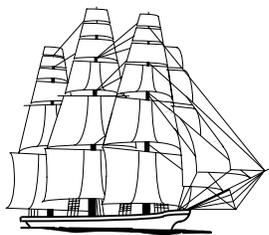


Yankee Clipper



Contest Club

Scuttlebutt

April 2001

Issue 153

Captain's Cabin

Don Toman - K2KQ toman@attglobal.net

Another contesting season is in the books. YCCC has overwhelmed the competition in the CQ Worldwide contests by a substantial margin. For ARRL, the story is not yet in.

Your club is riding the crest of a wave. We are winners...CQ WW twice and very likely three times, ARRL at least twice. We combine a core of world-class stations and operators plus a considerable number of constantly-improving smaller but competent players with a steady flow of new blood to produce breadth as well as depth. We could cut off our top 20 score-producers and still outperform our closest competitors. The top 5 Challenge Teams are too close to call, all in the mid-30 millions in combined CQ WW scores. About 280 people contributed scores for either or both modes. That's better than 50% of the club membership...and the mix changes every year.

I've had the chance to observe the club for a couple of years now, and I think I have a handle on the current state. From this point on, only the membership can determine how it should be and how to bridge the gaps.

With all this success, the social aspects of the club leave something to be desired. We don't have the cohesion we could have if we wanted it. Some of our most productive members never make it to a single Worcester meeting. Others won't invest a day in a regular meeting although they will easily devote a few 48-hour weekends to operating. Many will advance opinions on how things should be, but few volunteer to substitute action for words. Put a provocative thought or question on the club e-mail reflector, and you will see a diversity of ideas, opinions, reactions, prescriptions, recommendations, and complaints. Ask for a volunteer to put some of the above into action and the result is frequently stony silence.

The longer the commitment, the lower the probability anyone will step forward to fulfill it, whatever it is. Many

are willing to put in a little time, but few are willing to put in a lot.

Perhaps we need to break things down into bite-sized pieces and give everyone plenty of warning about what's going to happen and when.

I don't intend to serve the club as president for a third consecutive year, but I thought I would lay out some ideas a successor president might want to use as a guide for the future.

- **Lay out the entire year ahead of time.**

That isn't too hard. The dates of the major contests are known in advance. The dates of the five regular meetings are known pretty closely...the first available weekend in each even-numbered month. Area managers can plan times and places of area meetings by planning them in the odd months. Tactically-needed area meetings can supplement pre-planned meetings as required, but they can be the exception rather than the rule.

- **Establish the agendas of the regular meetings in advance.**

Instead of relying on the president and activities manager to conjure up agendas, assign meeting managers to handle the non-business and non pro-forma content of the majority of the regular meetings. That has the double benefit of letting everyone know what the meeting content is going to be and giving the meeting manager plenty of time to plan the program. Perhaps some of the more senior people in the club who don't want the responsibility and commitment of an officer position might be tempted by such an arrangement. The newer members certainly can plan on coming to meetings that educate them. We already have well-established themes for the various meetings. See the end of the column for a refresher.

(See Captain's Cabin – p. 4)

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Articles in the **Scuttlebutt** (except for those separately copyrighted) may be reprinted, provided proper credit is given. The editorial deadline for the Scuttlebutt is the 10th of every odd month.

KV1W ChowdaFest

Ric Plummer – KV1W ric@kv1w.com

The annual Chowda fest was held Wednesday, Feb 28 at 7:30 PM.

It was a great group consisting of: W1ZZ, W1RZF, N1XS, AI3E, N1PGA, W1WAI, W1BK, K1IR, K1GU, W1NR, W1MA, K1BFD, K1ST and KV1W.

The updates to the KV1W M/M were reviewed. They included addition of second sound card and second display to the primary station for more user interface capability and real time audio review. Also included was a network based antenna selection and direction control system so all three stations could have equal access and control of the antenna system.

