

THE BLACK HOLE



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- Member profile: KC9UHH - wrap up: W1AW/9 in Illinois - K9CT is off again !!!



From the President Craig Thompson K9CT

The contest season is quickly rushing by...and a lot of good ones are just around the corner. CQ WPX RTTY, ARRL DX CW/Phone and NAQP RTTY, plus a myriad of others.

We did a super job getting our membership on the air for the NAQP club competition so far. You should be proud of the high percentage of us who played. Keep in mind—we left the door open last year when we didn't get many stations active in the RTTY weekend. Please mark February 28th on your calendar now. Never operated RTTY? Well, it's fun and not as tiring as phone or cw.

The board had to postpone our annual meeting because of poor weather. So we will be meeting on March 21st to plan our 2015 activities and approve the budget. Our membership renewal process went very well, and we lost only a few members...but we still have more members now than a year ago. Most of the members who joined during the past year were referred by our members....thank-you.

I have only a few days before departing for Jamaica and then Navassa. My bags are on the floor, and I pack and unpack them to make sure I have everything I'll need. Navassa is desolate with bugs and creatures that won't make ideal bed-mates. Water has to be brought in and will be scarce. Our boat will be able to supply us with water, but it has to be brought up by pulley and rope. We must carry all our supplies from the boat to the operating site during the operation.

Lots to think about before leaving for a couple of weeks away from civilization. We have MRE's, cots, mosquito netting, sunscreen, bug repellent and you name it to think about...let alone the typhoid and malaria medicines we need to take prior to departure.

The good news is this will be like an extreme Field Day...set up stations for two to three days and then operate about 12 hours a day over a couple of weeks. We will have a helicopter bring us to and from the island, as the means of getting on the island via boat will have been removed. We will have a boat anchored off shore to bring heavy supplies and water... and as back up transportation.

Contesting really prepares operators for this, as it is hours and hours of rate. You just have to concentrate for hours to hear the calls and get them in the log accurately. Sleep is necessary but scarce. This is a physically and mentally draining exercise, one I know all of you contesters would enjoy.

WB9Z and I look forward to hearing lots of you SMC members calling and getting you in the log.

Go SMC!

73, Craig K9CT

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2. Use Paypal and email your donation to dues@w9smc.com.

So, You Want To Try RTTY Contesting...

Bill Axelrod K3WA

There's a rumor making the rounds that you might try your hand at RTTY contesting. That's great. I'm a CW guy. I like CW and I like CW contests. I don't like phone and rarely do phone contests. Maybe a little bit during the November Sweepstakes and NAQPs. That's mostly because I feel I owe SMC a little score there. And once a year I do my part in a multi-op phone contest at K9CT. That's my annual penance.

For many years I ignored RTTY. I was licensed in 1956 -- long before we had home computers. Like all of us back then, I was a novice, and we all started out with only CW privileges. A general class ticket soon followed -- time to try phone. Back then phone meant AM for 90% of all hams. SSB was new, complicated, and expensive. If you've ever tried working DX in an AM Phone pileup you can relate to just how painful that is. Contesting was not on my radar scope at the time. As a teenager I was far more interested in girls, cars, and the like. Fast forward to 1962. I was in the Navy going to Electronics school at Treasure Island, CA. We had a club station, K6NCG. That's where I got introduced to contesting.....And RTTY. We had a small room in the back with a war surplus ARC-5 transmitter and RBC receiver. One of the guys modified the ARC-5 for RTTY (Radio Teletype). With the aid of an ancient terminal unit and a decrepit Mark 19 mechanical teletype machine we experimented with RTTY. Mostly, I remember the noise it made, the reams of paper spitting onto the floor full of gibberish, and some very small number of QSOs. Not the experience dreams are made of. And certainly not the experience that made many of us want to run out and replicate that station at home.

