



Scuttlebutt

December 2008

Issue 197

**Next Meeting:
Sunday December 7th, 2008 - 1-5PM
Holiday Inn, Marlboro, MA**

Captain's Cabin

To all those that put in a major or minor effort during the CQ WW contests this past October and November, thank you! I have seen some very nice scores posted on the YCCC reflector as well as on the contesing.com site (3830) all pointing a great total club effort. Fantastic!

Hopefully by now you have found those station improvements made over the summer or this fall have paid off for you in pushing your year-on-year scores upward. At my place, was somewhat successful completing a few antenna projects but still more to go. And this is all part of the game of contesting. It is the incremental gains we make that keep our contesting interest alive and well. So keep it up!

As we start thinking about the next round of contests (160, 10 M and ARRL DX contests in Feb/Mar 2009), the officers are kicking off an effort to update our world famous Contest Cookbook but with some new additions – New to contesting? We can help! We are now looking for editors to choose a topic (band by band strategies, beginners section, etc.) and suggestions for other important contesting hints and kinks.

Leading up to the CQ WW CW contest weekend, Mike, W1JQ put together a nice strategy for beginners and days before the contest, I managed to package up his words of motivation and send it to about 75 new members that have joined the YCCC over the past couple of years. I was pleased to get very positive responses from several of our newest members and really appreciated the note! Also, they got on when they were not planning any operation! Although CW contesting is a bit of challenge, a nice score can be had with some simple search and pounce (S&P) techniques if one is not comfortable calling CQ and getting lots of answers at once if your code speed is not spectacular but as pointed out, you will be amazed to see your code copying ability increase in a short time. So I strongly recommend giving CW contesting a serious try. It is truly a fun experience! Small scores roll up to big numbers and we can not win unless we have scores (large and small) from all of the membership. I am still on the path to get 100% participation – WE WILL WIN each and every contest by this simple act!

At the December 7 meeting, the plan is to have a DXpedition presentation (we had a few this year!) and Randy, K5ZD, recent inductee of the Contesting Hall of Fame present an important talk on the theme of ethics in contesting – it is a don't miss meeting! A flea market will be setup at the back of the room too, so bring some goodies you wish to move along! Meeting starts at 1 PM (lunch places are nearby and many get together to socialize prior to the meeting), Sunday December 7 at the Holiday Inn, Marlborough, MA. Hope to see many of you there!

73, Mark, K1RX

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Next Meeting Dec 7th from 1-5PM Holiday Inn, Marlboro MA

Featuring.....

Randy, K5ZD on “Contest Ethics”

Holiday Inn in Marlborough. Located in the northeast corner of the intersection of I-495 and US-20. (See map on page 5)

US 20 @ I-495
265 Lakeside Ave.
Marlborough, MA 01752
Tel: (508) 481-3000

CREW NEWS

New & Returned Crew

Oct WMA Area Meeting

WA1ZAM, Ed Landry, WA1ZAM

Mike DeChristopher, K1KAA

Area Managers

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NNY	John Bradke, W2GB	-----	W2gb@n2ty.org
NYC/LI (718)	Tom Carrubba, KA2D	(631) 422-9594	ka2d@arrl.net
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The editorial deadline for the Scuttlebutt is the 10th of every odd month.

Flotsam & Jetsam

Barnacle Jack Schuster, W1WEF w1wef@arrrl.net

Ahoy Maties!

Hope everyone had fun in this fall's contest season. I'm writing this on Nov 22, and just came in the house after working what might have been the loudest JA signal I ever heard from my car. I hope that was a sign of good condx to come for CQWW CW.

This one is long overdue...sorry Bob, but I had misfiled it.

WIQA writes:

The XYL and I decided to take a vacation to Southeast Asia over the Christmas and New Year's holiday visiting Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. Whilst in Bangkok we were very fortunate to meet up with Champ E21EIC and his YL for a couple of days. Although we had enjoyed a few days exploring Bangkok and the surrounding area on our own there's nothing like the perspective and assistance from a local and the time we spent with Champ and his YL was very memorable. Some of you may remember Champ from his visit in 2007 to both New England as well as Dayton (I missed him because I was in SM/OZ/PALAND).

