

# THE BLACK HOLE



**ARRL SS Unlimited Team Champs 2000, 2001, 2002**

**Official Journal of The Society of Midwest Contesters**

*Volume XVI Issue X*

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## Progress Made in the 2008 Sweepstakes

*By Kevin Kaufhold, W9GKA*

Initial log entries and claimed scores for SMC in this year's Sweeps are encouraging. We are some 17% ahead of last year on both CW and PH log entries, and are projected to be at least 20% ahead of last year on club aggregate points. Considering that we are still at the bottom of the solar cycle, these are solid increases. Many bigger stations turned in very impressive results. We also saw the return of many smaller stations that have not been on for several years. Our log and point aggregates may be in the range of 2004 club numbers, so we are definitely moving "back up the hill".

I should have more definite results by the end of December. For right now, club members can see SMC claimed scores at the members page of the club web-site. Once we obtain more information, I will post a more extensive summary, with charts and graphs, in the members area.

Results this year can serve as a "base-line" for the club. From here, the real question becomes how both the individual club members and the club as a whole can improve from here. Can each of us better our scores next year? Can we get on both week-

*(Continued on page 3)*

### Contest Calendar

ARRL 160 mtr	22Z, Dec 5 to 16Z, Dec 7
ARRL 10 mtr	Dec 13 -14      00Z-24Z
Stew Perry TBC	15Z, Dec 27 to 15Z, Dec 28

### 2008 SS Log Deadlines

**CW: 03Z Wed Dec 3, 2008**

**SSB: 03Z Wed Dec 17, 2008**

## Lets Rock Their Party!

*By Patrick Hoppe, WW9R*

Whose party you might ask? The state QSO parties are the parties we are going to rock in 2009. In an effort to increase activity by SMC, we are going to actively participate in state QSO parties in 2009. These parties hold something for everyone:

- Most include both CW and SSB operation
- Some include FM operation
- HF and in some cases VHF & UHF
- Mobile Ops activating rare counties
- Short time commitment, typically an afternoon
- An opportunity to get on the air and contest

*(Continued on page 3)*

## The Black Hole



**The Black Hole** is published monthly, 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.

### EDITOR

Brian Maves, K9QQ

Material for **The Black Hole** should be forwarded to:

**k9qq@arrl.net**

Membership in **The Society of Midwest Contesters** is open to all persons with a bona-fied interest in amateur radio contesting. The club doesn't collect annual dues, but instead funds everything through member donations. For more information contact one of the following officers:

### BOARD

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Vacant

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## SMC Needs Your Financial Support

As one of the top contest clubs in the nation, we continue to sponsor plaques for a number of major contests including Sweepstakes, ARRL DX, CQWW, and CQWPX, as well as make monetary donations in the interest of promoting radio sporting.

A few years ago we decided to eliminate the formal dues of \$10 per year, and instead maintain funds through member donations. We encourage all members to consider making an annual donation to the club. Your generous donations allow us to continue to expand our support of radio sporting.

You can make your donation two ways:

1. Checks or money orders made payable to SMC:

SMC

c/o Zig Markowski - KM9M  
50 E. Eureka Drive  
Lemont, IL 60439-3970

2. Use Paypal and email your donation to [donation@w9smc.com](mailto:donation@w9smc.com).

## W9SMC

Official Callsign  
of  
The Society of Midwest Contesters

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

## SMC Stuff

To get your SMC stuff, see the last page of the newsletter or visit the SMC website, <http://w9smc.com/merchandise.htm>



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**Shirts**

*(Continued from page 1)*

ends? More power? Higher wires or beams next year? Can we get other friends to join the club? Can we get other members back on the air? How about developing a second effort from an unused club call? Or maybe a multi-single run? These are the questions that we should be asking ourselves and thinking through as we plan for next year.

Planning is very important at this stage, as it appears that we have closed the gap on the other clubs. We still have a substantial way to go before we are back in the hunt for "top dog", but 20% + gains in the club aggregate brings us that much closer.

Please remember the log submission deadline dates !!!!!!!

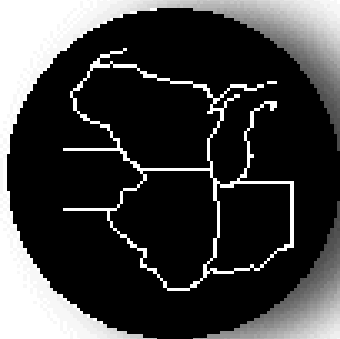
**CW logs are due Dec. 3, 2008 at 0300 UTC.**

**PH logs are due Dec. 17, 2008 at 0300 UTC.**

If you are having any troubles at all with log submissions, please contact me. The robot is working very well this year, with no problems being reported. All of difficulties club members have encountered so far stem from computer logging programs. I have sorted through several logging difficulties so far, and we have been able to get everything into the robot. Please let me know if you are having any problems on your logs.

And, please remember to list the full club name on the log entry. The club will not receive credit for your score if you don't list our name !!! Remember to enter with Society of Midwest Contesters.

Thanks for all the logs this year.



