2011 ARRL September VHF **QSO Party Results**

It was all guts! — KB0HH/R

Jeff Klein, K1TEO wa2teo@áol.com

fter terrific activity and band conditions in the 2011 June VHF contest, the hope was that Mother Nature would help create some more excitement in the September contest. Alas, band conditions were mostly rather bland and activity was lower than in prior years. However, with some help from rovers the contest was still a great deal of fun and very competitive across North America. In particular, congratulations are due to Bruce, W9FZ, who once again organized Midwest Mania (see Figure 1) with a slew of rovers operating across the Great Plains.

By the Numbers

Checking all of the submitted logs indicates that a total of about 2800 stations made at least one contact with one of the 434 entrants. Thus, only 15% of the contest participants actually sent in a log. No doubt many were stations that just happened to find a contest station and worked them while not actively seeking contacts. It does indicate the challenge of encouraging contest participants to submit their logs. W2SZ, for example, worked a total of 517 unique calls, more than the total number of official entries in the contest! The Unique Calls table shows the unique calls worked and total contacts for some of the top stations around the country.

Among the Limited Multioperator (LM) stations in the table, W3SO managed to work the most on multiple bands, averaging 2.4 QSOs with each unique call. With LM stations allowed to operate on up to four bands, 'SO did a great job of pushing each station to run the bands with them. I know from direct experience that as soon as you work 'SO regardless of band the operator will encourage you to move to the other three bands with them immediately.

Likewise, Single Operator K1RZ averages 3.7 QSOs with each call worked. Dave does a great job of taking the time to work those difficult microwave contacts that others might pass on. With severe thunderstorms between us, Dave encouraged me to try different dish headings to see which storm cells we could use to work via rain scatter for a

The Top

Single Operator, Low Power				
K2DRH	186,519			
WB1GQR				
(W1SJ, op)	119,280			
W3PAW 1	104,760			
K1KG	83,750			
K2KIB	82,432			
N3YMS	74,015			
AF1T	66,744			
WB2SIH	53,972			
W3SZ	39,237			
WA2VNV	36,366			

Single Operator, High Power				
K1TEO	461,370			
WA2FGK				
(K2LNS, op)	315,600			
K1RZ	240,975			
K3TUF	224,885			
W0UC	72,160			
K8TQK	61,502			
WB2RVX	57,536			
VA3ST	44,908			
K4QI	44,821			
N3HBX	44,118			
ODD Dortok	No.			

QRP Portab	le			
W1MR	33,803			
W9SZ	22,99			
N6LB	4,526			
N1PRW	2,574			
WB2AMU	2,492			
AB1MI	1,71			
KB5WIA	1,31			
N0JK	85			
KD9KC	784			
KC8KSK	112			
Limited Multiopera				

Limited	Multioperato
K1WHS	191,574
W3SO	163,805
K2LIM	101,060
AA4ZZ	64,701
W4IY	57,404
K2BAR	37,668
N1WK	25,063
W1QK	15,312
W0VB	6,384
K2TVI	5,576

Multioperator 1,009,348 N3NGE 308,186 182,434

W2EA

K3EOD	97,760
K5QE	91,096
VE7DXG	31,076
N8KOL	30,923
N9UHF	27,058
W4NH	17,080
Rover	
W1RT/R	245,804
VE3OIL/R	119,634
VE3SMA/R	99,802
W9SNR/R	69,760
WA3PTV	55,500
W1AUV/R	36,103
KE3HT/R	27,360
K0DAS/R	22,849
W9FZ/R	19,437

Limited Rover

WA2BTR/R

K2QO/R	65,968			
WA0VPJ/R	22,200			
K6BRW/R	11,760			
K9JK/R	11,172			
WW7D	10,076			
AL1VE/R	4,181			
N6ORB/R	3,030			
K8DOG/R	2,266			
W0ZF	1,325			
AB8M	1,265			
Unlimited Rover				

Unlimited	Rover
NN3Q	52,041
KR0VER/R	12,768
KJ1K/R	8,320
KD5IKG/R	1,738
VE6KC	816

10 GHz contact. It took a good 10 minutes or so but we finally succeeded, adding a new multiplier for both of us.

KB0HH operates in an area of the country with relatively low local activity. To do well — and they did with a high finish in the Multioperator category — they need to work every station available on as many bands as possible. They only worked 84 different stations but had the highest number of QSOs

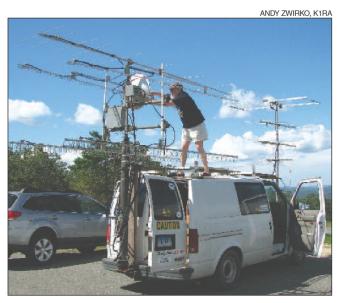
with each unique call of any fixed station. Given the Midwest Mania rovers and several others equipped with many bands, they made sure to work each station on as many frequencies as possible, averaging an outstanding 5.2 QSOs with every unique station they found.