I took Champ up on his offer to secure a Thai license. The process was fairly involved, which included joining the Thai equivalent of the ARRL who subsequently had to issue a letter on my behalf to the licensing authority. A lifetime membership was something on the order of only US \$60.00! Foreigners are issued calls starting with HS0Zxx and the last two letters are of a sequential nature. Although I did not get the ticket whilst there it did finally come through: HS0ZIF and it quite impressive - almost like a driver's license and including a colour picture!

We also visited with E21YDP and his wife. And I was privileged to be able to operate with the King's special event call HS80A in commemoration of his 80th birthday (on 5 Dec 2007). I was surprised to learn that he was actually born in Cambridge MA! I didn't operate HS80A very long - I'm not the kind of person you want in the chair for that kind of a pile-up! Champ E21EIC on the other hand seemed to breeze right through the callers - we're hoping that if he has the opportunity to return to W1-land we'll get him in the seat at NC11.

We were in Kuala Lumpur for New Year's Eve and stayed in the Trader's Hotel which is adjacent to the park where the Petronas Towers are. That night we were in the club lounge on the 34th floor for the 10+ minute fireworks display. They were lighting off the pyrotechnics directly below our building in the park - it was like being in the middle of the fireworks! You can't imagine what it felt like leaning against the glass windows and feeling the percussion of the explosions all around us. Made for great photos with the Petronas Towers in the background.

Doug Grant, K1DG sent this ..."I have been adding a lot of coax relays to the antenna switching system at my island QTH lately, and 12V coax relays are hard to find (and expensive when they appear). However, 24 and 28V DC (and 110VAC) relays are more available and cheaper. But I don't want to add another power supply (and a spare since there's no place to get a replacement or spare parts on the island).

The 24/28/110V relays will all usually hold in at 12V but need some extra voltage to pull in initially. There are various circuits to allow 12V systems to use these relays, and while they are pretty simple, building them takes time and/or is messy. I found a convenient circuit in kit form (small PCB, couple of relays, diodes, caps) on the Down East Microwave web site for \$10. Reduces construction time from an hour if you build your own discrete version to a few minutes using the kit. I also like the fact that it uses relays instead of transistors, since I end up replacing a lot of switching transistors after nearby lightning strikes each summer. Model RVD-1 at downeastmicrowave.com"

Doug also passed along another good tip. After diagnosing a problem that developed in his wire 4 square array, he found that the conductor inside the insulated flexweave wire he used had opened under stress in two of the four verticals! (BJ uses 10ga THHN for all wire antennas excluding beverages with no breakage problems).

At the Wallingford hamfest Pete, W1IRM pointed out a neat gadget for tightening a wire antenna rope, with a quick release mechanism. BJ (Barnacle Jack) has since noticed they are available at Home Depot and hardware stores everywhere, meant for clotheslines. I did get one...for the clothesline! I also saw another device in a hardware store completely different but for the same purpose called a line tightener and located near clothesline rope. Both varieties sell for about \$5.

Dave Jordan has come up with another neat club project he calls "Interface 12" Here is Dave's description:

A 4-port transistor switch allows 6 or 12 Input/Output to drive or translate voltage or ground switched devices. One application as an example of the utility of this project is translating a +12V Band decoder or KK1L 2x6 Switch output to drive a ground switched ICE 6 band TX filter. You can configure all 12 ports to translate just 1 state or configure 2-6 ports to switch +voltage

and ground. Each port is designed to sink 200mA. Drive antennas switches, relays, filters etc. \$8 (inc. shipping) for PCB. Parts are available from Mouser for ~\$11. Email K1NQ nhdjinn@yahoo.com (include call and qty) to get on the PCB list for Jan 09. Don't send money now. Check www.yccc.org Articles for more details

The latest antenna project at W1WEF has been an improved radial hookup scheme for the 160 inv L and 80M 4 square. Since the antennas are in the woods, and radials have been added over many years, they never looked like the neat sketches you see in books with neatly spaced wires every 10 degrees. I never was happy with my feedpoint arrangements, but at least what I'm doing now is aesthetically nicer...whether it works better or not! In the accompanying photos are shown one of the 4 square feed arrangements I started with. I used a 4x4 PT post sticking out of the ground 3 or 4 feet, the idea being to keep the feedpoint above the snow. To avoid tripping over radials sloping downward from the feedpoint, I dressed them down the 4x4, then radially on the ground. I consulted antenna guru Joe Reisert, W1JR and his feeling was that the vertical portion was probably acting more like part of the vertical antenna than a radial...(or interacting with the vertical... BJ). Joe's experience has been that snow at the feedpoint had little effect on his verticals, so I decided to cut the 4x4's closer to the ground, and attach radials as shown in the second photo.

