

TENNESSEE CONTEST GROUP

Where Radio is a Contact Sport



News and Events — June 2024

HAMVENTION 2024

Another excellent Hamvention is now in the books. As always, Hamvention offers something for everyone in the ham radio hobby, but especially contest operators. From Contest University on Thursday through the Contest Dinner on Saturday night, the weekend was filled with opportunities to meet up with fellow contesters, swap stories, and learn from each other. Of particular note was the significant number of younger contest men and women attending this year. While the “gray beards” certainly still make up the majority of the contest (and regular) ham population, it was hard not to notice the number of teens, twenty, and thirty-somethings among the grizzled guard. TCG was well represented, where our own NR4L and WV4P gave a talk at the RTTY Contest dinner on Thursday night. TCG was fortunate to host an encore presentation of their talk at our June 5 Zoom meeting.

Also representing TCG in a big way, the Kansas City DX Club CW Pileup Competition was once again won by Doug, W9WI. For those who have tried it, you know how difficult this competition is. For those who haven't tried it, trust me, one needs to be an absolute CW "mutant" (thanks N5KO) to win this thing. Doug took home a brand new IC-7300 for his winning effort. *Photo courtesy KCDX Club.*



WPX CW CONTEST

There were 21 TCG scores reported to the 3830scores.com web site for the WPX CW Contest. The team at NJ4U led the multi-op scores, with AD4EB and K0EJ (masquerading as KM9P) leading the Single Op High Power category. Four TCG single op scores broke the 1 million point barrier, and W4CMG managed 560 QSOs with 100 watts and a low wire antenna. Well done, TCG!

M/2 HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Prefixes	Op Time	Score	Club
NJ4U(@K4EA)		x	4134	1357	48	15,297,461	TCG

SOAB HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Prefixes	Op Time	Score	Club
AD4EB	SO2R		2568	1085	36	7,822,850	TCG
KM9P(K0EJ)	SO2R		2719	1003	36	7,502,440	TCG
WR3O(K4RO)	SO2R		2136	969	25	5,485,509	TCG
W4NZ			1105	608	18:38	1,914,592	TCG
NS4X			726	456	10	856,824	TCG
AF4T			531	349	15.00	458,935	TCG
K3FH			417	280	10	312,480	TCG
WM4Q			300	299	8.5	223,054	TCG
W3TB			206	181	5:46	95,387	TCG
W6UB			160	124	9.7	61,132	TCG
W4UT			160	144	6.5	58,896	TCG

SOAB Unassisted HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Prefixes	Op Time	Score	Club
KM9P(K0EJ)	SO2R		2719	1003	36	7,502,440	TCG
W4NZ			1105	608	18:38	1,914,592	TCG
W3TB			206	181	5:46	95,387	TCG
W6UB			160	124	9.7	61,132	TCG

SOAB Classic HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Prefixes	Op Time	Score	Club
W4NZ			1105	608	18:38	1,914,592	TCG
AF4T			531	349	15.00	458,935	TCG
W4UT			160	144	6.5	58,896	TCG

SOAB TB-Wires HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Prefixes	Op Time	Score	Club
K3FH			417	280	10	312,480	TCG

SOAB LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Prefixes	Op Time	Score	Club
W4CMG			560	338	25:04	460,694	TCG
N9TF			302	301	13.5	227,255	TCG
AC4G			225	161	5	111,090	TCG
W4SK			173	149	8:19	72,414	TCG
W4SSF			130	114	6	37,278	TCG
NE9M(KEØL)			20	20	1	940	TCG

SOAB Classic LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Prefixes	Op Time	Score	Club
AC4G			225	161	5	111,090	TCG
W4SK			173	149	8:19	72,414	TCG

SOAB QRP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Prefixes	Op Time	Score	Club
WD4CFN			153	130	7	42,770	TCG
K4DZR			80	75	5:12	16,425	TCG

SOAB TB-Wires QRP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Prefixes	Op Time	Score	Club
WD4CFN			153	130	7	42,770	TCG

SOSB15 LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Prefixes	Op Time	Score	Club
K4AMC			202	179	6:29	102,925	TCG

SOSB15 Unassisted LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Prefixes	Op Time	Score	Club
K4AMC			202	179	6:29	102,925	TCG

Don't see your score listed? Next time, make sure to submit your score summary to 3830scores.com, and use the pull-down menu under "Club" to select "Tennessee Contest Group." Of course it's also important to make sure that the Cabrillo file that you submit to the contest sponsor contains the following line. This will ensure that your score will contribute to the TCG club aggregate score.