Fast forward to 2005. I had retired from the Navy and had a decent ham shack, good radio, amplifiers, towers, beams, beverages, etc. on 40 acres of mountainside in the middle of Nowhere, West Virginia. And of course a home computer with satellite feed for internet connectivity to round out the experience. DXing and contesting were in my blood. Mostly all CW contests with a little bit of SSB time ruled my contest experience. But there were so many weekends with nothing but RTTY contests going on. And then there was the occasional DX station on RTTY in a country I needed. And me, sitting there in front of my radio with no way to work him, frustrated and frothing at the bit. The RTTY bug had bitten me.

So, I home-brewed a connection from my radio to the computer sound card, downloaded some software to decode the RTTY, and started to read the mail as others made RTTY QSOs. That wasn't so hard. Before long I was on the air on RTTY, working DX and playing in RTTY contests. If I could do it, you can too.

Now is the time to put your fears aside and take a shot. Remember -- this is JUST A HOBBY. You don't need much, just a radio, antenna, computer, software, and some kind of interface device. I bet you already have most of what you need already. You are a contester (or you wouldn't be a member of SMC and reading this). You already have an interest in RTTY contesting or you would have gone on to the next page by now. Now is the time for you to jump in.....

We have some great RTTY contesters in SMC. I'm not one of them. The best I have ever done was winning first place in the 9th call area for the 2009 ARRL RTTY Round Up contest. I can remember what it was like to get going and most of the mistakes I made along the way.

So what is Radio Teletype (RTTY)? A means, developed in the early 1900s to transmit and receive textual information on the radio. By then we had commercial land-line teletype. One person types on an electro-machine analogous to a typewriter and someone receives it at a remote location using the same type mechanical device. These electro-mechanical devices were known as, what else, a teletype machine. But putting it on the radio required thought and innovation. A five bit (as it is known today) code was developed to represent the alphabet. And, with the use of a shift code, we could shift the teletype machine to print numbers instead of letters. All print was (and still is) in capital letters.

To get land-line teletype to work on the air (radio teletype) required some novel ideas for that time. Switching a radio frequency carrier on and off as we do for CW didn't work. The technology of the day couldn't support the number and rapidity of the transitions and generated a wide bandwidth of key clicks. The technology evolved to the use to Frequency Shift Keying (FSK) which is the medium we still use today for RTTY. The transmitter remains on—generating an RF carrier. We change the frequency of that carrier to represent what, in today's digital world, we would consider either a 1 or a 0. In RTTY we call those states "MARK" and "SPACE". How much is the frequency shift between mark and space? In government and commercial use it is generally 750 Hz. For ham use, and some commercial use, we use 170 Hz.

We generate that frequency shift in two ways. One is FSK, changing the frequency of the Mark and Space directly. The other is AFSK (Audio Frequency Shift Keying). With AFSK we use software on the shack computer to generate audio tones representing the mark and space frequencies and feed them into the audio input of the transceiver. Most of today's transceivers can handle either mode. Each has their advantages and disadvantages. It is "user's choice".

RTTY contesting need not be an expensive proposition. You can homebrew the interfaces you need to get started. There's plenty of help available on the web both for operating and interface building.

The best (in my opinion) site for RTTY help is <http://www.rttycontesting.com>. There are tutorials on all aspects on RTTY setup and operation along with detailed instructions on getting started with RTTY. Many of the articles and links available were written by Don Hill, AA5AU, the guru's guru when it comes to RTTY and RTTY contesting. Please start there. As you proceed and develop questions, feel free to ask the experts, and people like me, on the SMC reflector. I'll be back in the next edition of the Black Hole to talk about actual RTTY operating.

ANNE DIRKMAN KC9UHH

My good friend Mike KE8IL suggested I give ham radio a try after I had been listening to the ham radio volunteers working the checkpoints at the UP-200 sled dog race in Marquette, Michigan. Curious, I picked up a copy of "Now You're Talking" at the school library where I work. I started studying the next day, and was licensed as a Technician in May 2011. By April 29, 2012 I had my General license, an IC-735 purchased from my eye doctor, a G5RV-Jr (borrowed) about 12' high in my backyard, and I made my first DX contact – EA8BWL – Canary Islands!

