

# THE BLACK HOLE



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## Adventures in SO2R Land - Part 8

By Bill Axelrod ND9E

Prolog. So there I was, Friday evening, all charged up, butt in the chair, waiting for the CW WPX contest to start.....

Time for the big test. How would my station play in a big, SO2R contest? Did the ergonomics of my station make sense? Would my antennas live up to the challenge? Would I live up to the challenge?

I was primed to operate the full allocated 36 hours of one of my favorite contests. Almost got there. A pop-up family event that I couldn't get out of cost me 3 hours on Sunday afternoon. But the 33 hours of SO2R operations left me with ~1500 QSOs, a lot of lessons learned, and totally exhausted.

How did I do on my big test? Well, two out of three ain't bad. Actually, more like 1 ½ out of 3.

Station. All the thinking and planning for my station ergonomics paid off. Other than a small adjustment in the location of my antenna switch controller I was happy with the layout of my station. I can pretty much leave that alone. All the help and advice I got from "real" SO2R hams helped tremendously. Score: 1 out of 3 so far.

I did have a problem with interference between the two stations that hadn't shown up in pre-contest testing. At times, and on some

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## Rock the QSO Parties

In an effort to increase SMC activity, we're encouraging everyone to actively participate in state QSO parties in 2009. Let's make a concerted effort to rock the state QSO parties.

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Kentucky QP                                      14Z, Nov 14 to 02Z, Nov 15  
CQC Great CO Snowshoe Run 21Z-2259Z, Dec 13

## New SS Log Deadlines

Logs must be submitted within FIFTEEN (15) days of the contest ending.

Deadline for submission of CW entries is 0300 UTC Tuesday, November 24, 2009 (10pm Monday, November 23 local time)

Deadline for submission of Phone entries is 0300 UTC Tuesday, December 8, 2009 (10pm Monday, December 7 local time)

Entries emailed or postmarked after the deadline may be designated checklogs. While the ARRL will never refuse a paper log, Cabrillo-formatted electronic logs are strongly encouraged.

# The Black Hole



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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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## SMC Dues

Dues are \$10 a year, but may be waived based on the fulfillment of participation requirements:

**In the SMC SS circle:** Make 100 total Sweepstakes QSOs over the two weekends and submit your score(s) for "Society of Midwest Contesters." In addition, submit one other score for an SMC club competition in one of the following contests: ARRL VHF, 160m, or 10m, NAQP, CQWW, ARRL DX, etc.

**Outside of the SMC SS circle:** Submit two scores per year for SMC club or team competition in any of the six NAQPS and four Sprints.

Qualifying scores are those submitted during the calendar year prior to January 1.

Donations are still accepted

You can make your payment two ways:

1. Send a check, money order, or cash to:

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

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

# W9SMC

Callsign of Society of Midwest Contesters

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

## SMC Stuff

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



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frequencies, keying radio 1 would wipe out anything but the strongest signals on radio 2. Spent a lot of time trouble shooting that one. Short answer was grounding. I already had every piece of equipment grounded to a copper ground buss using number 6 copper wire between the radio (amp, etc) and the ground buss. My problem turned out to be the length of the wire between the radios (amp, etc) and the ground buss. Some were just too long. I re-routed the ground buss and significantly shortened the ground wire between each piece of equipment and the ground buss. In a few cases I used ground strap instead of the number 6 copper wire between one of the radios and amps and the ground buss. That problem went away.

Antennas. I was very pleased with how my evolving antenna farm worked. I could hold a frequency and run on 40, 20, and 15 meters. Score 1 ½ out of 3. But...

When we were all little hams sitting on our mother's knee and learning about SO2R stations, we were taught that you needs lots and lots of antennas. At least two per band. And more if you do both domestic and DX contests. I must have slept through that one. Big mistake.

I had reasonably good antennas to do SO2R on 40 and 20. I could almost get by on 15 and 20 with the beam on 15 and a fair-to-poor vertical on 20. I was happy with the performance of what I had but not at all happy with what I didn't have. So, it's back to the drawing board to add more antennas to my growing aluminum and wire maze.

Operator. Well that was a bust. Playing SO2R is still just whipping me like an unwanted step child. Approximately 170 of my ~1500 Qs were on the second radio. I can't imagine how many other QSOs I may have lost doing that. My two challenges were training my ears and brain to deal with different signals in each ear and getting much smarter with the software. My brain might be trained in picking a signal out of the QRM in normal one radio operations, but when there's a different signal with its attendant contest QRM in each ear I can't seem to hear beans. That's probably a training and practice issue. Meanwhile, N1MM logger just kicks my butt for SO2R. There's just an awful lot to learn to be efficient. This boy has a long way to go.