*(Continued from page 1)*

There have been a number of good emails and magazine articles about the importance of practicing our contesting skills and getting your call recognized by other operators.

Call sign recognition is huge. How many of us instantly spot W9RE, WB9Z, AJ9C, or KX9X to name a few. I can pick their call signs out at 40+ wpm from a crowded band. Not because I am a crack CW Op but because I hear their call signs in every contest. The need to practice is something that is often overlooked. But if we are going to get better as operators and as a club, we need to get on the air more often. The slower pace and the grouped location of the bulk of operators give you a chance to focus on your operating technique. This is also an excellent opportunity to try SO2R operation. I for one would like to move to SO2R operation but I don't want to experiment during any of the contests that I usually operate in. The state QSO party is the perfect training ground for SO2R operation.

In addition, by participating in a state's QSO party we will spread good will. Folks take their state QSO parties very seriously. Folks that don't normally don't operate in contests will come out to play. Folks new to contesting will use their state QSO party first to get their feet wet. If they throw a party and the SMC shows up in mass, our participation will be greatly appreciated. We might also pick up new members along the way. Remember those operators new to contesting I mentioned earlier? If they see us working their QSO party, they just might check out our club.

A calendar listing the state QSO parties for 2009 has been posted on the SMC website. Let's make a concerted effort to participate in these state QSO parties. Wow, with 300+ members if 10% showed up at each one, think of the impact we would have. If you don't have a lot of time to spare, then support the states where our club members live.

This is an opportunity for each of us to hone our skills, promote good will, and pick up some new members along the way. I hope you can join us as we Rock Their Party!



## SMCers on the Road for CQWW

Mike, VP2V/K9NW



**“20M dipole configured as 1/4 wave vertical. Half of it going diagonally into the nearby tree. The other half laid out as a radial. Being right on the beach surely helped. Simple but fairly effective on 15m, 17m, 20m, 30m with help from the radio's tuner. Good enough for 3078 QSOs over the course of a week, mostly a couple hours in the morning and a couple hours in the evening.” Mike was in VP2V for WW SSB.**

Ralph, K9ZO/YN



**Ralph warming up for WW CW from YN2Z.**



## New Towers at K9AY

Tower 1 is a 72-foot self-supporter of uncertain origin. It is built in the Pirod style, but does not have solid rod legs. I'll admit to being surprised at how solid it is for climbing, which I've done a couple times since it was put up. This tower has the mast and HDR-300 rotator in place, but I need to check tuning on the 2el 40M beam and Cushcraft X9 before installing them permanently. There is a sidearm with rope-and-pulley at 70 feet.

Tower 2 is 100 feet of Rohn 25, guyed at 32-64-96 feet. The guys are part Phillystran (about 60% of the length) and the rest EHS with a couple insulators to avoid resonant lengths. This is primarily my 160-meter tower, so it is base insulated and has a hexagonal top hat of wires supported by six 13-ft. fiberglass quad spreaders found in my stash of antenna parts.

This winter, I'm putting down temporary radials of #17 aluminum electric fence wire. One of next year's projects is an extensive buried ground system with attachment points for future experiments such as an 80M 4-square or 160M parasitic reflectors. This tower has rope-and-pulley at 98 feet, which will be used to hoist wires for specific contests, as well as for antenna experiments.

The towers are only 120 feet apart, so when the beams are installed, Tower 1 will need to be de-tuned to avoid becoming part of an unwanted 160M or 80M directional array.



K9AY (left) and WI9WI (right) pose at the bottom of the new 72-foot tower.

Tower 1 has been set on its anchor bolts and I've just finished detaching the lifting sling. Total crane time on the job site was less than an hour, so the total door-to-door crane rental was just 2.0 hours, a very economical way to get things done. Self-supporting towers are great, once you've accepted the size of the foundation hole and the price of the concrete to fill it!



## New Towers at K9AY (Cont.)



100 ft. of Rohn 25G stayed pretty straight when lifted at the 70-foot point. This photo provides a good look at the capacity hat on this tower.



W19WI, K9AY and K9MA guide the tower onto the pier pin base. The base insulator (courtesy of W0AIH) has no problem supporting this light tower. We're dressed for the cold, but it was really quite nice WX at 40F, bright sunshine and minimal wind.



We're tensioning the last guy wire before I climbed the tower to unhook the lifting sling and let the crane leave. This is the view from my driveway toward the north.

# SMC Stuff

## SMC Clip-on Badge

by NV5A

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.

Price: \$14.50 (includes s&h).

Order now from **The SignMan**

Visit his full color web page to see other items you can get with the SMC Logo:

[www.thesignman.com/color/](http://www.thesignman.com/color/)



## KC9FD

**SOCIETY OF MIDWEST**

Club badges can be obtained by sending a check for \$5.50 to:

**Midwest Engraving**  
6657 N. Sidney Place  
Glendale, WI 53209

**Ph: 414-228-8654**  
**Fax: 414-228-8655**

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

## Member/New Member Information/ Update Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Call: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send updates to:

**Zig Markowski - KM9M**  
50 E. Eureka Drive  
Lemont, IL 60439-3970

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## The Society of Midwest Contesters

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