

2011 ARRL September VHF QSO Party Results

It was all guts! — KB0HH/R

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After 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

	
Single Operator, Low Power	Multioperator
K2DRH 186,519	W2SZ 1,009,348
WB1GQR (W1SJ, op) 119,280	N3NGE 308,186
W3PAW 104,760	W2EA 182,434
K1KG 83,750	KB0HH 109,668
K2KIB 82,432	K3EOD 97,760
N3YMS 74,015	K5QE 91,096
AF1T 66,744	VE7DXG 31,076
WB2SIH 53,972	N8KOL 30,923
W3SZ 39,237	N9UHF 27,058
WA2VNV 36,366	W4NH 17,080
Single Operator, High Power	Rover
K1TEO 461,370	W1RT/R 245,804
WA2FGK (K2LNS, op) 315,600	VE3OIL/R 119,634
K1RZ 240,975	VE3SMA/R 99,802
K3TUF 224,885	W9SNR/R 69,760
W0UC 72,160	WA3PTV 55,500
K8TQK 61,502	W1AUV/R 36,103
WB2RVX 57,536	KE3HT/R 27,360
VA3ST 44,908	K0DAS/R 22,849
K4QI 44,821	W9FZ/R 19,437
N3HBX 44,118	WA2BTR/R 19,435
QRP Portable	Limited Rover
W1MR 33,803	K2QO/R 65,968
W9SZ 22,991	WA0VPJ/R 22,200
N6LB 4,526	K6BRW/R 11,760
N1PRW 2,574	K9JK/R 11,172
WB2AMU 2,492	WW7D 10,076
AB1MI 1,717	AL1VE/R 4,181
KB5WIA 1,311	N6ORB/R 3,030
NOJK 851	K8DOG/R 2,266
KD9KC 784	W0ZF 1,325
KC8KSK 112	AB8M 1,265
Limited Multioperator	Unlimited Rover
K1WHS 191,574	NN3Q 52,041
W3SO 163,805	KR0VER/R 12,768
K2LIM 101,060	KJ1K/R 8,320
AA4ZZ 64,701	KD5IKG/R 1,738
W4IY 57,404	VE6KC 816
K2BAR 37,668	
N1WK 25,063	
W1QK 15,312	
W0VB 6,384	
K2TVI 5,576	

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

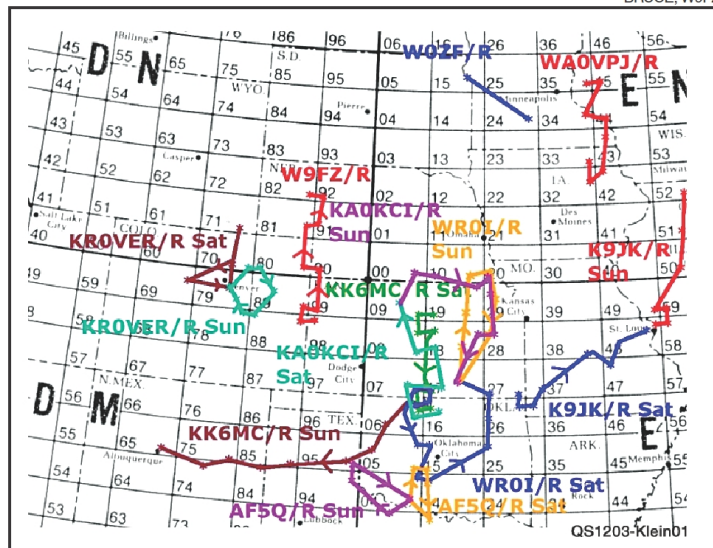
KB0HH operates in an area of the country with relatively low local activity. To do well — and they did with a high finish in the Multioperator category — they need to work every station available on as many bands as possible. They only worked 84 different stations but had the highest number of QSOs

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.

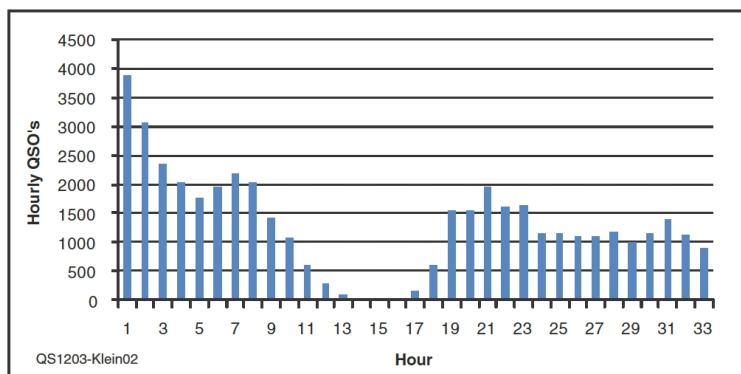
Another factor in contesting success and enjoyment is how to allocate whatever time is available for operating. Figure 2 shows total QSOs by hour of the contest. There are several overnight hours with very few contacts followed by a large jump at around 9 AM local time on the East Coast. Activity peaks 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.



