



Scuttlebutt

April 2010

Issue 203

**Next Meeting:
Sunday April 10th, 2010 – 1PM to 5PM
Holiday Inn - Boxborough, MA**

Captain's Cabin

Hello all!

The YCCC experienced another wild contest season and we saw the high bands finally come to life! Anytime the high bands open, and the spots are back, the northeast tends to be in the driver's seat when it comes to score generation. Big numbers were produced this year from stations that struggled during the down part of the cycle. This gives us all a shot in the arm and makes for a fun time while in the chair. Thanks to all that took the ride this past season – you done good! Dave, K1HT will giving us the big wrap up at the next meeting – expect good things!

The upcoming meeting will provide the members some interesting insight into operating a contest and being comfortable for the long stretch. One of our newest members and a very long time friend of mine (met in NJ while I was WB2YEW and we were both playing contest back then) will be providing some highly anticipated information on Ergonomics for the Contester. Also included herein is a detailed article on the topic for your reading pleasure. And another important topic – elections are upon us. Come prepared to nominate anyone for the office of President, VP, Activities Manager, Secretary and Treasurer – or if you wish, put on that train engineer's cap and listen for the sound of the oncoming train..... (yes, the current set of officers are interested in continuing for another year!) W1WEF is leading the election committee, so provide him with your list of nominees!

And further to the importance of this meeting is the raffle drawing for a new K3 100 watt radio along with some additional smaller valued prizes. The meeting will start at 1 PM and we will dedicate the opening period to selling raffle tickets and collecting dues. Checks payable to the YCCC are acceptable. And if you are interested in helping the fund raising effort for the YCCC Youth Scholarship program by participating in the raffle, and unable to make the meeting yourself, get the money to someone you know is attending (don't forget to include your \$15 dues for the year). Although you don't have to be present to win the radio, you do need to get the money directly to Ed, K1EP and get your ticket(s). Remember, no limit on the number of tickets (\$25 each). We had to resort to this approach as the USPS and PayPal has some issues with raffle ticket sales. I keep saying that we need a committee dedicated to making our Scholarship fund raising effort successful. We continue to struggle to execute well on this project. Volunteers are welcome and encouraged!

Hope to see lots of you at the April 10 meeting – should be another winner. We are meeting at the Holiday Inn in BOXBORO, MA just off Interstate 495. Full directions are found on the web site and elsewhere in this issue. (This is the site of the August, 2010 ARRL NE Division Convention)

73, Mark, K1RX
YCCC President, 2009-10

Yankee Clipper Contest Club

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Directions to Holiday Inn – Boxborough

Boxborough Holiday Inn is located at 242 Adams Place, (I-495 Exit 28)



New and Returning Crew

At the February Meeting in Sturbridge, MA:

KK1X	John Griswold	Ayer, MA	NF1A	Art Pizer	Billerica, MA
K1MM	Bill Poellnitz	Southborough, MA	N1RD	Jeff Struven	Windham, NH (ex-N1OEK)

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Flotsam & Jetsam

Barnacle Jack (BJ) Schuster, W1WEF

w1wef@arrrl.net

Ahoy Maties!

I just finished reading a book that I found very interesting about the Father of our hobby, Hiram Percy Maxim. "T.O.M." (The Old Man) as he signed his QST editorials, was involved with far more than Ham Radio, but that became his first love. As engineer with Pope Manufacturing he built motorized bicycles, electric and gas engine driven horseless carriages. His inventions ranged from the splined shaft to the Maxim silencer to early air conditioning. He founded the American Radio Relay League after coming up with the idea of relaying messages on 200 meters in order to span longer distances. QSLing was his idea, as was the Wouff Hong, the Rettysnitch and the Uggerumph (sp?). It was HPM's presentation in 1930 before the Interstate Commerce Committee in Washington DC that saved Ham radio from early extinction. If you're interested, the book is available for sale from ARRL Hq.

K1KI once said to me "in what other competitive sport do the competitors help each other improve their abilities so they might beat us the next time" (I paraphrase but you get the idea). We help each other putting up better antennas, write articles describing our automated stations, give talks on operating technique and more. In this spirit, following the recent ARRL DX phone contest during which BJ just couldn't take the splatter, K1RX and NN1N passed along the following very interesting tips.

From Mark, K1RX:

Well it is not an original idea but heard a K0 calling CQ at 14.340, listening 14.109 - thought that might make 20 M more tolerable. Years ago, a few did this and some complaints followed - tying up two frequencies, etc. I figured on Sunday, rates were slow enough and it would not bother too many people by doing this. A later check on the band found N1UR, K0TV and others doing the same thing as a survival technique.

I was actually listening to both frequencies, and noticed if I got spotted, people just did the usual packet grab and did not notice they went split. Others calling on my frequency did not understand my request "listening down" but no matter. When the QRM was low, I could run on my frequency, but when some loud EU station fired up nearby, I always seemed to have stations calling me on my split listening frequency which helped! I'm not suggesting this be done on a regular basis but do it selectively or when the madness is too much!