I'm working toward DXCC with 67 entities confirmed at last count, upgraded to Amateur Extra in July 2013, and got my VE credentials last October. In March of 2014, I upgraded my station with a Kenwood TS-570D and had an A4S antenna (with 40m add-on) installed last month. That has made a world of difference.

My first taste of contesting was the CQWW in 2012 (240 points – this year I almost hit 54K) I took 2nd place in last year's Rookie Category of the WI QSO party, and that was with the G5RV-Jr. I enjoy SSB, but my voice does give out if I don't take it easy. Santa might have to bring me a voice keyer for Christmas if I want to do some serious running. I especially like contests with short exchanges – the November Sweeps nearly did me in this year. I enjoy QSO parties and the DX/WPX contests that help boost my DX count.

I'm the bookkeeper/payroll clerk in the Mishicot School District. Other hobbies include gardening, knitting, cooking & baking. I have two grown daughters, and this summer my husband retired --- to the golf course. Amateur radio is the perfect hobby for me. There's plenty of math, lots of structure and procedures, but still enough variety to keep me intrigued for many years to come.

Good luck and good DX. See you on the air!



Member/New Member Information/Update Form

Name: _____

Call: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please send updates to:

Zig Markowski - KM9M
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km9m-zig@comcast.net

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Please consider contributing an article today!

BH@w9smc.com

A page from the contest diary - RTTY CONTESTING Anthony AB9YC

This time around it was the CQ WW RTTY DX contest. Contacts are worth points where foreign contacts are worth more than domestic contacts. There are multipliers for each country and CQ zone, and additional multipliers for US states and Canadian provinces.

I did this event last year and had a blast, and even set a class record. I set out this year to improve on that effort and maybe pick up a few new countries along the way. Once again I concentrated on 40M since that's where my station can do the best, even if the band itself is not open full time. From the start, conditions were tough. It seemed that I had trouble with normally workable stations, domestic as well as DX. I experienced problems where operators were not very good at syncing with my transmit frequency. Unlike other modes, where a human is decoding the transmission, RTTY uses a computer (or similar device) to decode, and if anything is different, it has to adjust. Not being on the precise (within a few Hz) frequency means the decode doesn't commence right away while the AFC tracks. This can lead to repeats. I am always amazed how many stations cannot zero in a digital signal, they must be just clicking a display and aren't very good with their mouse.

A few hours into the event I noticed the percentage of my contacts was decidedly skewed toward domestics and not much DX. Trying to get a more streamlined operation led me to tweak my setup just a bit. I use N1MM as my contest logger, and for RTTY I use MMTTY and 2Tone as the decoders. Normally, 2Tone is the superior decoder, but watery conditions made both MMTTY and 2Tone struggle. But one feature in MMTTY seemed to give it the edge, that being the notch filter. Basically, it keeps the peaks of the RTTY and specifically notches out the valley portion of the signal. With this engaged, MMTTY was the better decoder for the moment. I had periodic issues with 2Tone freezing. Simply restarting its process seemed to fix the problem, but it never went away.

As with most contests you are allowed only a single contact on a band with each station. But, I'm always amazed at how many stations call me again. Some are hours later, but it's still a dupe in my log. I don't complain, I just log them all. I don't get points for a dupe, but it's easier than fighting with them. I even had one late in the contest who realized he was a dupe and sent SRI SRI 73. No problem.

With international contests it's always challenging to find a clear frequency. What may be clear on your side may be busy somewhere else. In one case I was running, when some DL's were calling. Since they were on my frequency and zero beat, I presumed they were calling me. It turns out that an RA was working that precise frequency on the other side of the world. I never heard him. Well, after a few of those aborted contacts, I rolled away. Time to search the band for anything new.

