

The VHF JOURNAL



February 1999- Volume 50 Number 4

Dedicated to the Radio Experimenters, Contesters and Operators above 50 MHz, along America's North Coast

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Membership in THE ROCHESTER VHF GROUP is by application. Dues are \$10 (Ten Dollars U.S. \$15 U.S. for Canadian Members) per year. Make Checks payable to "The Rochester VHF Group". Membership expires on May 31st.

The Club meets on the second Friday of each Month, September through June, at the Monroe County Social Services building at 111 Westfall Road. Commercial advertising prices are \$20 (twenty dollars U.S.) per year per space and must be arranged through The Advertising Manager. Non-commercial "For Sale" or "Wanted" ads are free.

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<http://VHFGrouper.greeceney.com>

This Months Meeting...

Place:	111 Westfall Road
Time:	7:30 PM Friday Jan 8, 1998 Please be on time!!!
Program:	Metalica
Presenter:	KB2AH
Dead Line for Journal:	Feb. 12, 1999

More This Months Meeting :

By Dave Hallidy, K2DH

This month's speaker is well-known among the 23cm EME crowd. He is no other than Tom Dinyovsky KB2AH, owner of ThS Amps. They are the makers of fine single and multiple tube amplifiers for high power 23cm work. A carpenter by trade but a machinist at heart, Tom will present a talk about precision metalwork for the amateur. He will show many slides representing the kind of work he does and that we can (with some ability), also do. Please plan on joining us- Tom is a real interesting character and you're sure to enjoy the evening.

Contest Corner:

By Mark, N2YB

Contest, contest. Seems that's all that I have heard the last couple of weeks. Get this together for the contest, get that together, I hope we have time before the contest, on and on. In the words of George S. Patton, "I love it, God help me I do love it so". (Of course GSP was referring to the trials of war.)

I do love contesting because at no other time is the activity on our bands higher. On any given evening one could call CQ for quite a while on 432.100, and perhaps not get an answer. During the contest, its a

matter of how long before the next Q, or Grid. A VHF radio contest also give me a chance to play with all my toys at once. All the toys that I have spent building for the last 6 months, and will spend the next repairing. I don't know about anyone else but, I am ready to operate again next weekend.

Post contest, this is the time when everyone who participated in the contest has no doubt a head full of ideas for improvements. Take advantage of this time when your brain is storming. This is the time to write them down, and again, make a realistic plan to execute them. I hesitate to reiterate this concept again, but it seems the only thing that works for me with my home station and I don't imagine anything would get done at the N2PA station without one. There is 4.5 months till the June Party with the Sprints in between. It seems like a long time, plenty of time to get things together. Ill bet if you take a look a each week or weekend now until then, it will seem a lot closer than you first thought.

How about some results. On this date I haven't any idea what some other stations scored. I have heard rumors, but I will try to keep to facts. I have not investigated any avenues to get some scores. Perhaps this weekend.

There are a few awards left to sponsor along with some that have been made available from last year. At the February meeting I will announce the awards not yet spoken for and make them available to the **membership**.

Post Contest Thoughts:

I have made up a standard checklist for your log submission.

- Try to submit you log package to the League yourself either electronically or hardcopy. Send only a summary sheet to the Contest Committee. Mark on the summary sheet that you have handled your log.
- If you send your log package to the Contest Committee, submit a second summary sheet (copy of the first). After the logs have been mailed it is a reminder of who, what, and when.
- If you send your entire log package to the Contest Committee electronically, you should expect a short acknowledgment message. If you do not get one, don't wait, find out why.
- Your call should appear on every single sheet you send

to the Contest Committee.

- Compute you Rochester Cup score if your are participating. The Rochester VHF Group is ineligible for the award so do not enter on behalf of the RVHFG.
- Complete a submission sheet that include all you contest activities from a single grid. If you operated in more than one grid and are not entering as a ROVER, complete a entire package for each grid you activated.
- Clearly mark on the summary sheet turned into the Contest committee the POWER LEVEL and/or OPERATING CLASS you are entering! I don't plan to make any phone calls this year to clear this up, the default category is the UNLIMITED.
- Clearly mark any other information that you think makes sense on your submission sheet. Remember, if you send me a copy of your summary sheet, you can put down anything you want as long as we can read it. When tallying the scores, more information is better that less and we are always looking for ways to improve the contest results. Give me your ideas.

Sometime during the week following the contest you should have your score tallied and your log package together. Not having time is a very poor excuse and I am tired of hearing it. EVERYONE IS BUSY!! Including the people who have handle your package to compute the club score. The deadline for Hardcopy log submissions to the contest committee will be the night of the February meeting. After that I will accept electronic forms over the weekend of the 13th and 14th. I plan to mail the Rochester VHF Group package in to the League on Monday the 15th.

I find myself getting very excited about the contest this year. Maybe it has something to do with writing about it for so many months prior, maybe its the new antennas at the N2PA site, maybe I'm a lunatic! What I am looking forward to is immersing myself in the VHF bands by putting on the headphones, and the excitement of digging through the noise to find the DX in some distant new grid. The essence. I hope everyone enjoys the contest as much, or more than I do. Good Luck, and good DX.

