58,071
Florida Contest Group — Panhandle	4	34,762
Hudson Valley Contesters and DXers	4	20,829
Local Category		
South Mountain Contest Club	7	984,820
Eastern Connecticut ARA	6	418,056
Michigan VHF-UHF Society	4	404,930
North Texas Microwave Society	7	275,612
Roadrunners Microwave Group	3	101,862
Delaware Valley VHF Society	4	91,068
10-70 Repeater Assn	3	37,401
Dauberville DX Assn	3	24,548
CT RI Contest Group	3	13,384
North Texas Homeschoolers ARC	4	10,121
Raritan Valley Radio Club	4	3,766

² You can find this flyer at www.nr6ca.org/pdf/hamradiorover.pdf. Randy Bynum, NR6CA, holds the copyright, but if you ask permission to use his format, it is often granted.

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)		
WB1GQR	228,270	A	W0AH	108,472	A	K2DRH	522,205	A	N0VZJ	251,328	A	K7BG	84,372	A
AF1T	221,312	A	W4SHG	86,172	A	K9MU	408,078	A	N0LL	159,094	A	NU6S	62,237	A
W3SZ	195,517	A	W9ZRX	83,475	A	K8BU	206,980	A	N0KP	112,240	A	WJOF	60,344	A
WB2SIH	108,360	A	KG4HOT	68,355	A	N9ISN	194,256	A	VE5UF	107,250	A	VA6AN	53,019	A
W1PM	100,204	A	N4JQQ	61,770	A	N9DG	126,027	A	W6ZI	88,192	A	W7ISG	49,125	A
K1TEO	854,556	B	W4RX	342,305	B	WB9Z	391,680	B	K5AM	239,320	B	AF6O	145,692	B
K3EAR	825,000	B	W4WA	164,844	B	K8EB	300,425	B	K0AWU	182,646	B	K7RAT	119,480	B
K1RZ	385,030	B	K4XR	147,186	B	W9GA	199,784	B	K9MK	157,024	B	(N6TR, op)		
KA1ZE	368,861	B	KC4PX	146,509	B	N0AKC	197,208	B	W0GHZ	156,555	B	AA7A	80,370	B
K3DNE	239,616	B	K4QI	131,712	B	K8MD	168,207	B	K0YW	104,676	B	K7CW	76,950	B
												W7CE	65,520	B
KA1LMR	120,042	Q	KG4LEV	16,206	Q	K9AKS	66,044	Q	N7QF	11,440	Q	K6MI	84,410	Q
KV1J	19,885	Q	W4RXR	6,102	Q	W9SZ	21,922	Q	N0JK	196	Q	N7IR	40,508	Q
WB2AMU	12,267	Q	KF8YK	627	Q	N8XA	15,045	Q	W0OHU	150	Q	WB6FFC	20,669	Q
KF2PC	3,990	Q	WA4EPI	78	Q	W8TCZ	350	Q	K7RJ	84	Q	W6QI	11,286	Q
N3YD	1,200	Q										N7XB	7,599	Q
W3SO	640,782	L	W4IY	486,595	L	K9NS	805,805	L	K5TR	276,000	L	WA7JTM	133,120	L
W3DOG	351,325	L	AA4ZZ	310,517	L	N8ZM	176,661	L	KM5PO	184,212	L	N6ENU	81,260	L
W2MMD	254,254	L	W4NH	207,515	L	W9VW	74,106	L	W0LSD	149,720	L	AD6J	70,680	L
KB1DFB	212,058	L	W4COV	52,920	L	N9AKR	67,968	L	N0EO	90,415	L	K7XC	56,280	L
K2BAR	174,399	L	K5QQQ	34,563	L	KG9BV	51,569	L	KS9Z	51,460	L	W7JLC	17,595	L
W2SZ	1,985,360	M	K8GP	2,060,142	M	N2BJ	219,150	M	K5QE	673,554	M	K0DI	199,408	M
W3CCX	1,156,243	M	AG4V	101,849	M	N8KOL	164,640	M	W0EEA	400,150	M	N6CW	163,392	M
K3YTL	569,734	M	WC4J	48,026	M	K9RN	99,165	M	KB0HH	247,505	M	W6TV	51,634	M
N2PA	386,468	M	WB4WEN	28,576	M	K9SG	80,703	M	W0VH	181,905	M	W6FSC	38,481	M
N2NK	239,776	M	N3NYC	25,480	M	KC9RG	6,105	M	W0KVA	127,792	M	NA6XX	16,940	M
K2TER	197,253	R	W1RT	103,576	R	K9ILT	130,131	R	W0ZQ	131,100	R	N6MU	510,224	R
K2QO	106,641	R	N8UM	68,637	R	VE3NPB	118,594	R	W6YX	113,399	R	W6XD	473,215	R
N3IQ	73,480	R	KC3WD	43,460	R	VE3SMA	70,848	R	N0KE/R	56,064	R	N6TEB	292,115	R
WA2IID	59,732	R	N4DXY	38,875	R	WB8BZK	37,927	R	KR0VER	44,280	R	N6DN	261,450	R
KB1EKZ	41,040	R	W0CIR	38,236	R	KF8QL	33,790	R	N5AC	39,388	R	KI6CG	31,584	R