I ran across Ascension Island (JZD8) calling CQ, and there was a pile waiting to get his multiplier (and me a new DX country!). Up pops an EA who starts calling CQ. Everyone in the pile is clamoring for him to QSY, but he just keeps calling CQ. Then, get this, he tries to work Ascension Island as if he was responding to his CQ! Ugh! Frustration; I moved on. Still more dupes calling in, amazing; most are domestics. At the end of my first stint, I had 136 contacts in the log. A poor showing in my mind. But, it was midnight. I would come back anew tomorrow morning.

Sunrise was disappointing and I didn't score anything really new, just some more domestics. But, I had a meeting to attend. 40M was dead by now anyway. Returning around midday, I decided to hunt the other bands looking for some new countries. I found ZA/Z35T (Macedonia in Albania) spotted on 15M so I decided to move there. I heard them, but never made contact. I scored a few new band stations, handed out some points to others on the band, and kept hunting. I scored C37NL (Andorra), a new one for me. A check of the spots now had ZA/Z35T on 10M, so I moved there hoping for a contact. Again, he couldn't hear me. I scored C37NL again, on another band, so it wasn't a total bust on that band. I moved to 20M, looking for anything I can use. I hand out a few points to some acquaintances, but not much exciting. Again I see the ZA spotted, here on 20M, so, I spin the dial there. Man, he's working a pileup. I try to get through, but it's clear I'm just not strong enough considering who he's answering. The daylight brings a few new countries and some new band contacts for countries I already had.

After dinner, I sat down ready to run as long as I could. It was still early, about an hour before sunset local time. This is the time to be on, to stake out a place on 40 meters as it opened up. And that's what I did. I began calling CQ, mostly into the dead band. Slowly, I began to log some local stations. Then a DX or two. It seemed that all at once, everyone realized that 40M was the place to be because it got crowded in a hurry. I ended up moving several times as I got pushed off my frequency by stronger stations who wouldn't work me, and couldn't hear me either. After not a few "run and move" episodes I finally staked out a solid spot that I was able to maintain. I would take a break from running every now and then to scan the band. Looking for any station I hadn't already worked, and making sure I wasn't missing any much-needed multipliers, then back to running on my staked out location.

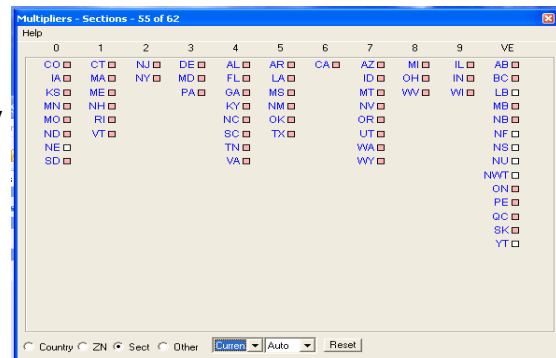
I'm running assisted, which means I'm logged into a DX cluster and getting notifications on my band map as stations

AB9YC RTTY Continued

are spotted, most of which I can't hear. And right there, less than 1kHz away, I see the ZA spotted. I quickly abandon my run, roll the dial a bit and work him! Boom! In the log! Awesome! A new multiplier, and a new country for my DX count. I bounce to my browser and look up the station on QRZ.com to find out if he uses LOTW. Darn, he doesn't. But, he does use ClubLog! So I jump over there and request an OQSL. I prefer an electronic QSL, but I'll take paper. Back to my running frequency and more contacts. I'm beginning to notice that I'm getting mults (stations I need for score multipliers) calling me, responding to my CQ! Excellent. Now, my score is starting to build. And the ever-present dupes. I get one now and again, usually a station I worked 20 hours ago. But here is a G who calls, we QSL, I send QRZ and the same station responds! Man, dupes hours apart are one thing, anyone can get bleary-eyed, but this guy is a dupe in consecutive entries! I make it as long as I could, and the band wasn't producing any more replies, and a scan showed nothing I hadn't already worked. It was 1am, so I went to bed.