Another factor in contesting success is operating on as many bands as possible. Often in the June contest quite a few of the high-scoring stations will make the bulk of their contacts on 6 meters. In fact, when six is open the other bands often are somewhat inactive. To score well in the September contest it is important to be active on as many bands as possible. Virtually all of the top Single Operator and Multioperator stations were on several microwave bands and many had all bands through 10 GHz.

Two meters is the most popular band for contacts in the September contest followed by 6 meters. However, when QSO points are taken into account 432 MHz is the second "most valuable" band, not far behind 2 meters. 1296 MHz accounts for about half as many points as 6 meters, which is impressive given far fewer stations operate on the band. While grid totals on 6 meters are still an important factor in September, they are not much higher than the totals that can be worked on 222 and 432 MHz. These are far different charts than similar ones for the 2011 June VHF QSO Party in which conditions allowed huge QSO and grid totals on 6 meters.

Another factor in contesting success and enjoyment is how to allocate whatever time is available for operating. Figure 2 shows total OSOs by hour of the contest. There are several overnight hours with very few contacts followed by a large jump at around 9 AM local time on the East Coast. Activity peaks again in the Sunday morning hours and then falls off until a small peak about two to four hours before the finish. If you have limited time and want to make the most contacts, it pays to be active in the first few hours and again on Sunday morning. A different view might be that as QSOs get fewer and farther between, taking a break and getting back on the air on Sunday afternoon as "fresh meat" might be a good way to go.

Figure 1 — Bruce, W9FZ, organizes Midwest Mania every year, coordinating and encouraging rover stations to activate as many grids as possible. In 2011, 10 different rover stations were activating grids across the Midwest.



The W1RT rover van was active on quite a few bands as this photo shows. John, W1RT, gives his antennas some "hands-on" attention on Mohawk Mountain in FN31!

Band Conditions

September contests can see a wide range of conditions including tropo, meteor scatter, aurora, and even sporadic E on 6 meters. 2011 brought little extra excitement from enhanced conditions though some astute operators were able to make use of a weak aurora opening on Saturday evening to work extra grids. For example, WA2FGK noted working five otherwise unworkable grids on 6 meters from northeast Pennsylvania. Single Operator, Low Power overall winner K2DRH made a number of aurora contacts and even Single Operator, QRP station W9SZ was able to work a few stations using the aurora.

Single-Operator Categories

The Single-Operator Low Power (SOLP) category remains the most popular with over half of all log submissions. Frequent top scorer K2DRH returned to the top spot this year with over 186k points. Bob's key was working terrific grid totals on the bottom four bands combined with impressive totals on the microwaves. On 50 through 222 MHz he was either second or third in grid totals on each band for all categories including multioperator stations.

Top Regional results included a trio of excellent scores from the Midwest from NOLL. K0SIX and W0ZQ. On the West Coast, the leading SOLP results were from KD7UO, AF6RR, W6OMF, VE7FYC and KG7P. In the Southeast N4QWZ had 15k points to lead the competition followed by KX4R and K4FJW who were separated by only 8 points!

K1TEO repeated as the top scorer in the Single-Operator High Power (SOHP) category. Jeff's score improved about 20% over 2010 despite similar conditions and activity. The big difference was finding and working rovers on the microwaves in rare grid squares helping to improve his multiplier and QSO point total over the prior year.

Other regional scores of note included W0GHZ who just missed making the national Top Ten from the Midwest region. In the Southeast W3IP and KN4SM had a tight contest to finish second and third in the region for SOHP behind K4QI. The top West Coast Region score came from the Pacific Northwest as N7EPD scored 25k with KC6ZWT in second and W7FI in third for the SOHP category.

Single-Operator Portable Operation

Chris, W1MR (formerly KA1LMR) finished atop the Single-Operator Portable (SOP) category. He had some excellent competition from W9SZ in Illinois. Zack was actually able to make some aurora contacts even at the 10 W level though he heard more than he could work during the opening. He

noted some good microwave activity this time helping him to his fine finish.

Multioperator Categories

After winning the Multioperator (MO) category in 2010 for the first time, the K1WHS team moved into the Limited Multioperator (LM) category and gained another victory. On 6 meters they managed a contestleading total of 63 grids, an impressive total given the overall flat conditions.