We then broke for the usual, high quality chowda provided by Chef Linda (KV1W's XYL) and a good round of friendly conversation and demo capability on Writelog, contesting, and other computer and social topics. It seems Writelog has become the logging product for contesting and nearly everyone learned something new about it during the course of the evening.

We then re-gathered for an interesting talk by Jim, K1IR, on his OE/K1IR experience in ARRL DX CW. there were interesting stories and it stimulated many interesting discussion topics. There was also a chance to hear "from the other side" as Jim had recorded the contest with Writelog and played back selected segments.

The group departed around 10 PM. See you all next year!

New Scuttlebutt Publisher

Doug Scribner – K1ZO k1zo@arrl.net

Please join me in welcoming Ned Swartz, K1GU as the new Scuttlebutt Publisher. Ned starts his new duties with this issue and replaces Art Holmes, W1RZF. Welcome Ned!

I would like to thank Art for the superb job that he did as Publisher. I was always amazed at how short a time it took Art to get the Scuttlebutt printed and in the mail following receipt of the Master copy. Art's dedication to the job and YCCC overall should be an inspiration to us all.

Thanks Art...it has indeed been a pleasure working with you.

February Meeting Minutes

Charlotte Richardson – KQ1F

Kq1f@underwater.org

Club president Don, K2KQ, called the meeting to order with the club's brand-new ARRL DX Contest 2000 club gavel. The meeting began with introductions of the 78 members and guests in attendance. Don announced that it appears that we beat FRC by 169M in the CQ WW. Just to show there are no hard feelings, we are planning a joint club picnic with FRC and PVRC next summer, since last year's picnic was a big success. The club welcomed three new members: Barry, K1BFD, Tom, WB1FLA, and Jim, N1NK (see "New Crew" for details). Don still had some Top Fifty mugs available, as well as club pins for everyone who operated in at least one contest last year. Don then presented the ARRL winning team plaque and medal to team captain Whitey, K1VV, and a plaque and medal to Ray, W1RY.

Don then presented some interesting CQ WW score statistics for both modes of last fall's contests. The mode score was 950K, the average score 2.4M, and the median score 950K. This shows the importance of score contributions by our smaller stations.

Ric, KV1W, presented the treasurer's report, which showed a balance of \$8424.46, plus \$160.00 in the CD Fund (from Len, K1NU, from sales of the 'Butt archives on CD).

Don, K2KQ, reported that since no one felt able to volunteer to lead the WRTC-2004 effort, we are not going to do it. But he will proceed with incorporating the club and get the club a taxpayer id number. Mike, K1TWF, will handle this paperwork.

Art, W1RZF, then talked about changes at the W1 QSL BURO, which is sponsored by YCCC, since our members receive the bulk of the cards processed by the BURO. Burt, W1ZS, has been the W1 BURO chief, main volunteer, and done the master sort of the cards, a massive amount of work. To ease the burden, Art will arrange the presort, and Chris, N1XS, will send the cards to the final sorters. Burt will continue doing the administrative work. Art has rounded up an impressive list of local radio clubs and individuals to take turns doing the presorting, but was still looking for more volunteers to help out. Several members volunteered themselves or their local clubs. The W1 QSL BURO post office box is moving to PO Box 7388, Milford, MA 01757-7388 to make retrieving the cards easier for Art. For the foreseeable future, there will be a postage-due fund maintained at the Springfield post office to continue forwarding cards that are sent to the old BURO address after the one year forwarding period expires. Chris, N1XS, delivered cartons of presorted cards

to several of the letter sorters who attended the meeting.

At the joint club picnic last summer, there was talk of forming an international federation of ham radio contest clubs, including YCCC and FRC. This discussion is on-going.

Art, W1RZF, then showed statistics for the CQ WW team scores. The top five teams are in a statistical dead heat for first place, close enough that the UBNs will determine the winning team. Right now, they stand as team 15 with 35M, team 2 with 35M, team 23 with 35M, team 3 with 35M, and team 14 with 33.9M. Art also presented data on what percentage of team members participated in each contest, which averages about 55%.