When I awoke, it was already daylight. I hopped in the chair and checked the band map. Forty was teaming with JA's! Wow! I rolled up on the first one, he's loud and clear. It send my call. Nothing. I try again. More nothing. I try again. Futility. Ok, maybe this guy isn't able to hear me, there are plenty more multipliers out there. I roll the dial to the next JA. Unfortunately, it's the same thing. I can hear him strong, but he just continues to call CQ. Disappointing. No problem, they are still strong. I work Guam and Australia, both first call, but the JA's just don't hear me. I move off, scanning the band, looking for what else is new. I manage a few new stations, but no new multipliers. I run for a short stint. I return to hunting for JA's. Once again, while they are strong, they can't hear me. This goes on. It seems I'm losing the band and missed my chance for that part of the world. Perhaps I should have gotten up earlier.

Daylight was the same as yesterday, scan the higher bands looking for some new countries. Just for grins, I pull up my multiplier status. I've worked all but 3 states! Wow, that's a first. Even in domestic contests I never work that many states. I only need LA, RI and NE. Nice to know, but 40M is pretty dead. I'll keep an eye out for these holes in my multipliers.



I return, like yesterday, just ahead of sundown, monotonously calling CQ. It's still a bit early, so I start cleaning up around my station, always within reach of the keyboard should a reply show. Done cleaning, I sit down and watch the display, the software mechanically calling CQ. A reply. Most convenient, it's from LA. And another, also from LA. The band must be opening. And there, within the span of a dozen or so QSO's I manage several RI. I might make Worked All States – in a DX contest! Ok, I really want NE now, where are they? That's W0 country, so any 0 calls are my targets. I scan the band map but don't see any spotted. A 0 calls me, could this be my needed NE? Nope, MN. Check the cluster for any NE station, even on another band, maybe I can contact them and ask for a temporary hop to 40M. But there aren't any shown. Another 0, it's MO. Another, but CO this time. Talk about missing the mark. I'm scanning the band map for any signs of a 0 station, but they are scarce, and the ones present are definitely NOT from NE!

My multiplier count seems to have topped out, and the QSO's dwindle. The final minutes of the event tick away. No NE. No WAS for this event. A scan of my WAS history shows absolutely no NE on 40M digital, RTTY or otherwise. Nothing changes this time either.

In the end, I managed 421 forty meter QSO's for 612 points, 18 CQ zones, 52 countries and 55 states/RAC sections. I tallied 76,500 total points for my 19.6 hours of effort. I post my log to the contest address knowing I did what I could. Maybe not my best, but there is next year, and I'll do better.

The raw scores (before log checking and penalties) were posted, and my score is currently in position number 4 in the world in class. It's not likely I will move up following scoring adjustments, and I can see that the gaps in my operating time put my score where it is. More reason to extend my operating time for this band if I want to place higher.

Like a true Cubs fan, there's always next year.

Assisted Low 40 Meters

SP2QOT.....	148,463
DJ2RG.....	141,363
IT9RZU.....	104,328
AB9YC.....	76,136
HB9/RV3DH.....	69,275

The 2014 ARRL Centennial QSO Party - A View From The Heartland



If you are a ham and were on the air at all in 2014, you would have heard, and probably took part in, the ARRL Centennial QSO Party. Every state got two different weeks to get on and work the world using the world's most recognizable call sign – *W1AW*. And many of us worked many *W1AW/n* stations. Here, in Illinois, we operated *W1AW/9* in two very interesting weeks: the last week of June (which included the Field Day weekend) and the first week in

December, which included the ARRL 160 meter contest. Craig, K9CT was the coordinator for the June operation and Jerry, WB9Z coordinated the December operation. Thanks, guys, for picking up that responsibility and doing a

great job. Not only did Craig and Jerry coordinate the operations, they also opened their contest stations to host many of us guest ops during Field Day and ARRL 160 contest. Several others hosted, like Steve A19T for RTTY ops. Thanks, guys. Eighty-four gals and guys in Illinois polished their beams, grabbed their keys, microphones and/or keyboards, and handed out over 118,266 *W1AW/9* QSOs to people all over the world. We were active on 160 meters through UHF. We even had 147 EME QSOs and a bunch of satellite Qs. We had a straight key station on CW, and we even had a station on AM (some of us remember AM, but not that fondly) in December! The pile ups were tremendous and gave us the thrill of being the "DX" for a week. Wowser!