Dave, NN1N:

I worked to find a less-painful frequency (14.194) and started CQing. After a few CQs I had some callers, and could pick them out. After a couple of minutes I was spotted and I didn't have to CQ again for more than an hour.

I always use the manual Notch filter on phone. Always loved it on the TS-930. The pile up on me was huge. I was amazed. The frequency didn't clear out, so I decided I had to really listen to the notch on the IC7700. Wow! I discovered that just by turning the knob for the manual notch, I could detect three separate pileups on me. With the notch out, it was white noise with mostly S5 type signals. With the Notch on, and knob turned to 9 o'clock I found several callers who were in the clear. Turning the knob to about 11 o'clock revealed another set of callers and at about 1 o'clock, another set. So I set to work picking off the guys from each group and had an over-200 hour. When I couldn't hear anyone, I remembered to turn the notch knob on the IC7700, and found a bunch of callers. I had never experienced this previously.

BJ felt loud during the contest, and had one great pileup on 20 like Dave described. I wish I knew his notch trick. I recall during that pileup saying I was standing by for Asia ONLY, never expecting the Europeans to stand by. They did though, and there was E21EIC, and another HS0, and a UN that I never would have copied had they not stood by.

At lunch with W1EBI the other day, George mentioned that he used heavy duty bungee cord on his wire antennas to relieve stress on the ropes when wind sways the trees. He puts a slip knot in the rope and hooks the bungee to the loop and anchors the bungee further down the trunk. It's a good idea to leave some slack in the rope below the loop, and anchor the rope too in case the bungee breaks.

Last year I replaced my 40-2CD with a Cushcraft XM240. I felt that the XM240 was the best built antenna I ever had, but I have had one problem...well the same problem three times now. The XM is at the top of the mast at 116 ft. At 108 ft on the same mast I have a TH6. The U Bolts in the boom to mast bracket on the XM have slipped three times now, and it is a big job to get at it to reorient it. I don't trust the Rohn mast to climb it, so it is necessary to remove the rotor, loosen the TH6, and lower the mast using a come-along which has to be repositioned every couple feet or so of lowering. Last Fall I really torqued the U Bolts as much as I dared, but it slipped again twice now. Since it never had happened with a 40-2CD I had in the same place for years, I thought about what was different. What I had done on the 40-2CD was a twofold modification. If I remember right, I used a TH6 plate which I beefed up with a second ¼ inch aluminum plate, and used a HyGain TH6 mast clamp rather than the U Bolts. I have always liked the HyGain cast brackets which have teeth to grip the mast on both sides as opposed to a U Bolt with teeth on one side.

73 BJ W1WEF

FOR SALE

The following equipment is offered for sale from the estate of Coe Forino, KA1NTA, my long time friend, family member and ham radio mentor. Coe was a dedicated DXer and occasional contester, and his equipment could easily meet the needs of many of our club operators. I've personally checked this gear and can verify its condition and operation.

If there is any serious interest I'll be glad to bring specific items to the next YCCC meeting, Sat 10 April 2010, in Boxboro MA.

Tom Doubek, AA1CA
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Hampton NH 03843-0392

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Kenwood TS-440S HF Transceiver. All-band, all-mode (SSB, CW, AM, FM, and AFSK) operation + general coverage reception 100 kHz-30 MHz. IF bandwidth shift, Notch controls, etc. CW full break-in keying. 7 ft in-line fused DC pwr cable. Output checked at 130 to 150 watts, all bands, into dummy antenna. New memory battery, checked at 3.3v. Very clean. Includes instruction manual and original shipping container.

Kenwood SP 230 Filtering Speaker Console. Two audio inputs, switch selected. Three audio filter positions, switch selected.

Kenwood MC-60 Cardioid Dynamic Microphone. UP/DOWN/LOCK(Freq)/P.T.T. switches. Built-in preamp (uses 2 AA 1.5v batteries), switches on/off.

All above purchased new, never used in smoking environment, squeaky clean. \$600 for complete set.

Kenwood TL-922A HF Linear Amplifier. Used with TS-440S above. Currently wired for 240 vac (can be jumpered for 120 vac). Rated plate input: 2 kw P.E.P., 1 kw CW. Uses 2 Eimac 3-500Z tubes. Forced air cooled. Rugged, reliable. In original shipping container. \$950.

Dentron MT-3000A Antenna Tuner. Top-of-the-line, 1.8 - 30 mHz, 3000 watt P.E.P. tuner. In-line dual wattmeter, shows simultaneous forward & reverse power, switch selectable 200w & 2kw ranges. Internal 200w dummy load. Owners manual. Rugged construction, components. Clean. \$280.

Two Dentron MT-2000A Antenna Tuners. Rugged construction. Same as above, without meters or internal dummy. Includes "Lightning Protect" switch. Owners manual. Clean. \$200 each.