Regional Leaders

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

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 (W1SJ, op)	119,280	A	N4QWZ	15,272	A	K2DRH	186,519	A	N0LL	34,884	A	KD7UO	9,020	A
W3PAW	104,760	A	KX4R	5,568	A	KC9BQA	18,648	A	K0SIX	25,628	A	W6AQ	10,745	A
K1KG	83,750	A	K4FJW	5,560	A	WZ8T	17,854	A	W0ZQ	23,166	A	AF6RR	8,772	A
K2KIB	82,432	A	W2BZY	3,827	A	VE3KZ	14,555	A	K0MHC	15,450	A	W6OMF	5,764	A
N3YMS	74,015	A	WK4P	3,335	A	KF8QL	10,384	A	WB5ZDP	11,592	A	VE7FYC	5,092	A
												KG7P	4,587	A
K1TEO	461,370	B	K4QI	44,821	B	W0UC	72,160	B	W0GHZ	43,890	B	N7EPD	25,830	B
WA2FGK (K2LNS, op)	315,600	B	W3IP	41,952	B	K8TQK	61,502	B	WQ0P	40,460	B	KC6ZWT	10,528	B
K1RZ	240,975	B	KN4SM	31,270	B	VA3ST	44,908	B	K0AWU	10,647	B	W7FI	10,258	B
K3TUF	224,885	B	NT4RT	4,365	B	K8MD	34,776	B	K9MK	8,477	B	W7CE	7,755	B
WB2RVX	57,536	B	AA4DD	4,218	B	K9EA	28,704	B	KF0M	4,387	B	K7AWB	4,028	B
W1MR	33,803	Q	KC8KSK	112	Q	W9SZ	22,991	Q	N0JK	851	Q	N6LB	4,526	Q
N1PRW	2,574	Q	N3AWS	6	Q	KC9MMM	32	Q	KD9KC	784	Q	KB5WIA	1,311	Q
WB2AMU	2,492	Q				KD8LDX	4	Q	NA5O (AA5JG, op)	6	Q	W6MDH	6	Q
AB1MI	1,717	Q										VA7GNR	6	Q
K1WHS	191,574	L	AA4ZZ	64,701	L	N2BJ	3,920	L	W0VB	6,384	L	W7BI	3,132	L
W3SO	163,805	L	W4IY	57,404	L	W9RVG	3,276	L	WB0BQV	2,440	L	WW7LW	1,140	L
K2LIM	101,060	L	NE5BO	96	L				WD5IYF	1,566	L	N7KN	798	L
K2BAR	37,668	L							N0LD	819	L	VE6AO	128	L
N1WK	25,063	L												
W2SZ	1,009,348	M	W4NH	17,080	M	N8KOL	30,923	M	KB0HH	109,668	M	VE7DXG	31,076	M
N3NGE	308,186	M	WY3P	10,553	M	N9UHF	27,058	M	K5QE	91,096	M	W6TV	14,322	M
W2EA	182,434	M	W4PK	306	M	KO9A	7,672	M	KC5MVZ	1,220	M	W6AB	7,480	M
K3EOD	97,760	M	K4QE	180	M				W0RIC	273	M	KC7I	6,201	M
W3KWH	2,625	M	KD2JA	136	M							VE6NQ	1,617	M
W1RT/R	245,804	R	AG4V	3,400	R	VE3OIL/R	119,634	R	K0DAS/R	22,849	R	KD7TS/R	12,264	R
WA3PTV	55,500	R				VE3SMA/R	99,802	R	W9FZ/R	19,437	R	K7HPT/R	4,110	R
W1AUV/R	36,103	R				W9SNR/R	69,760	R	KA0KCI	12,852	R	K7MDL/R	867	R
KE3HT/R	27,360	R				VE3CRU/R	17,215	R	AC0VQ/R	7,095	R	VE7BQQ	216	R
WA2BTR/R	19,435	R				VE3MSC	481	R	KK6MC/R	6,683	R			
K2QO/R	65,968	RL	K6PFA/R	816	RL	K9JK/R	11,172	RL	WA0VPJ/R	22,200	RL	K6BRW/R	11,760	RL
W0BL/R	182	RL				K8DOG/R	2,266	RL	W0ZF	1,325	RL	WW7D	10,076	RL
WB2AIV/R	70	RL				AB8M	1,265	RL	K0NR/R	40	RL	AL1VE/R	4,181	RL
W1PL	56	RL				VE3RKS/R	1,152	RL				N6ORB/R	3,030	RL
												K6LMN/R	468	RL
NN3Q	52,041	RU							KR0VER/R	12,768	RU	VE6KC	816	RU
KJ1K/R	8,320	RU												



Unique Calls and Total Contacts

Station	Category	Unique Calls Worked	Total QSOs	QSOs Per 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

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.