Of course, 9-Land ops in Wisconsin and Indiana had their weeks also. And they kicked butt! I expect we will hear from them sooner rather than later when they share their stories in a future edition of the Black Hole.

This was not a contest. But WE are contesters; every operating event is a contest to us. We need to know how we stack up. We want everyone to know how we did. So here's the 3830. The results were pretty evenly split between the two operating periods. Operators: 84 hams, the majority being SMC members.

QSOs: 118,266 (includes dupes). DXCC worked: 195 WAZ: 39. We missed Zone 34.... Twice.

WAS: all 50 in each operation on CW and SSB; 49 states on RTTY (Missed VT).

This was a QSO party, not a contest. But we want to know who won! Naturally everyone who took part wins. But who made the most Qs? In Illinois the top numbers were Bob, K2DRH, with 12,704 QSOs and Barry, N2BJ, with 7,757 (these two guys contributed over 10 percent of our total QSO's).

The ARRL centennial was a fun operating event throughout 2014. It was lots of fun chasing the *W1AW/n* stations and even more fun being one. It was great fun to complete Worked All States using *W1AW* stations. It was even greater fun to complete an all *W1AW Triple Play*. (WAS in all three modes) I did it. How did you do?

73... Bill K3WA

SMC Clip-on Badge

The SMC logo appears at the top-center of the badge in black and white. Your call sign, first name and city & state appear in dark blue. The SMC name badge as shown with the slot & strap with swivel alligator clip (but there are other choices). Order now from **The SignMan**.

Price: \$ 13 (plus s & h).

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KC9FD

Carol Baldwin

SOCIETY OF MIDWEST CONTESTERS

Club badges can be ordered from:

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Fax: 414-228-8655

Be sure to note that it is for a "Black Hole" badge and please allow a couple weeks for delivery.

WILL THE "COASTERS" MAKE US LOOK LIKE CASUAL CONTESTERS ?

Stand up for SMC in the 2015 North American QSO Party Challenge !!!!



Halftime for the 2014 NAQP Challenge (after the first round of NAQP CW, SSB, and RTTY) saw SMC in third place behind Potomac Valley RC and Northern California Contest Club. At halftime, the other two clubs each had more points than SMC and PVRC had 40 more logs than SMC, leaving us nearly 90 million total points behind second place NCCC. Scoring is total points times number of logs for each event. So small logs are important.

Our friends in the other clubs may have gotten complacent over last summer. Perhaps they relied on their close proximity to the Atlantic and Pacific beaches to help their QSO totals (just point the beam inland, right?). In any event, their participation fell off dramatically in the second half, and SMC's participation remained strong, moving us into second place once the final score was tallied. In the second half of the Challenge (July NAQP RTTY and August NAQP CW and SSB), 196 SMC members submitted logs compared to 197 for the PVRC and only 178 for the NCCC. According to the NCJ web site, 96 individual SMC members submitted a log for at least one of the three second half contests (just over a third of our members), and 30 members submitted a log for all three second half contests. The scoring for the competition puts a big premium for individual participation, and NCCC's decline in logs submitted led to their drop in position. Thanks to all who sent in an NAQP log for SMC.

The SMC Board of Directors has committed to our participation in the 2015 NAQP challenge.

Every log submitted will help us compete, regardless of the score or the number of QSO's. The first two events have already happened, and we had a good turnout of logs with a decent total score so far. But the other clubs are not resting.... we need to step up the game if we want to beat the coasts.