was Zach Widup, W9SZ, from Illinois.

Multi-operator

One of the perennial multi-op winners, W2SZ/1, the Mt Greylock Expeditionary Force, experienced winds and rain for the entire weekend, accompanied by flat conditions for the microwaves; they slipped back into second place. A lightning storm on Saturday lit up the Mt Greylock skies and was a photo-op for tourists. The extreme weather twisted their microwave antennas by 20 degrees and wrought havoc with their ability to point them accurately. Brian Justin, WA1ZMS, climbed the tower in darkness and the middle of the storm to secure a loose rotator with new bolts.

Ascending to the top spot were the Grid Pirates, the Delmarva VHF and Microwave Society, K8GP, multi-op team — well-seasoned, well-equipped and dedicated — operating from Spruce Knob, West Virginia. In the process, their 11 operators set a new multi-op record for West Virginia of 2,060,142 points. They well deserved the multi-op plaque, as they have knocked at the door of first place in this category for several years.

Crossing the million point barrier for the first time, in third place was the Mt Airy VHF Radio Club, W3CCX, Pack Rat team with 1,156,000 points. They also experienced rain and mountain top winds on Camelback in the Poconos, but managed to struggle through the worst conditions they had seen in all their contesting weekends. The K5QE team in South Texas presented a

673,000 score for fourth place by using seven bands and setting a new section record. The Murgas Amateur Radio Club, K3YTL, the “yellow traffic light” group, had a 569,000 score for fifth place in the Multi-op class.

The Limited Multi-op class also saw several new records set. The Mt Frank Contesters, K9NS, enjoyed first place again, but improved last year's score by 175,000 for a total of 805,000 points, setting a new class record for Illinois; they had a whopping 1272 contacts on 6 meters in 258 grids. The Wopsonock Mountaintop Operators team at W3SO also set a section record in Western Pennsylvania with their second place score of 640,000 points. Their gear and antenna growth paid off as they moved up from their third place score in 2005. The Jim Hale, W4IY, team was in third place with 486,000 from Virginia, followed by the TAPMARC, W3DOG, group in Delaware with 351,000 and Paul Trotter, AA4ZZ, from North Carolina came in at fifth place with 310,000 points.

Rovers

As a rover myself for the past 15 years, I have experienced the excitement of operating from a key location and having a pileup calling me, the disappointment of finding another rover already operating in one of my favorite spots and the angst of being tied up in traffic with the weekend travelers. Despite all the challenges, there were more rovers than ever out during this June QSO Party, creating great scores for themselves and other fixed stations. The positive feedback from fixed stations to rovers is part of the reward that

keeps them rolling! John Desloge, N6MU, with Arnie Shatz, N6HC, accompanying from San Joaquin Valley, captured top honors with a score of 510,000 points, covering 16 grids with 10 bands on board.