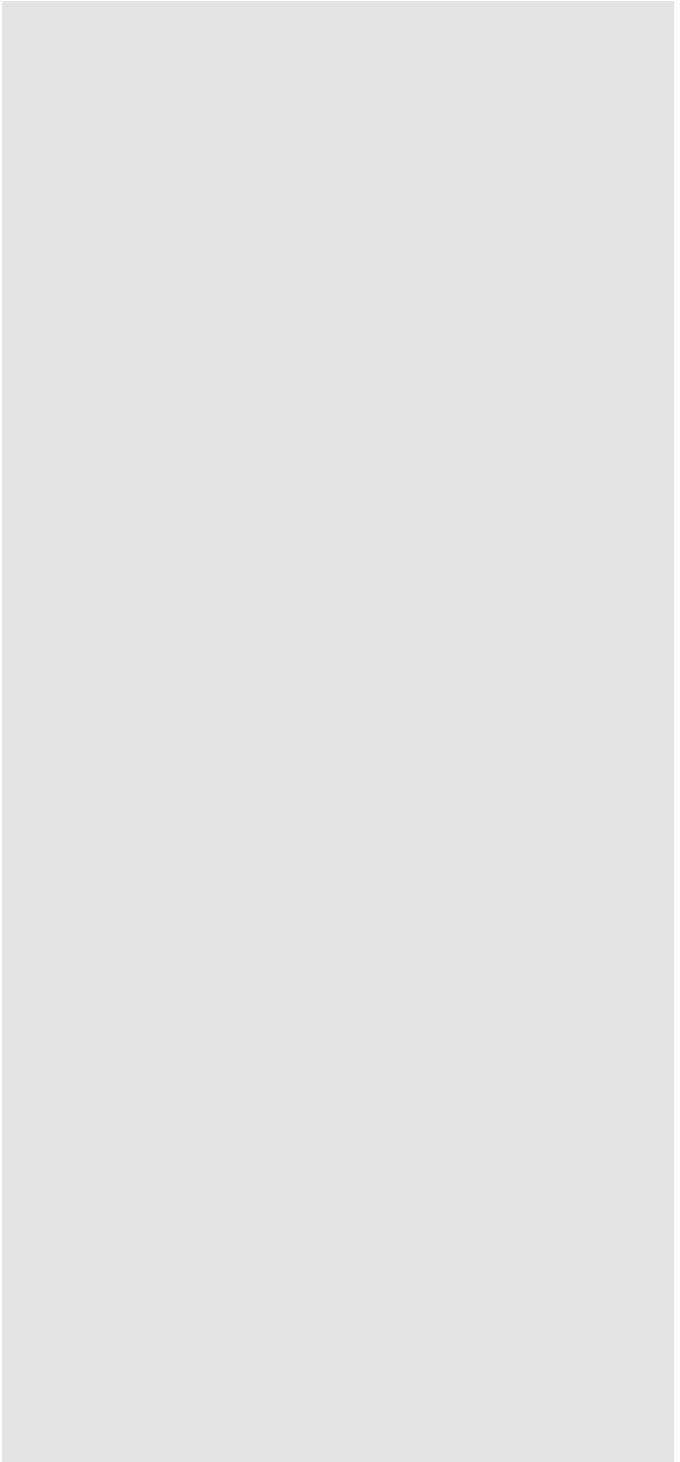
On the bright side, my stuff keeps coming in for the antenna farm. Next goals are to hit the August NAQP hard for SO2R training, architecting the next phase of the antenna farm. And getting more actual antenna work done on. Oh yes, and having some fun on the air in the interim.

Preview... So there I was, one Tuesday evening, running UA0s on 20 meters when .....

73 and GL... Bill ND9E

## K2DRH Achieves 2mtr WAS

On Aug 13, 2009 K2DRH worked California to complete his 2 meter terrestrial WAS. Only the 13th person to do so, and the first from east of the Mississippi. Way to go Bob!



# K4VX 80th Birthday Party



**Left to Right - N9JF, KB9CES, K4VX, K9BGL, K9PG, NS0Z, N0SS, NN1N  
and Sharon (Lew & Terri's daughter)**



**The K4VX antenna farm**

# 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).



# KC9FD

SOCIETY OF MIDWEST CONTESTERS

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

Midwest Engraving

Ph: 414-228-8654

6657 N. Sidney Place  
Glendale, WI 53209

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

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Please send updates to:

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