We really need you (yes. YOU) to try RTTY and submit 2 logs of whatever size you can muster, and please turn in a log with as many QSOs as you can do for SSB and CW. If you aren't concerned with winning an individual award for yourself, consider operating with assistance (packet, etc) to maximize your contribution for the club.

Mark these dates on your contest calendar now:

NAQP RTTY 1: 1800Z, Feb 28 to 0600Z, Mar 1

NAQP RTTY 2: 1800Z, Jul 18 to 0600Z, Jul 19

NAQP CW 2: 1800Z, Aug 1 to 0600Z, Aug 2

NAQP SSB 2: 1800Z, Aug 15 to 0600Z, Aug 16

Beginner RTTY Contesting with a K3

Don't let inexperience daunt your desire to help SMC in NAQP RTTY at the end of February. Even if you don't have a sound card interface for your K3, you can send and receive RTTY (and PSK). The K3 will decode RTTY and scroll it across the VFO B screen. You'll get used to the proper tones to read RTTY correctly. If you are accomplished with a CW paddle you can set the K3 mode to FSK 45 BPS, plug the paddle into the paddle port, and send characters (at your CW speed), just be sure to send *IM* (as one character) at msg end to turn off the carrier. Or pre-program the K3 CW memories with four (or 8) canned messages, each with *IM* at the end. Then you need to send only the other guy's call with the paddle, and the canned stuff will roll out much faster. Here's my setup as an example:

M1=KJ9C IM

M2= TU MEL MEL MT MT DE KJ9C IM (please send

the other station's call before you hit this button)

M3 = CQ CQ TEST KJ9C KJ9C IM (you can chain this message with the K3, just push M3 until display shows CHAIN)

M4 = TU QRZ TEST DE KJ9C IM

Consider memory bank 1 for running, bank 2 for S&P

You can also use the K3 utility program and send/receive RTTY from your PC via your RS232/CAT cable. There are more memories available, but I can't remember to use the mouse to key a memory.

You also need to log each contact, and often my PC screen/mouse is on the logging program and not on the K3 Utility. So I use the K3 CW memories. It's not an approach I would recommend if you want to win, but it's a way to get some contacts into a log for SMC!

Go get em! **Mel KJ9C**

The Black Hole

The **Black Hole** is published periodically, maybe September through June, by The Society of Midwest Contesters. Permission for use of the materials is hereby granted on the sole condition that credit is given to the source of those materials.



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Membership in **The Society of Midwest Contesters** is open to all persons with a bona-fied interest in amateur radio contesting. For more information contact one of the following officers:

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The Society of Midwest Contesters is a **contest club**;

our reason for existence is contesting. We contest as a club; we submit our scores to the club effort every chance we have. We excelled at this a few years back by winning the unlimited club Sweepstakes Gavel three years in a row. What happened? Did it get to be too much work? Did some of our biggest scoring stations quit operating? Did we just lose the desire? Was it just a fluke?



There is absolutely no reason we cannot be the top unlimited club in SS again, it just takes the desire and commitment to do it. The bar has been set quite high but it is not out of reach if we really want it. Our current membership is down a long ways from where it was in the years we did win, and the total number of logs was a big part of why we won. But do we really need 400 members to win again? Can we do it with the members we have? I think so. We have many very competitive members and many with very good stations (besides, SS does not need a killer station to do well), all we need is for everyone to commit to the effort and work together. Will it be easy? Not on your life, but it will mean a lot more if it is a hard earned victory! It will take a lot of us (me especially) to put a lot more hours in the chair.

More about this later.

Danny NG9R

W9SMC

Callsign of
Society of Midwest Contesters

SMC Web Page: <http://www.w9smc.com>

FUTURE ISSUES: W1AW/9 from Wisconsin and Indiana, remote station control on the cheap, K9LA on distance-based scoring, SO2R adventures, Ammo for little pistols... what else can you contribute?