The MO team of W2SZ had a rare secondplace finish in 2010 but came back to dominate the category this time around. Despite the conditions and activity level they still managed to exceed one million points. As is often the case, they had the top QSO and grid totals on all of the microwave bands in addition to impressive results on the bottom four bands. Perhaps 2012 will see another battle of the heavy weights between 'SZ and 'WHS?

Rover Categories

A total of 54 rovers submitted logs this year with over half in the traditional Rover category that was won by a strong effort from W1RT. Operating with the assistance of Andy, K1RA, John piloted the "Jitney" through 7 grids amassing a total of 245k points.

The Limited Rover (RL) category had 18 competitors this year with K2OO leading the pack. Mark managed 65k points in his rove that started in New England and ended up close to home in Western New York. The 'QO team managed nearly 500 QSOs on four bands and noted making many contacts on CW to help the score.

The final rover category is Unlimited Rover (RU) and this year there were five entries. NN3Q roved in the Mid-Atlantic area and was first after several top scores in

Affiliated Club Competition

Anniated Oldb Competitio	411	
Medium Club		
Mt Airy VHF Radio Club	17	1,144,326
North East Weak Signal Group	21	1,003,386
Potomac Valley Radio Club	17	637,067
Contest Club Ontario	11	316,651
Northern Lights Radio Society	13	230,054
Society of Midwest Contesters	7	225,999
Badger Contesters	9	140,467
Pacific Northwest VHF Society	20	106,714
Cold Brook Contest Club	3	70,066
Yankee Clipper Contest Club	6	
North Texas Microwave Society	5	21,671
Frankford Radio Club	3	7,744
Mad River Radio Club	3	5,394
Florida Contest Group	5	1,855
Northern California Contest Club	5	1,605
Grand Mesa Contesters of Colorado	4	922
Western New York DX Assn	4	790
Local Club		
Bergen ARA	4	37,870
Stoned Monkey VHF Amateur Radio Club	3	27,135
Bristol (TN) Amateur Radio Club	3	9,808
Western New York DX Assn	4	790
Portage County Amateur Radio Service	3	508

Regional Leaders

A = Single Operator, Low Power; B = Single Operator, High Power; Q = Single Operator, QRP Portable; L = Limited Multioperator; M = Multioperator; L = Limited Multioperator; R = Rover; RL = Limited Rover; RU = Unlimited Rover