I bought heavy gage 9-inch aluminum cake pans with an encapsulated steel rim at Wal-Mart for \$9. (I since noticed stainless mixing bowls and aluminum pot covers that might have worked out just as well). The radials are attached with stainless sheet metal screws. For the 4 square verticals fed with 70 ohm 1/4 wave coax, the feedline connector on the side of the pan connects directly to the SO239 on top for the antenna.



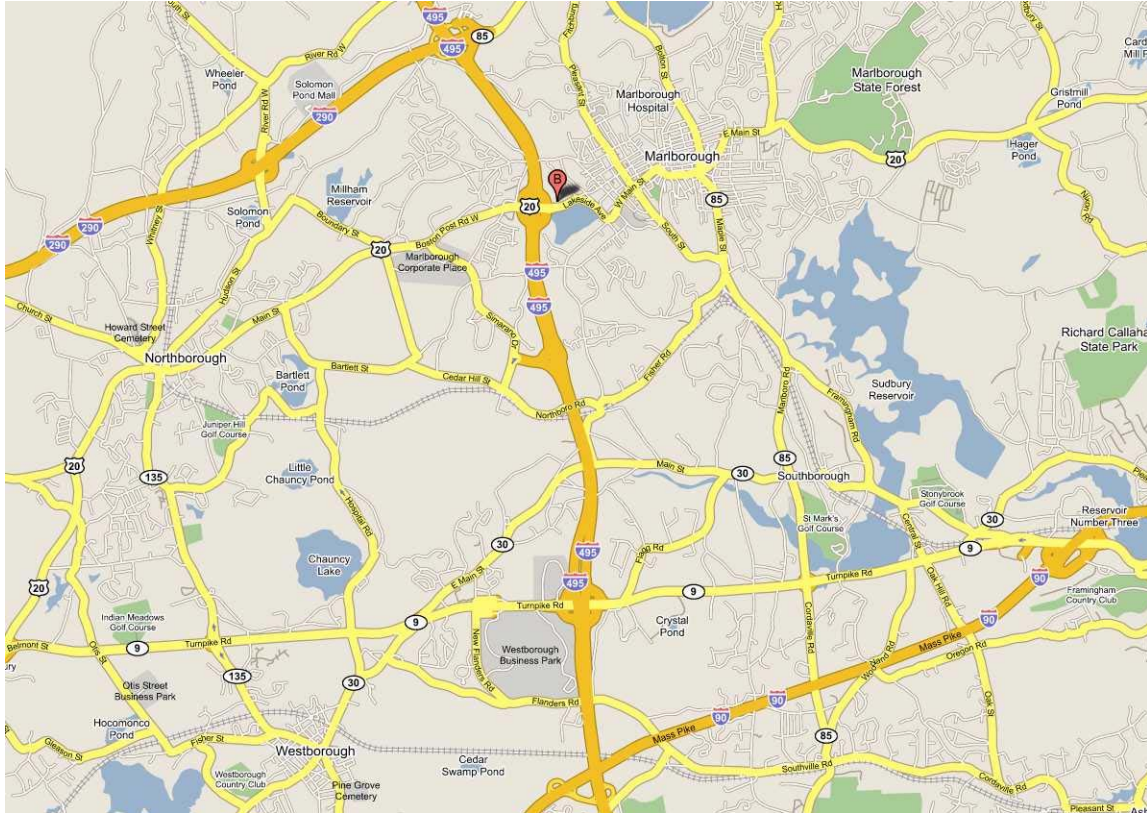
On my 160 Inv L I use a 1.7:1 un-un that mounts on top of the antenna connector, as described by K1VV in a Butt article a few years back. If I ever get around to it, I'd like to experiment with the matching scheme described in the latest NCJ (Vol 36, no 6) by WX0B which simply uses a shunt inductor at the feedpoint.

