

Thirty Years of TCG



A Brief Look Back At 30 Years Of TCG

Three Decades Of Contesting Excitement

The Beginning – Aug 1993



- K4AMC and WA6KUI came up with an idea
- Plan was to compete in the NAQP CW Aug 1993
- Team members also included N4ZZ & AA4DO
- With only 4 members, they won the competition!
- K4AMC coined the name, and thus was born the
Tennessee Contest Group

Early Breakfast Meetings



- First meetings held at The Country Buffet
- First eyeball contact for many TCG ops
- This was still during the pre-Internet era
- Lots of enthusiasm for all things contesting!
- Regulars included K4AMC, WA6KUI (Wo4o), K0EJ, W9WI, N4ZZ, WR3O (K4RO) and others

The Paperwork Begins



- 1996 TCG decides to pursue ARRL affiliation
- K0EJ wrote constitution and led the effort
- We wanted to compete in the ARRL Club Competitions – Either affiliate, or don't compete
- Meant the introduction of dreaded paperwork
- Soon we had a Constitution, By-laws, etc.
- There were in-person meeting requirements, but we were already exceeding them

ARRL Club Boundaries



- K1KY spearheads an effort to lobby for a change in the ARRL Club boundary definition
- Proposal is for radius OR section boundary
- We want to compete as a STATE
- Amazingly, the league adopts our proposal!
- Still in place to this day, 26 years later
- When you want the impossible done, call K1KY

TCG Joins the Internet Age



- Several of us met on CQ-Contest @ TGV.COM
- K4RO sets up primitive email reflector & web site
- More discussion is happening online
- Less discussion is happening face-to-face
- More efficient, but something intangible is lost
- Still having monthly in-person meetings
- Meetings still required by ARRL, but not for long

Growing Pains



- K1KY launches serious recruitment effort
- Our roster expands by leaps and bounds
- Lots of new faces, not just the “grizzled guard”
- Some growing pains and personality clashes
- Internet discussion flames, occasional disruptors
- Club still very strong; much enthusiasm & passion

TCG Is Now A Contest Force



- Several TCG ops making the Top Ten regularly
- N4ZZ led the pack, the rest of us tried to keep up
- TCG fielding many teams in Sprint, NAQP, ARRL
- Susie designs logo, now we have official shirts
- TCG quite visible at Dayton and other gatherings
- TCG contributing hundreds of thousands of QSOs on an annual basis

Radioactive Report



- KE4OAR, K4KO first admins, now W4NZ
- They kept track of every TCG QSO made !
- 2001 – 210,000 QSOs
- 2002 – 237,400 QSOs
- By 2011 - 357,752 QSOs !
- N4ZZ dominates until AD4EB decides to win it
- Not an easy award to win – a year of dedication

Steady As She Goes



- Early growing pains have subsided
- We're older now, and perhaps a bit wiser
- Shift to Google Groups for TCG reflector
- New Wordpress site and K4TCG.ORG domain
- K4RO becomes NCJ columnist and then Editor
- More TCG ops start trying RTTY, some for RAR
- TCG sharing knowledge with SEDCO, Dayton...

Sponsorship Efforts



- Decision to assess dues for voting members
- New Ham Club Online system trial
- New polling, voting, and roster functions
- TCG continues to sponsor awards
- WRTC Tent Sponsorships since 2014
- Sponsorship of Tennessee QSO Party

Surviving the COVID-19 Era



- COVID-19 Changed Contesting and DXing
- Far fewer DXpeditions and Contest Expeditions
- Far more people stuck at home, with radio
- Contest activity picks up as a result
- TCG mounts successful W1AW/4 effort
- First attempt at Distributed Multi Op
- Strong work led by AC6ZM and WV4P

Onward To Our 4th Decade



- COVID restrictions are finally over, and Eyeball meetings can finally resume.
- Familiar faces, plus new folks joining monthly
- Upcoming opportunities to meet in 2023
- May – Dayton June – NARC July - Hamquest
- Potential W1AW/4 activation for 2024
- Plus... we now have Sunspots and Ten Meters!!

Still Going Strong



TCG is still going strong

30 years of contesting excitement

Don't forget the TCG Prime Directive:

Have Fun Contesting!