

From the Editor

What's the difference between self-spotting and asking your friends and club members to spot you frequently during a contest? Inquiring minds want to know. Three of us did a multi-single entry in CQ WPX SSB this past weekend, in which self-spotting is *not* allowed. This is becoming more the exception than the rule, though. It is always frustrating to be calling CQ on a new band...and calling and calling... until somebody mercifully spots us, and, *wham!* Suddenly there's a pile-up. Why do we continue to play this game on phone? For those of us in the western US, it is particularly frustrating knowing that 10 or 15 meters is wide open to Europe and that those EU stations want to work us for a mult but have trouble finding us through the east coast wall... before a spot for us appears.

Bottom line, it was still a fun WPX SSB weekend with more than 3,000 stations in the log and more than 1,000 mults for a respectable raw score a hair above 6 million points. And, my voice took a few days to recover even though I tried very hard *not* to yell into the microphone. The sun gave us a hassle with a coronal hole that impacted the first 24 hours of the contest, but the second half was great fun with 20 meters staying open to Europe from here well past midnight on Saturday and a juicy 10-meter opening to Europe on Sunday morning. All the while, 15 meters was a workhorse band both days.

In this Issue...

John Pescatore, K3TN, approached me a few months ago about interviewing Frank Donovan, W3LPL, for *NCJ*. John is the editor of the *PVRC Newsletter* and, like me, is concerned that we document the contributions of our better-known contesting colleagues. *NCJ* does some of that through "*NCJ Profiles*" in each issue, but there is also room for the special sort of interview story that K3TN has prepared for this edition.

A few years ago when I was helping with the programs for the International DX Convention in Visalia, California, I had the pleasure of meeting Bob Beebe, GU4YOX, who emceed the Saturday



This is my operating position at home to run the NA7TB remote station 175 miles southeast of Phoenix in Safford, Arizona (DM52). I use a K3/0 Mini and a screen-sharing program. A mouse controls the antennas using Green Heron's GHE software, and the remote computer sends N1MM Logger+ CW or, in this picture, MMTTY RTTY.

night banquet that year. We have stayed in touch since then, and I was excited to learn that Bob was going to Jersey as MJ5E for the CQ World Wide 160 CW this past January. I had no idea what effort a dedicated Top Band contesteer would expend to have his idea of a good time. Two words and a picture will show you what I mean: "radial plate."

Speaking of *NCJ Profiles*, the one in this issue tells the story of dedicated CW contesteer Will Baber, WJ9B. Will's thirst for knowledge is characterized by always asking "why," and that led him to a lifetime of discovery in academia and in electronics. Will gives of his time through CWops to bring more CW contesters into our ranks. I think you will enjoy reading about his unique journey.

There are some great tips for increasing your contest scores in "The Little Pistol Pages" by Mike, VE3GFN. The "VHF-UHF Contesting!" column by Jon, NØJK, discusses a recurring problem we are seeing in WSJT-X when both stations trying to complete a FT8 QSO have compound call signs with a "/" symbol in them. And "Next-Gen Contesters" from Neil, WB9VPG, showcases a young

ham in Brazil who loves the CQ World Wide CW contest. Gerry, W1VE, has a compelling tale in his "Remote Radio" column about combining in-person and remote operators for a winning multi-multi contest effort at K1LZ. We started seeing these types of hybrid operations run by Remote Ham Radio (RHR) during the pandemic. The PJ2T station has also been getting more sophisticated in using hybrid teams when not enough folks want to travel for a weekend contest.

Final Thoughts

I want to thank those who sent emails saying how much they enjoy reading the contest career memoirs written by Jim Neiger, N6TJ. Jim has committed to writing Part 3 for a future issue.

By the time you read this, I should have seen some of you at Visalia, and I will see many more of you in a few weeks, I hope, at Dayton Hamvention. I will be attending Contest University and wandering the fairgrounds. I may also spend some time in the ARRL booth area. Please stop by if you see me and say hello.