CLUB: Tennessee Contest Group

HOW IT ALL STARTED – Brad Brooks, WF7T

Ham Radio was there from my very first memory. I would spend weekends with my grandmother and grandfather, Paul Mathews W2QBH, in Haddon Township, New Jersey. I would sleep in the radio room, a spare bedroom with a huge map of the world, beautiful oak furniture with my grandfather's reference books, and a stunning Drake TR-4.

On Sunday mornings my grandfather would tip-toe quietly into the radio room and turn on the transceiver and RV-4 remote VFO. That sound of the current hitting the power transformer, the low hum, and the slow rise of volume out of the speaker would gently bring me out of my dream world. My grandfather would call the callsign of his friend Ed, whom he had befriended while working at Todd Shipyards in Los Angeles. Confident and authoritative, he would call on schedule, on 15M, and work his friend across the continent through the magic of radio.

And...OH! That beautiful blue light of the Drake radio dial!

I moved with my mother to Missoula, Montana. My mother had a work associate who was a ham, so she foisted me off on him. I had a Hallicrafters SX-110 as my first receiver and a Heathkit HW-16 that my grandfather had mailed to me from Burghardt Amateur Center. Most evenings I spent over at Dick K7CHY's house (now W7XT), listening to him work DX, run traffic on RN7 and the Idaho-Montana Traffic net.

We would regularly sit down to do code practice sessions, solder projects, and talk about the way radios work. We also did practice written tests in preparation for taking the novice test. I guess Dick sent one of those tests and code practice sessions (written on yellow lined paper, of course), because in a month or two I received my first callsign in the mail...WN7EJS. This was 1975.

I spent the next summer with my grandfather, now in Seattle. He made an appointment for me to go take my general test at the FCC office downtown. By this time code was old hat, but I was a bit of a goof-off when it came to studying. I barely passed that General-class test, and my code sending was also a bit jittery, but they let me change the N in my call to WB7EJS, with an official document in the mail to prove it. My grandfather was proud! The novice rig was traded for a Drake TR-3.

When I got back to Missoula for the fall, K7CHY recruited me into Field Days, Simulated Emergency Tests, Sweepstakes and checking into IMN to handle traffic. I had regular schedules with my grandfather on SSB. Alas, the energy of youth was mostly spent on chasing girls, going to keg parties in the hills, and skiing.

After high school graduation I migrated to Seattle, as many did in those days, for greater fortunes. I lived in one of the neighborhoods near downtown, and ham radio was firmly relegated to last place for my attention. I eventually went to college in Olympia, having worked for a number of years as a computer analyst at the shipyard in Seattle.

I immersed myself in college with gusto, and upon my graduation, the credit company sent me a card. I used that card, under the guise of establishing credit, and purchased an Icom IC-735. I threw a wire up in the trees, then a vertical snuggled in the bushes, and started working DX and contesting. I also had acquired my own PC compatible computer, so I also started using CT and NA for contest logging. I was having the time of my life. I upgraded to Advanced and then Extra (ARC convention in Puyallup).

I eventually *had* to get a job, and back to Seattle I went, leaving ham radio behind. I dabbled a bit with AX25 and KA9Qs VHF Packet Radio. But this was also the late 80s, early 90s and there was a music scene to get lost in. Radio lost out again, but I did meet my bride, although I was clueless to that fact at the time.

I was working in financial technologies at the time, and the company said they had a deal for me. I could move to Nashville and run a part of a company from their office there. So we moved to East Nashville in 1999, bought a house, and I promptly spent the majority of time working in LA and Chicago. I sold my trusty IC-735 to a friend at work, thinking I would not be back.

Then the radio bug bit again, I think it was pulling my grandfather's Drake rigs out of the boxes and looking at them. I expressed to my wife that I was interested in ham radio again, went to Huntsville and came back home with a Yaesu FT857. I put up an G5RV and started working DX again.

One night I was sitting on 40 CW and I heard this cacophony erupt out of nowhere for a half hour and then it was gone. It turned out to be a session of the Thursday night sprint sponsored by NCCC. I didn't operate but it piqued my interest, so I researched what I could do on the internet! I had operated in field day prior and had a lot of fun. That fall I played in the TNQP, and this guy named Kirk K4RO emailed me about contesting and Tennessee Contest Group. This was 2008 I believe.