Right behind in second place was Art Goddard, W6XD, assisted by Bob Hughes, KG6TOA, who appeared to take the same route with the same bands for a score of 473,000 points. N6TEB (Glenn Allen, KE6HPZ, op) was in third place with 292,000, covered 11 grids with Paul St John, N6DN, on a similar route in fourth place with 261,000 points. The fifth place honor went to Bill Rogers, K2TER, from the Rochester VHF Group with a score of 197,000. More than half of the rovers were capable on eight bands or more, many having gear through 24 GHz and laser.

Club Competition

This is the fourth year that aggregated club scores have appeared in *QST* for the June QSO Party, and the winner was — no surprise — the Potomac Valley Radio Club. Led by the 2 million point effort of their multi-op flagship, the Delmarva VHF and Microwave Society, K8GP, their 36 entries garnered a grand total of over 4,800,000 points. The Society of Midwest Contesters collected logs from 36 members as well, jumping into second place with almost 3,000,000 points. The North East Weak Signal Group held onto their third place position from 2005, with 18 members submitting logs for a total of 1,750,000 points. The Mt Airy Pack Rats were in fourth place, and the Northern Lights Radio Society

maintained their same fifth place spot as last year. One big jump was the Chippewa Valley VHF Contesters, who moved from the Local Category in 2005 to the Medium Category this year. Their logs from 13 members totaled over 1,100,000, while last year they had only 10 entries and 230,000.

In the Local Category, the South Mountain Contest Club, led by their mother ship at the South Mountain Contest Club, K3EAR, attained top honors with 984,000 points. The Eastern Connecticut ARA put together six logs for second place with 418,000 points, up two notches from last year. The Michigan VHF-UHF Society appears to have their first entry, making it into third place with four entries and a total of 404,000 points.

VHF contesters greatly benefit from club activity. Whether it is sharing gear, assisting each other with ideas, construction, testing, antenna raising parties, outfitting rovers or just making contact with each other on the air, amateurs who are part of club activities appear to have a great camaraderie and success in the on-the-air events. If you're not already part of a VHF club, check a Web search engine for some of the clubs listed in the Affiliated Club Competition score column and see if there's one of interest to you.

Observations

"Wow!" was the word used by so many when the contest ended. If you didn't get to experience some of the 6 meter opening with over a thousand stations vying for band space to make hundreds of contacts, you missed one of the best contest years of recent memory. Apparently the Texans were not sufficiently included in the opening, based on several station reports received from the West Gulf Division. DX stations including CO2OJ, CO8DM, HI3TEJ, XE1AO, XE1KK, XE2S, XE1MM, XE2YWB, and XE2TZP worked their way into several logs. There were reports of several East Coast to EU contacts, and even rumors of a West Coast to Japan opening. Logs were submitted by ZC4LI, XE2K, XE2TZP and HI3TEJ. Canadian provinces were represented, with several of them setting records for their sections. A new Canadian record in the Single-op Low Power class was set by Doug Freestone, VE5UF.

Not enough has been said about the nice 2 meter opening that appeared on Sunday afternoon to add even further excitement for the stations in the right geography across the New England, Atlantic, Great Lakes, Central and Dakota Divisions. Bill Davis, K0AWU, in Minnesota, shared his log and starting at 2138 UTC, he added 50 contacts, including the rare

grid of FN51 at the knuckle of Cape Cod, until the 2 meter E_s ended at 2244 UTC.

You had to have great luck or wisdom to be jumping off 6 meters periodically to have caught the opportunity. Ron Patten, KG6HSQ, described a 2 meter contact with Paul Lieb, KH6HME: "I was his first contact at the start of June VHF contest. Two meter, 10 W, 5 element horizontal from DM13 at Palomar Mountain, 5600 foot elevation."