Every once in a while I have a member ask me how to get on the YCCC reflector, or how to submit contest scores to the club scorekeeper. Both questions are answered on the Resources page (the last page) of every Scuttlebutt. Note that you must also submit your score to the contest sponsor, and be sure to spell out Yankee Clipper Contest Club on your submission.

73 Happy Holidays

Barnacle Jack Schuster - W1WEF

Map to Dec 7th Meeting



Holiday Inn in Marlborough. Located in the northeast corner of the intersection of I-495 and US-20.

US 20 @ I-495
265 Lakeside Ave.
Marlborough, MA 01752
Tel: (508) 481-3000

YCCC WMA Area Meeting, Oct 25, 2008—Peru, MA

The Western Massachusetts Area of the Yankee Clipper Contest Club held a regional meeting as part of an open house at K1TTT October 25, 2008. The Open House's purpose was to allow anyone interested in learning more about contesting to see a multi-multi SSB contest in operation, ask operating or hardware questions, try out multi-multi operating, or other general questions.

A local Yankee Clipper Contest Club meeting was held on at 1 p.m. to consider applications from anyone interested in joining, rejoining, paying dues, etc.

Two returning members were re-voted into membership, WA1ZAM, Ed Landry; and K1KAA, Mike DeChristopher. In addition to the members three guests attended. Dues were collected from the returning members, WA1ZAM and K1KAA and have been forwarded to the treasurer.

Attendees: NJ1F, N1FJ, K1TTT, W1TO, K1SFA, K1MK, W1EQO, KB1OEV, K1KAA, W1BS, KB1W, WA1ZAM

Guests: AA1AR, Michael Pietrowsky; W2LC, Scott Bauer; Sara Bauer

Tom Homewood, W1TO

Western Mass. Area Manager

K5ZD leads in WRTC 2010 Qualifying in NA#1

Congratulations to Randy Thompson , K5ZD for his current 1st place qualifying score in East Coast (NA#1) for WRTC 2010. Many familiar YCCC calls are also in the running with a heated Full details at http://wrtc.radio-sport.net/US_ranks1008.htm

(Thanks to radio-sport.net)

Contest Club Finland's PileUP!

The December issue of the Contest Club Finland's publication PileUP includes articles (in English for us non-Finnish reading contesters) on "Data Entry in the 60's: OH2AM CQWW SSB Log of 1968" (how it was done in the good ole days), "Secrets to Chinese language", and a proposed "New method for official contest result calculation"

Latest issue can be downloaded from: <http://www.helsinki.fi/~korpela/PU/PU.html> Earlier issues are also posted on the page

2008 ARRL 160 Meter Contest

Don't forget the ARRL 160 Meter contest this coming weekend. Period: Starts 2200 UTC Friday, ends 1600 UTC Sunday (December 5 - December 7, 2008). Forty-two hour period with no time limitation.!

W/VE amateurs exchange information with amateurs worldwide on the 160-meter band CW only. DX-to-DX QSOs do not count for contest credit.

Stations located in overseas and non-contiguous U.S. Territories may be worked by DX stations. (Alaska KL7, the Caribbean US possessions KP1-KP5, and all of the Pacific Ocean territories KH0-KH9, including Hawaii KH6) These stations can work BOTH domestic stations (US and VE) as well as DX stations around the world. Don't forget to check your software to make sure that it accept these QSOs.

Full rules and log submission details at: <http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2008/160-meters.html>

YCCC DXCC Challenge

Have you entered your DXCC Data? Lots have, but many haven't. The link is: <http://www.yccc.org/OnAir/>
Click on "YCCC DXCC Challenge". Make your browser window W I D E R if you can't see the submission fields.

YCCC CLUB RESOURCE INFORMATION

DUES AND MEMBERSHIP STUFF Dues are payable as of the April election meeting, which begins our club "contest year". The YCCC has adopted a multi-tiered membership format as follows: Please note that payment of dues IS NOT a prerequisite for contributing scores to the Club aggregate, but IS for the various YCCC Awards Programs

Full Member - \$20 (\$35/2 yr) (Eligible for YCCC awards programs and paper delivery of Club newsletter)

Full Member - \$15 (\$25/2 yr) (Eligible for YCCC awards programs and electronic "Ebutt" delivery of Club newsletter)

Family Member - \$0 (Grants full membership to all amateurs residing at one domicile on payment of one member's "Full Member" annual dues and entitlement to one Club Newsletter sent to one domicile or email address. All members of said family are eligible for YCCC awards programs.)