Don, K2KQ, noted that many YCCC members are also interested in VHF contesting, and some members have a great deal of expertise in this area. He would like to add a section on VHF contesting to the annual Contest Cookbook starting this year, but needs a volunteer to author the new section.

Don, K2KQ, then spoke about DVKs and DVPs. Whitey, K1VV, demoed how to set up WriteLog to do voice. A DVK can handle digital recording and playback, costs around \$100, and has no need for a computer or special software. A DVP can also record snippets to synthesize callsigns and exchanges, can be controlled from a keyboard, costs a bit more, and requires a computer and software. Either can help save your voice, keep the noise level down in a SSB multiop, and fight operator fatigue. CT running with a K1EA DVK rarely has RFI problems and is easy to use. WriteLog with a sound card can run on a laptop PC, but RFI and hum problems are common. Using WriteLog you can record the whole contest. A RigBlaster, for about \$90, can help clean up the RFI problems. A sound card can also do RTTY, PSK31, and other digital modes. Whitey's desktop computer was running WriteLog using a sound card. Whitey noted that WriteLog information is available online at <http://www.k9jy.com>.

Two Slovenian visitors, S53ZO and S53MM, then introduced themselves and talked about ham radio in Slovenia and operating from their club stations, S50C and S53M. Slovenia, the size of New Jersey, has almost six thousand hams and around one hundred radio clubs.

(See Minutes – p. 4)

(Minutes from p. 3)

This was followed by Dennis, NB1B, on the VB2R zone 2 CQ WW SSB operation, performed Field Day style from just south of James Bay. Dennis said he had never been so cold in his life, but he had a great time and plans to return next fall. The operating QTH, set up in a campground near a lake just north of the zone 2 boundary, is far enough north that the road signs are bilingual: French and Inuit (Eskimo). Dennis was the 40M op. The location is 550 miles north of Montreal, about 925 miles from Dennis's home QTH in Wayland, MA, at latitude 50.2 degrees North.

In other club DXpedition news, Kurt, W6PH, will be on from KH6 in the ARRL DX Contest CW, and from VP9 for the SSB contest. He will be listening for YCCC members especially. Charlie, K1XX, and Marty, W1MD, are going to J3 for the SSB contest and plan to operate multi-2.

After the break, Charlotte, KQ1F, and Ann, WA1S, gave a multimedia slide show on the V63X CQ WW 1998 DXpedition, with AV help from Paul, K1XM. The three DXpeditioners showed their ham radio activities, the ancient ruins, and the colorful undersea life and historical shipwrecks of eastern Micronesia.

(Captain's Cabin from p. 1)

- **Use the advanced planning to attract new members.**

Once the dates, agendas and star players are known, the club can advertise. The website and the newsletters of other clubs are potential media.

- **Take advantage of modern communication media to capture the content of regular meetings.**

Videotaping the content portions of regular meetings, for example, can create an archive of material that can be used for YCCC area meetings and joint meetings with local clubs.

- **Establish one alternate meeting site for one regular meeting.**

Some of the club population finds it hard to get to Worcester, especially in the winter. We can afford to experiment with a location for one of the meetings that serves a geographical area somewhat different from the others.

- **Encourage social get-togethers to get more interaction among club members and between club members and other clubs.**

The YCCC/FRC/PVRC picnic is an example of this kind of activity. Why travel to Dayton for social interaction with your contesting peers when we can make our own opportunities?

Meeting themes over the year can be set well in advance. October is a time for CQ WW awards and reviewing contest operating practices, both strategic and tactical. December is a good time to cover ARRL awards. Technical sessions covering computers and networking, choosing and using a contest logging program, radio and amplifier selection, antenna issues (including the legal aspects of towers), antenna selection, performance evaluation, siting, theory and practice, station layout and efficiency, spotting networks via radio and internet links, planning, running and operating in DXpeditions are possible themes for other meetings. With the freedom to plan and implement a program for one meeting, a meeting manager gets to choose a set of topics and orchestrate how they are presented. The activities manager needs only to coordinate with the meeting managers, making that task more manageable.