In the intervening years, I have learned so much from my contesting elmer Kirk, along with countless others in the club who have unselfishly shared their skill and humor. My wife Jed has been endlessly supportive of this strange obsession of mine. I still have my grandfather's TR-4, my prized possession, the radio I grew up with. And that beautiful blue light!



K3UA and WF7T at K3LR during ARRL DX CW 2024

WRTC-2026 TENT SPONSORSHIP

WRTC-2026 is looking for contest clubs to sponsor operator tents. A WRTC tent sponsorship involves a non-trivial amount of funding, well in excess of a thousand dollars. Many TCG members would like to sponsor a tent collectively as a club. While this significant expenditure may not appear to directly provide much benefit to TCG, WRTC is a very high-profile event which has the potential to expose a world-wide audience to the joys of radiosport. TCG has been a supporter of WRTC tents going back to WRTC-2014 in New England. We would like continue the tradition of supporting WRTC.

So far, we have pledges totaling \$200 towards WRTC-2026 TCG tent sponsorship. If you would like to contribute to TCG WRTC-2026 tent sponsorship, you may send a check to K0EJ, or use the TCG PayPal address: [<tcgtreasury53@gmail.com>](mailto:tcgtreasury53@gmail.com)

Be sure to memo your check or PayPal transaction with “WRTC-2026 tent contribution.” Thanks for your support of WRTC-2026!

TCG JUNE ZOOM SESSION

Thanks to NR4L and WV4P for their excellent Zoom presentation describing the genesis and growth of the formidable NJ4P contest station. Trina and Ron have put an incredible amount of time, work and resources into what is now the largest contest station in Tennessee. Their rapid ascent from being essentially newly licensed hams into a contest force is impressive. You may view their presentation and very informative Q&A session at the following link: <https://youtu.be/fnWIYM6wquc>

NEW MEMBERS

TCG is *very* pleased to welcome AA4WX and W4SK as new members this month. TCG membership is open to all with an interest in contesting. There are no geographical limitations. All you need is a sincere interest in contesting, and the willingness to get on the air and operate with us.

LEBANON HAMFEST AND LUNCH

Bert W4KW would like to remind everyone of the upcoming lunch gathering to be held at the Shoney’s in Lebanon, TN the day of the Lebanon “HamQuest.” Last year’s lunch was a big success and a good time for those able to attend. The date is Saturday July 20 at the Shoney’s in Lebanon. I’m sure that Bert would appreciate hearing from you if you plan to attend, so that he may give the restaurant an approximate head count.

TENNESSEE QSO PARTY 2024

Thanks to the hard work by W0AG, AD4EB, WF7T and others, the TN QSO Party rules have been revamped for 2024. The contest is now *TEN hours long*, and a new Rover category has been added. Now is a good time to review the TQP rules for 2024, and start planning our operations. The sunspots should provide a boost this year. Let’s hope for some good short skip. Here is a direct link to the 2024 TQP rules: <https://tnqp.org/rules/>

UPCOMING CONTESTS

The following table is a list of the upcoming contests which qualify for the TCG Most Radioactive Award. For more information on the MRA, please refer to K4TCG.ORG under the TCG INFO section. Thanks to AD4EB for this list, and to Ted W4NZ for administering the TCG Most Radioactive Award.

June 1, 2024 ARRL International Digital Contest
June 1, 2024 Kentucky QSO Party
June 8, 2024 ARRL June VHF Contest
June 8, 2024 GACW WWSA DX
June 15, 2024 All Asian DX Contest, CW
June 15, 2024 Stew Perry Topband Challenge-Jun
June 15, 2024 West Virginia QSO Party
June 21, 2024 ARRL Field Day
June 22, 2024 His Majesty King of Spain Contest, SSB

July 1, 2024 RAC Canada Day Contest – July
July 6, 2024 Marconi Memorial HF Contest
July 13, 2024 IARU HF World Championship
July 20, 2024 CQ Worldwide VHF Contest
July 20, 2024 North American QSO Party, RTTY Jul
July 27, 2024 RSGB IOTA Contest
July 27, 2024 Alabama QSO Party

Good luck to everyone in the IARU contest! There will be a couple of TCG types joining a group operating from a location in Missouri as HQ station NU1AW. We look forward to seeing everyone at the Lebanon lunch on July 20. Be sure to let Bert W4KW know if you are planning to attend the lunch. Until then...

73, —Kirk K4RO