Student Member - \$10 (Grants full membership to students at a reduced level. Eligible for YCCC awards programs and paper or electronic delivery of the Club Newsletter.)

Subscription - \$** (A "friend of YCCC" - not a member but a possible candidate for future membership. Receives club newsletter only in paper or electronic form. Fee basis is \$20 for overseas paper delivery, \$15 for domestic paper delivery and \$10 for electronic "Ebutt" delivery domestically or overseas.)

Club members who move out of club territory and so are not eligible to contribute to club aggregate scores automatically become subscribers. New members who join at the February meeting are credited with dues for the year beginning the following April. You can tell if you owe dues by checking your 'Butt mailing label. **Mail your dues to the club treasurer, Ed Parish, K1EP, 9 Spoon Way, N. Reading, MA 01864**

SCUTTLEBUTT ARTICLES should be sent to the Scuttlebutt editor, Steve Rodowicz N1SR, preferably by E-mail at n1sr@arrl.net or on 3½" disk (in MS-Word format or text file) by snail mail to Steve Rodowicz, 809 Pendleton Avenue, Chicopee, MA 01020. The deadline for each issue is the 10th of the preceding month..

Scuttlebutt Advertising: Nominal Business Card sized ad, \$50 per year (6 appearances)

CONTEST SCORES should be sent to the club scorekeeper, Dave Hoaglin, K1HT, preferably by E-mail at scores@yccc.org. Please include details such as numbers of QSOs, QSO points (if appropriate), and multipliers (all types); entry category; and power.

CLUB GOODIES

BADGES YCCC badges are available from Ric, KV1W. Send \$2, name and call desired on the badge, and your mailing address to: Ric Plummer - YCCC Badge, PO Box 1158, Berlin, MA 01503-2158.

APPAREL Contact Bob Rogers KB1LN@yahoo.com

YCCC LOGO ITEMS <http://www.cafepress.com/n1ik>

QSL CARDS are ordered through Burt Eldridge, W1ZS. To order, send Burt an email at w1zs@arrl.net, detailing card information per "QSL Request" form available at http://www.yccc.org/members/yccc_qsl.htm. You will receive a proof by email. Approve the proof, making any corrections, and return to Burt *with payment* (make checks out to Burt, not YCCC). Current price is \$50 (delivered) for 1,000 cards. Also available is the glossy version for \$70/1000.

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER is posed on the YCCC website. Updates are published in 'Movers and Shakers' when members move or change call signs.

COMPUTER STUFF INTERNET REFLECTOR There is an Internet mailing list for YCCC members. To subscribe, send mail to yccc-REQUEST@yccc.org. Insert only the word "subscribe" in the subject of the mail message. (Do not send messages to the reflector that have file attachments, HTML formatting, use boldface or other fancy fonts, etc.)

WWW HOME PAGE Come visit us at <http://www.yccc.org> Our Webmaster is Mike Gilmer, N2MG.

ADMINISTRATIVE STUFF The W1 QSL BUREAU is sponsored by the YCCC. Keep your account up to date by sending a check. Stamps are sold at face value, envelopes are 20 cents each. Address: W1 QSL Bureau, PO Box 7388, Milford, MA 01757-7388. Email address: w1qsl@yccc.org.

ARRL COMMITTEE REPS are:

CAC: New England Dick Green, WC1M Hudson George Wilner, K2ONP Atlantic Michael Gilmer, N2MG

DXAC: New England Bob Beaudet, W1YRC Hudson John Sawina, NA2R Atlantic Chris Shalvoy, K2CS

ARRL LIAISON: Tom Frenaye, K1KI.

Upcoming Meetings

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Dec 7	General	Marlboro, MA

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**Next Meeting:
Sunday, December 7th - 1-5PM
Holiday Inn, Marlboro, MA
(Map and Directions on Page 5)**

The YCCC Scuttlebutt
18 Bancroft Tower Road
Worcester, MA 01609

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