Contesting is a fascinating, open-ended endeavor that's never done. New ideas are always worth an examination. They, and the people who think them up are the lifeblood of a dynamic club like YCCC.

Keep in mind that the best teachers are students, and the students who stand the most to learn are often the teachers. The way to keep YCCC a dynamic, growing enterprise is to be a little of each.

W1QSL – New Address

Please note the following new address for the W1QSL Buro.

W1 QSL Bureau
P O Box 7388
Milford, MA 01757-7388

YCCC – The Future

Art Holmes – W1RZF w1rzf@qnci.net

We are nearing the completion of three very successful years in YCCC by most measures. As a large contest club we can claim to be #1 as measured by scores, membership, activities, newspaper, website, ... But it has come with a price. Jeff took the bull (the club) by the horns and dragged us across the finish line beating FRC. The energy he put forth just to get members eligible and on the air was monumental. Don has carried on in addition to doing the Presidents job, he is awards manager, sometimes activities manager, OTA net control, site manager, and recruited members to fill all positions. Some of these he did of his own choosing but others because no one else would. We have fallen into a trap. Let Jeff do it! Let Don do it!

I believe we need to do several things to continue our success:

1) Organization

- a) Need to have a nominations committee responsible for recruiting members to fill the clubs offices and management positions
- b) Need to to have a membership chairman to augment the work done by Charlotte and drive the club eligibility and regional meetings.
- c) Need to have an active advisory board to assist the president. There is one in our bylaws .
- d) Review our current office positions, see if duties should change.

2) Spirit

- a) We each have to step up and do our share.
- b) The Pros have got to provide mentoring to the newbies

3) Goals

- a) Decide what our goals should be
- b) Develop action plans, programs consistent with the goals

CT Area Meeting – 2/9/01

Joe Natale – K1JN

A regional meeting of the YCCC was held at Bertucci's Brick Oven Pizza in Newington CT on Friday evening, 2/9/01 from 8 to 10 PM. The following members were in attendance: Pete W1RM, Dave K1NYK, Tom N1MM, John K1VW, Tom N1TM, Al N1JW, Paul KF2XK and his XYL Susan KA1YED.

N1TM was awarded a club hat for submitting logs for the big four last year. Several participation pins were handed out along with copies of the latest Scuttlebutt and Contest Cookbook. Dues were collected from K1NYK and KF2XK and eligibility lists were made available.

A roundtable discussion of strategy for the upcoming ARRL DX contests was held over pizza and Tom, N1MM demonstrated his Free Contest Logger software. It is an MS Access based Windows contest logging program with all the bells and whistles. You can learn more about it at Tom's web page:
<http://tomwagner.home.mindspring.com/n1mm.htm>

Stan Hilinski, KA1ZE rejoined the club after a long absence. He is now active on VHF/UHF and microwaves. Welcome back Stan!

WMA Area Meeting – 2/16/01

Tom Homewood – W1TO

A regional meeting of the YCCC was held February 16, 2001, at the QTH of Dave Robbins, K1TTT in Peru, Massachusetts. The meeting began at 23:00 UTC. All attendees were introduced. Barbecue chicken was available as fuel for the contesting activity about to start. The topics discussed were K1TTT station operational issues, computer logging, contest strategy, manning of positions, and a review of the available antennas.

Two lapsed members were present and paid dues to return to active status: NU1P, Stewart Wilansky and N1GA, Ladislav Valenta (also OK1DIX). Dues collected have been forwarded to Ric Plummer.