Jan VHF Thoughts:

By DaveHallidy, K2DH

MY OPINION OF THE JANUARY '99 VHF CONTEST Or TWO OPERATORS AND ONLY ONE ROTATOR

The title sort of says it all, I suppose. N2WK, as most of you no doubt know by now, has sold most of his gear and sort of pulled in a bit, deciding not to contest anymore and leaving very large shoes to try to fill. I had purchased his big 2 meter and 70cm amplifiers and so I decided I had no excuse but to operate the contest this year (since I wasn't going to be invited over to Wayne's), but you all know how much I dislike singleopping.

Wayne and I, over a few beers, thought it might be fun to do a two-person multi from my place, so we started planning for it. Well, the plan was to have a second, temporary, tower up with 2 meters and maybe 6 on it, so there would be the ability to point the "money" bands separately from UHF/Microwave. Yeah- so, we've all heard about the road to Hell being paved with good intentions... Murphy (and the weatherman) decided I WASN'T going to put up a second tower by having it snow big time a week before the test. Wayne said "What the heck, we'll make the best of the single rotor" and came over anyway.

Well, the contest started, and as you know if you were **there**, conditions were lousy. In addition, the wind was howling here at the cabin and the rotating tower (with 5 dishes and 6 yagis on it) didn't really want to turn any direction but with it's back to the wind. So we struggled, made some contacts, and generally got frustrated- poor Wayne got sort of relegated to 2 meters since it was convenient and didn't require any jumping around from rig to rig to change bands (those who know my station know what I'm talking about) and I operated ALL the other bands. That sounds like a big deal, but if you check our line scores, you'll see that the only band we did well on was 2meters (Wayne's band)! We messed around until about 9:30 Saturday night, got frustrated, went upstairs and had a few Manhattans and said good night.

Sunday morning we got up, had breakfast, fooled around, and then decided to change out the IF rig on 2 meters to

the TS-4305 I had just bought from Wayne. That project turned into a "most of the day" affair, requiring a trip to Radio Shack over 10 miles away, then lunch in town and I guess we finally got back on the air about 3pm Sunday afternoon. You can tell this was a serious effort! Now the wind was really howling, 40-45mph!!! The tower was really stuck now, so I had to go up there a couple of times with Wayne running the control box, to "strong-arm" the tower around to where a couple of the local Rovers were, so we could work them on the microwave bands. Once again, frustration set in, about 10pm and so we quit the contest then and repeated the scenario of Saturday night with the Manhattans, a lot of laughter, and a generally fine time. We wound up with only 63k for a final score, but a LOT of knowledge about what needs to be done for next time (there WILL be next time) and also the recipe for the perfect Manhattan. By the way- it's a 2:1 ratio of whiskey to Vermouth, a dash of cherry juice, and TWO cherries!

Next year, watch out for us- we'll either be kicking butts in the contest, or be drunk ON our butts!

For Sale ...

February 99

Alinco DX70TH, 160-6M mobile all mode rig with 100Watts on all Bands. Removable Head kit, asking \$650.

Diamond X-500 Dual 144/440 Band Base antenna **8.3/11.5db?**, asking \$145.

Curtis, N2HKD 223-1347

January 99

5 el. 2 meter beam, HB, New, 5' boom
\$ 50.00

Icom IC- 275, 2 meter, multimode base
600.00

Realistic HTX-202, 2 m.HT,& 30w PA, ++
150.00

Presicion O'scope, M- S-55,
15.00

WA2ZNC Len 229-5470

Good Luck in the January 1999 VHF Contest

From the Treasurer..

By Len WA2ZNC

Income:

Receipts:

11 Memberships	\$	135.00
3 Awards donations		90.00

Total	\$	225.00

Expenses:

Journal mailing	\$	98.00
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Balance on hand:

	\$	590.46
Checking acct.		
Saving acct.		1,780.08

Total	\$	2,370.54

Treasurer

WA2ZNC Len

CW Alive and Well:

By Mark. N2YB

For those who just found out last month how important CW is in VHF contesting, and for those who already knew, the N2PA group is planning to get on the air a practice the code by conversing with each other about, whatever comes up. This is an effort to improve the skills of operators by not only becoming comfortable with CW, but also to gain a better understanding of how to complete a QSO under rough conditions.

Both CW competency and the skill of completing a QSO under fading and/or difficult conditions are invaluable during a serious contest effort. For many of us, these skills have become so second nature that we just come to expect it from everyone. We may also find it difficult to recall just when and where these skills were acquired. As a consequence find it difficult to disseminate to others. One step in the right direction could be to just get on the air at regular intervals and practice.

We have set a tentative time and place for this operation, 144.170 on Mon evenings ~9:00pm. Anyone who is interested may join in to practice or help out. If a good turnout ensues, we can always spread out.