Bob Striegl, K2DRH, had 49 2 meter grids, with an additional 5 stations logging over 30 grids on 2. In the single-op high power category, Jeff Klein, K1TEO, had 61 2 meter grids in the log, with several others catching over 50 grids on the band. Several factors account for these stupendous grid totals, besides just power and antenna height and gain, and Jeff has shared his 20 year VHF contesting experience with many avid VHFers at recent regional radio conferences. Knowledge of the regional operating habits is essential, like who gets on what bands and when. Use of *WSJT* with prearranged skeds for distant grids is of great value, as is tracking rovers and running the bands rapidly with them.

Despite many complaints that the higher band conditions were "flat," grid totals were still impressive for both single and multi-op stations. Jeff, K1TEO, had 27 grids on 903 and 1296 MHz, and these numbers were matched

external antennas allowed)!...I only have a halo on 6 meters, but I worked over 1000 miles!...Connected two telescoping whips end to end for a 6 meter antenna — great fun!...Could have used an omni antenna Saturday for 6 meters...First contacts on 6 meters ever — had a great time. I matched my G5RV to somehow radiate some RF on this band, coming from an FT-857...I used my 6 meter hex beam on a little six foot tall tripod mount in front of my house. I'm fairly impressed with my results...I decided to see if I could tune my HF wire dipole to the 'Magic Band.' It worked, and I had a blast!...I was running only 15 W into a homemade 6 meter loop antenna...I had a blast and worked some real DX (Charlotte, North Carolina) for my little 10 W into a homemade wood and wire Yagi at 25 feet...First three hours I used the wrong antenna (40 meter vertical) on 50 MHz!...All this from portable antennas at 20 feet...When I turned the radio on, I could not believe what I was hearing!" As you can see, it didn't take big power or stacked beams way up high to enjoy the weekend. All Soapbox comments and pictures are found at www.arrl.org/contests/soapbox/. Detailed listings of all scores may be found on the Web report at www.arrl.org/contests/results.

If you have taken part in the VHF contesting, you know what fun a busy band can be and the excitement of DX contacts. We can bet that your experience with the recent VHF contests has spurred you on to enhance your station and increase operating time. If something about this contest review piques your interest and you haven't yet tested the VHF contesting waters, try to get hooked up with a multi-op group or build, buy or borrow a rig and antennas for some VHF bands. Remember: the busiest bands are 6 and 2 meters, and 432 MHz, in that order. If you live in a disadvantaged location for VHF propagation, try to take a rig and antenna to a local hill or mountaintop and see what you can work from there. You may also find FM simplex activity on the following bands: 52.525 MHz, 146.55/58 MHz (146.52 MHz is not allowed in the contest), 223.5 MHz and 446.000 MHz, depending on your geography. There are excellent resources available, including ARRL publications and VHF reflectors. This is just the time to get going with the VHF Sweepstakes, scheduled for Jan 20-22, 2007, as well as preparation for the Spring VHF Sprints or even the next June VHF QSO Party scheduled for Jun 9-11, 2007. Let's keep the activity growing!

QST



Mark Adams, K2QO/R, is enjoying the microwave position in his rover van.

by several of the multi-op stations. The best grid total on 2304 MHz for a multi-op was 33 by the RPI Amateur Radio Club, W2SZ, and 20 for a single-op by Jeff, K1TEO. On 3456 MHz, these totals dropped to 28 and 10, respectively. The 5 GHz and up bands seemed to be the worst off, with fixed stations logging only 10 to 12 grid multipliers.

Some of the notes sent in by contesters detailed their minimal antennas: "Three W to a 6 meter rubber ducky in mountains east of Salt Lake City, Utah — 7 grids and a lot of fun...10 W into an 80 meter dipole...All contacts made via aluminum rain gutter (no