Attendance list:

YCCC: K1TTT, W1MA, W1TO, NT2X, K1WD, W1VE, K1MK, N1NK

Returning Members: NU1P and N1GA

FYI – VQSL.NET

(Editor's Note – I received this a few weeks ago and would like to pass it on to our members. I have not used, nor do I endorse this service. KIZO)

My name is Michael Paris (KA9TND). I have been searching the web today looking at ham radio and ham radio club web pages. This is how I found you, I clicked on your email link to send this message, so please don't report it as a spam message, I am not selling anything. :)

The reason for this message is to make you aware of a new service for Amateur Radio Operators; a virtual QSL card service.

<http://www.vqsl.net>

There is NEVER a charge for ANY service on VQSL! It is simply our way of giving something back to ham radio. This service is totally free and no money is ever solicited for any of the online services found there.

VQSL was designed to help the QSL effort when friends and I myself saw some outrageous prices on postage for some far away DX contacts.

VQSL Offers the Following Services Free To Any Amateur Radio Operator.

- Create & Send High Quality QSL Cards
POSTAGE FREE
- Submit Pictures For Personalized Cards
- Online DX Chat Rooms designed for making radio contact
- Free Web Hosting
- Free Email Account
- Lookup DX Contact Email Addresses
- CQ Contests - Win NICE Prizes

It would be GREATLY APPRECIATED if you could help us in any of the following ways:

- Tell your friends and CQ contacts about VQSL.
- Have someone read parts of this message at your next meeting.
- Have someone copy parts of this message and provide it as a handout.
- Link <http://www.vqsl.net> on your web page.
- Put a small blurb about VQSL and our address in your next newsletter.

If you know any blind radio operators be sure to tell them that we designed the site with them in mind. We have a large group of blind users that enjoy surfing through our easy to use, blind friendly menu system.

VQSL is easy for anyone to use and offered to those that want to have fun, and also save on postage and send a high quality QSL card that can be printed and added to their collection right away. (most times the same day as the QSO)

On VQSL there is a growing selection of picture categories and different formats that allow the operator to create a quality online QSL card within minutes. Then with one click of a button, the VQSL card is emailed and reaches the DX contact within seconds. (if the email address is unknown it will remain on the site for your contact to pick up later)

(personal pictures can also be used to give your card a more personal touch)

Full instructions are given on how to design and setup your first web page, how to find email addresses of your DX contacts and how to design Virtual QSL cards. Email technical support is also offered.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me directly (ka9tnd@vqsl.net) Also feel free to visit <http://vqsl.net>

Thank you for your time,
73's --- Michael KA9TND

P.S. You might also want to make your members aware that online QSL cards are not official with some groups without being sent through the snail mail system, (contest credit) but a great way to have fun, take a load off sorting and save a few bucks at the same time.

YCCC CLUB RESOURCE INFORMATION

DUES AND MEMBERSHIP STUFF Dues are payable as of the April election meeting, which begins our club "contest year". The YCCC has adopted a multi-tiered membership format as follows: Please note that payment of dues IS NOT a prerequisite for contributing scores to the Club aggregate, but IS for the various YCCC Awards Programs

Full Member - \$20 (Eligible for YCCC awards programs and paper delivery of Club newsletter)

Full Member - \$15 (Eligible for YCCC awards programs and electronic "Ebutt" delivery of Club newsletter)

Family Member - \$0 (Grants full membership to all amateurs residing at one domicile on payment of one member's "Full Member" annual dues and entitlement to one Club Newsletter sent to one domicile or email address. All members of said family are eligible for YCCC awards programs.)

Student Member - \$10 (Grants full membership to students at a reduced level. Eligible for YCCC awards programs and paper or electronic delivery of the Club Newsletter.)

Subscription - \$** (A "friend of YCCC" - not a member but a possible candidate for future membership. Receives club newsletter only in paper or electronic form. Fee basis is \$20 for overseas paper delivery, \$15 for domestic paper delivery and \$10 for electronic "Ebutt" delivery domestically of overseas.)