Again, this is just tentative, if there is a better night, a better time, a better band? The important thing is to just make it happen.

Notes:

By Curtis. N2HKD

I am pretty sure that the club score could be even *higher*, if we cross checked our logs. As a rover, we have noticed that when we go over our logs, some contacts were not logged, even though the contacts were made. I am trying to write a PERL program that compares logs in order to cross check them. I could really use some electronic logs to verify my program, so please send your logs to me. We can then use it to verify our contacts for the club. No More missed contacts...

I Remember..

By Karyn M. Blodgett, WD2AKA.

(This letter was sent to the Club. I finally had a chance to make room for it, I apologize that it took me this long. Editor)

November 13, 1998

While sitting here perusing my complimentary copy of the VHF Journal and noting that it was said there was a lack of submissions, it occurred to me that perhaps I should write an essay for the newsletter based on my point of view.

Most of you members didn't know Hank, W2UTH but outside of Harriet, K2KLP, I knew him better than any of you. You see, he was my dad. We lost him to cancer 12 years ago this week. It is sometimes hard for me to fathom that fact, let alone the idea that he and a few other brave explorers embarked on a journey 50 years ago which has been carried on by a series of great **successors**. True, I was not yet born when this club was founded. ..(although not by much!), but I probably have a better sense of the history of VHF than most of you. There are not a lot of members today I'm sure, that can say they grew up listening todah-didah-dah. night after night while trying in vain to do homework, or better yet- watch Red Skelton in tv while the picture bounced in time to the code. I

Good Luck in the January 1999 VHF Contest

think dad was one who might not have believed in TV filters or maybe I should say not in our house!

I grew up sitting in my dad'shamshack.. ..a room that defies description except to those who had the opportunity to enter into it! Every January and June I would sit there at my dad's side and write his entries into his contest logs.. oh how I hated thosecw contacts where I didn't know what to write until the contact was over. Then, there were always those certificates that hung proudly on the wall.. .WAC, WAS-50MHz, WAS, as well as his NAVY discharge and other public service awards. I would sit there and listen to him talking to voices known to me as W2OWF, and W2UAD, and hundreds of others. I believe it to be a unique upbringing when I can say I knew some people by their Ham calls instead of their names.

I remember meeting upon meeting going on either in the ham shack or our living room. Thank God it was a big **house**, but boy it sure seemed small when I was trying to sneak out to the kitchen for a bedtime snack, only to encounter a thousand pairs of eyes turned towards me as I passed the shack's door , or so it seemed.

How many of you can say that you helped your dad put up and take down more antennas than Carter has little liver pills? I have been up on theCanandaigua Courthouse roof in wind, rain and snow. But I'm not complaining mind you, just rather reminiscing over what VHF and Ham Radio in general mean to me.

I can remember being right there... I mean right there!! When dad made the first ever contact between Africa and the United States on six meters. Wow, even as a kid I remember thinking what an awesome accomplishment. Then the phone and the 2 m rig and the 6m rig all started to buzz with the news, "Wow, Hank, was that really Africa... .I didn't hear anything!" But boy my dad sure heard it. (Why was it he never quite heard me when I needed some money or the car keys?)

I always swore up and down that I would never become a ham. But somehow things have a way of changing. My husband, at the time, thought a real good way to get in good with his father-in-law was

to attend dad's novice ham classes. Well ,I couldn't let him do the dastardly deed alone so, yep, you got it, I took them too. Funny thing though, I found once I got past the code which I still despise, I loved it. When I was home all day raising my 2 daughters, I could turn on the 6m rig and even managed somedx like Alaska and Hawaii, darn it though, Dad drowned me out for Australia! But a little family competition is always good for the soul.

I have been much impressed by what I have seen and heard of the VHF Group over the years. I am sad that Dad is not here to see the club into its Golden Anniversary year. But I must tell you how proud both my mom and I are of all you have done to further VHF in the Rochester area. Unfortunately I am not active at the present time, but hope to be in the near future. Mobile home parks don't seem to agree with ham radio well. I guess I never would have even thought much about the club except when a couple years ago I heard about being able to request a special call sign and I thought, well good, now I can get dad's call back in the family and back on the air. But to my surprise, I was informed that the call had already been given to the VHF Group. Mom and I were surprised, but pleased and thought that it was a great tribute to the man most knew as Hank, but just Dad to me.

May I just say, as the club proceeds through its 50th year, think back on the dedication, achievements, Public service and involvement that the founders of this club had to make it what it is today. Volunteer and share your knowledge, and enthusiasm for VHF with others. Teach others and you will learn as much as those you teach. Explore the realm of ham radio and all the new facets that are available for use. Make wise use of the resources that the founders have given for you to use and improve and build on them. Make your time and efforts count for this club so that in another 50years our descendants can look back and reminisce about how they sat and watched their moms and/or dads create new advances in ham radio. Remember you all are the explores, looking for the new horizons. Congratulations on 50 years of dedication to the Rochester VHF Group and may God bless all of you.

73's,
Karyn M. Blodgett, WD2AKA