Northeast Region (New England, Hudson and Atlantic Divisions; Maritime and Quebec Sections) WB1GOR	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)
W3FAW 119,280 A W3PAW 104,760 A K1KG 83,750 A K2KIB 82,432 A N3YMS 74,015 A	N4QWZ 15,272 A KX4R 5,568 A K4FJW 5,560 A W2BZY 3,827 A WK4P 3,335 A	K2DRH 186,519 A KC9BQA 18,648 A WZ8T 17,854 A VE3KZ 14,555 A KF8QL 10,384 A	NOLL 34,884 A KOSIX 25,628 A WOZQ 23,166 A KOMHC 15,450 A WB5ZDP 11,592 A	KD7UO 9,020 A W6AQ 10,745 A AF6RR 8,772 A W6OMF 5,764 A VE7FYC 5,092 A KG7P 4,587 A
K1TEO 461,370 B WA2FGK (K2LNS, op) 315,600 B K1RZ 240,975 B K3TUF 224,885 B WB2RVX 57,536 B	K4QI 44,821 B W3IP 41,952 B KN4SM 31,270 B NT4RT 4,365 B AA4DD 4,218 B	WOUC 72,160 B K8TQK 61,502 B VA3ST 44,908 B K8MD 34,776 B K9EA 28,704 B	W0GHZ 43,890 B WQ0P 40,460 B K0AWU 10,647 B K9MK 8,477 B KF0M 4,387 B	N7EPD 25,830 B KC6ZWT 10,528 B W7FI 10,258 B W7CE 7,755 B K7AWB 4,028 B
W1MR 33,803 Q N1PRW 2,574 Q WB2AMU 2,492 Q AB1MI 1,717 Q	KC8KSK 112 Q N3AWS 6 Q	W9SZ 22,991 Q KC9MMM 32 Q KD8LDX 4 Q	N0JK 851 Q KD9KC 784 Q NA5O (AA5JG, op) 6 Q	N6LB 4,526 Q KB5WIA 1,311 Q W6MDH 6 Q VA7GNR 6 Q
K1WHS 191,574 L W3SO 163,805 L K2LIM 101,060 L K2BAR 37,668 L N1WK 25,063 L	AA4ZZ 64,701 L W4IY 57,404 L NE5BO 96 L	N2BJ 3,920 L W9RVG 3,276 L	WOVB 6,384 L WB0BQV 2,440 L WD5IYF 1,566 L NOLD 819 L	W7BI 3,132 L WW7LW 1,140 L N7KN 798 L VE6AO 128 L
W2SZ 1,009,348 M N3NGE 308,186 M W2EA 182,434 M K3EOD 97,760 M W3KWH 2,625 M	W4NH 17,080 M WY3P 10,553 M W4PK 306 M K4QE 180 M KD2JA 136 M	N8KOL 30,923 M N9UHF 27,058 M KO9A 7,672 M	KB0HH 109,668 M K5QE 91,096 M KC5MVZ 1,220 M W0RIC 273 M	VE7DXG 31,076 M W6TV 14,322 M W6AB 7,480 M KC7I 6,201 M VE6NQ 1,617 M
W1RT/R 245,804 R WA3PTV 55,500 R W1AUV/R 36,103 R KE3HTI/R 27,360 R WA2BTR/R 19,435 R	AG4V 3,400 R	VE3OIL/R 119,634 R VE3SMA/R 99,802 R W9SNR/R 69,760 R VE3CRU/R 17,215 R VE3MSC 481 R	K0DAS/R 22,849 R W9FZ/R 19,437 R KA0KCI 12,852 R ACOVQ/R 7,095 R KK6MC/R 6,683 R	KD7TS/R 12,264 R K7HPT/R 4,110 R K7MDL/R 867 R VE7BQQ 216 R
K2QO/R 65,968 RL W0BL/R 182 RL WB2AIV/R 70 RL W1PL 56 RL	K6PFA/R 816 RL	K9JK/R 11,172 RL K8DOG/R 2,266 RL AB8M 1,265 RL VE3RKS/R 1,152 RL	WA0VPJ/R 22,200 RL W0ZF 1,325 RL K0NR/R 40 RL	K6BRW/R 11,760 RL WW7D 10,076 RL AL1VE/R 4,181 RL N6ORB/R 3,030 RL K6LMN/R 468 RL
NN3Q 52,041 RU KJ1K/R 8,320 RU			KR0VER/R 12,768 RU	VE6KC 816 RU

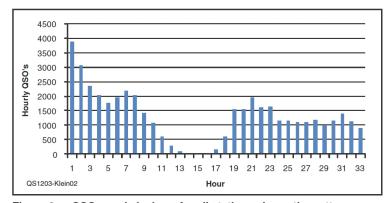


Figure 2 — QSOs made by hour for all stations shows the pattern of activity throughout the contest.

		Unique Calls	Total	QSOs Per
Station	Category	Worked	QSOs	Unique Call
W2SZ	MM	517	1599	3.2
K1WHS	LM	416	869	2.1
W3SO	LM	294	690	2.4
K1TEO	SOHP	290	920	3.2
K2BAR	LM	274	438	1.7
AA4ZZ	LM	255	437	1.7
N3NGE	MM	247	765	3.1
WA2FGK	SOHP	197	699	3.5
WB1GQR	SOLP	195	549	2.9
K1RZ	SOHP	184	669	3.7
K5QE	MM	176	332	1.9
K2DRH	SOLP	141	491	3.5
W1RT/R	R	102	740	7.5
W3PAW	SOLP	101	381	3.9
KB0HH	MM	84	434	5.2

Unique Calls and Total Contacts

prior years in Rover. This time they racked up 52k points on 10 bands.

Club Competition

The September VHF QSO Party features an ARRL Affiliated Club Competition in addition to the individual categories. The Mt Airy VHF Club has a long history of Medium Club wins in the January VHF Sweepstakes and has now extended that success to September. With 17 log entries they ended up with over a million points to edge the North East Weak

Signal Group by a little over 100k points.

In the Local Club competition the Bergen Amateur Radio Association took the top spot in a close competition with the Stoned Monkey VHF Amateur Radio Club. Third place went to the Bristol Amateur Radio Club.

In Closing

The 2012 September VHF QSO Party is slated for September 8 through 10. It's a great end of the summer bash for those dedicated VHF+ operators looking forward to the pos-

sibility of good conditions, an opportunity to work some new grids, and the chance to say hello to old friends on the bands. Plan to get on and enjoy the fun and do not forget to submit a log so your score counts!

Details Online

More details of the competition, photos and charts are available in the online version of this article at www.arrl.org/contests.