Club members who move out of club territory and so are not eligible to contribute to club aggregate scores automatically become subscribers. New members who join at the February meeting are credited with dues for the year beginning the following April. You can tell if you owe dues by checking your 'Butt mailing label. **Mail your dues to the club treasurer, Ric Plummer, KV1W, PO Box 1158, Berlin, MA 01503-2158**

SCUTTLEBUTT ARTICLES should be sent to the Scuttlebutt editor, Doug Scribner K1ZO, preferably by E-mail at k1zo@arrl.net or on 3½" disk (in MSWord format or text file) by snail mail to Doug Scribner, 661 Park Avenue #4, Keene, NH 03431. The deadline for each issue is the 10th of the preceding month. **CONTEST SCORES** should be sent to the club scorekeeper, Dave Hoaglin, K1HT, preferably by packet or by E-mail at dave_hoaglin@abtassoc.com. Please include details such as numbers of QSOs, QSO points (if appropriate), and multipliers (all types); entry category; and power.

CLUB GOODIES BADGES YCCC badges are available from Ric, KV1W. Send \$2, name and call desired on the badge, and your mailing address to: Ric Plummer - YCCC Badge, PO Box 1158, Berlin, MA 01503-2158. **APPAREL** Contact Brad, W1NT bradld@bellatlantic.net **QSL CARDS** are ordered through John Dorr, K1AR. To order, send John packet mail, or E-mail at k1ar@contesting.com, detailing exactly what you want the card to say. There are 2 lines of text available for awards, etc. You will receive a proof by return mail. Approve the proof, making any corrections, and return to John *with payment* (make checks out to John, not YCCC). Current price is \$68 (delivered) for 2000 cards. Normal turnaround is 30 days after approving proof. **MEMBERSHIP ROSTER** is mailed annually with the August issue of the Scuttlebutt, and to new members when they join. Updates are published in 'Movers and Shakers' when members move or change callsigns.

COMPUTER STUFF INTERNET REFLECTOR There is an Internet mailing list for YCCC members. To subscribe, send mail to yccc-request@yccc.org. Include the word "subscribe" in the body of the mail message. **WWW HOME PAGE** Come visit us at <http://www.yccc.org>. Our Webmaster is Doug Scribner, K1ZO. **CT CONTEST LOGGING SOFTWARE** is available from Matt, KC1XX. Orders: 603-878-4600. Support: 603-878-4200 Internet: <http://www.k1ea.com>. There is an Internet mailing list for CT users. To subscribe, send email to CT-USER-REQUEST@contesting.com, and put only the word SUBSCRIBE in the message body. The web site is the best way to get CT country file updates, which are regularly announced on the reflector. These updates may also be obtained by sending a blank formatted disk and \$1.00 for postage to Jim Reisert, AD1C, 7 Charlemont Court, North Chelmsford, MA 01863-2306.

ADMINISTRATIVE STUFF The W1 QSL BUREAU is sponsored by the YCCC. Keep your account up to date by sending a check. Stamps are sold at face value, envelopes are 10 cents each. Address: W1 QSL Bureau, PO Box 7388, Milford, MA 01757-7388. Email address: w1qsl@yccc.org. **PACKET NETWORK** information is available from Charlie Carroll, K1XX, Candlelight Rd., Rindge NH 03461.

ARRL COMMITTEE REPS are **CAC New England** Dave Hoaglin, K1HT; **CAC Hudson** Rich Gelber, K2WR; **DXAC New England** Ken Bolin, W1NG **DXAC Hudson** Rich Wujciak-K2RW. **ARRL LIAISON** is Tom Frenaye, K1KI.

Upcoming Meetings

Date	Type	Place
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Apr 1 (Sun)	General	Worcester MA
Jun 2 (Sat)	General	Worcester, MA

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The next general meeting of the Yankee Clipper Contest Club will be held Sunday April 1st,
at 1:00 PM in the Student Union on the campus of Worcester State College.

The YCCC Scuttlebutt
44 Williams Road
Lexington, MA 02420-3232

FIRST CLASS MAIL