Autek WM1 Computing SWR/WATT Meter. The most accurate SWR meter you'll ever own. Ideal for use with the MT-2000A tuners above. Senses PEP or Average power over 20-200-2kw switch selectable ranges. Reads SWR and Power on separate, LARGE, meters for those tired contester eyes. Remote sensor head with 4 foot cable. Instruction manual. Includes 110 vac - 9v dc adapter. \$100.

Anyone Interested in 6M EME?

From the VHF Reflector

W7GJ expects to be QRV from 3D2 from September 27 through October 7 GMT. This time period spans the optimum days of the month for 6m EME.

More information is now available at: <http://www.bigskyspaces.com/w7gj/Fiji2010.htm>

Lance Collister, W7GJ
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Contesting Ergonomics

Making your station more comfortable for long hours in the chair

Jack Russell, K2RS

Ergonomics is adapting the physical demands of the task at hand to your needs. In regard to contesting, it isn't about you adapting to the existing set-up of your station. It's about reorganizing the gear you have to a more user-friendly configuration. For contesters, ergonomics should be about making your station more comfortable and less tiring as you spend long hours in the chair. It's reasonable to assume that less fatigue should translate into more QSOs over the duration of a contest . . . and one of the purposes of ergonomics is to reduce fatigue. If you concentrate on your seating; keyboard and desk height; monitor positioning and placement of equipment, you should notice an improvement in your comfort and a reduction in fatigue as the contest hours pass by.

With the advent of computer interfaces for rig control and logging, operating a contest is, in a very general way, similar to being seated at a computer workstation in an office for an extended period of time. The comfort needs of a person who spends all day at a computer in their cubicle at work isn't that far removed from those of a contester who sits in front of a rig for an entire weekend. In fact, the contester's need for comfort is more crucial because a contest is a marathon compared to the 8-hour "sprint" of a normal work day.

In contesting "chair time" is essential to success. The longer you can stay seated comfortably at the rig, working stations, the more points you'll make. Uncomfortable seating and poor body positioning will eventually lead to fatigue, which will impede your QSO rates . . . sooner or later.

So, let's start with the chair. You have to be comfortable as you sit in front of the rig and there are some basic rules to follow as you plunk yourself down at the operating position. Look for a chair with good back support, particularly in the lumbar area – the lower back. This lower-back support can be a make or break factor for long-term comfort. Ergonomically-designed chairs fit the curve of your back, with a small-but-firm bulge at the bottom of the chair back that fits the small of your back. If your favorite chair doesn't have lumbar support, you can add it. There are lumbar-support cushions available to bolster chairs without any lower back support. But you may also find that a rolled up beach towel or small blanket placed against the seat back, so it rests against your lower spine when you lean against the seat back, will add some support and comfort. Back support is useless if you don't take advantage of it, so sit back in your chair (more on that shortly).

It's essential that the chair has adjustable seat height. Your knees and hips need to be in a neutral position and an adjustable chair makes it possible to fit your individual requirements. You need to be able to adjust the seat height of your chair so you can have a 90-degree bend in your knees and a 90-degree bend in your hips, with your feet flat on the floor. I call that the "90-degree rule." Why is 90 degrees important? The knees and hips are most comfortable at that position because no single muscle or muscle group has to work more than any another to maintain that angle. Comfort depends on muscles being in a neutral position so they don't have to work hard for long periods of time. When they're relaxed, you will be too. Relaxed muscles are less likely to tire after a long stint in "the chair."

Sitting on the edge of the seat and leaning forward slightly, as many contesters do for hours on end, puts a great deal of additional strain on the lower back. That position requires many more muscles to become activated to support your upper torso compared to letting the back of the chair support your spine. The muscles that work overtime as you sit on the edge of your seat will tire quickly, leading to soreness and fatigue.

A comfortable operating chair, adjusted to your body is important enough that guest ops who routinely drive to multi-multi stations may want to consider getting a good, comfortable, adjustable chair and bringing it with them for the weekend. With the popularity of SUVs and mini vans, hauling a desk chair around shouldn't be much of a problem for many of us.

Because we're constantly using computers as we operate in contests, it's important to have the keyboard and mouse at the proper height so your arms are comfortable. Here comes that "90-degree rule" again. For most people, the correct height for the keyboard is when your upper arm is hanging vertically from the shoulder and your elbows are at 90 degrees when your forearms are reaching forward for the keyboard or mouse. The correct keyboard height is when your wrists are straight as you type. Any upward or downward bend in the wrists will eventually cause discomfort. In the long term, typing with bent wrists can lead to carpal tunnel syndrome, a painful condition where the nerves going to the hand are pinched.

There are a few ways to get the keyboard at the correct height to hit the desired 90-degree angle. 1.) You can permanently lower the desk by adjusting the length of its legs (measure twice, cut once!) so the desktop is at the proper height to allow your elbows to stay at 90 degrees as you type. 2.) You can add a keyboard drawer to your existing desk, so the keyboard is at a lower height than the desktop. The drawer pulls out for access to the keyboard and is pushed back under the desktop when it's

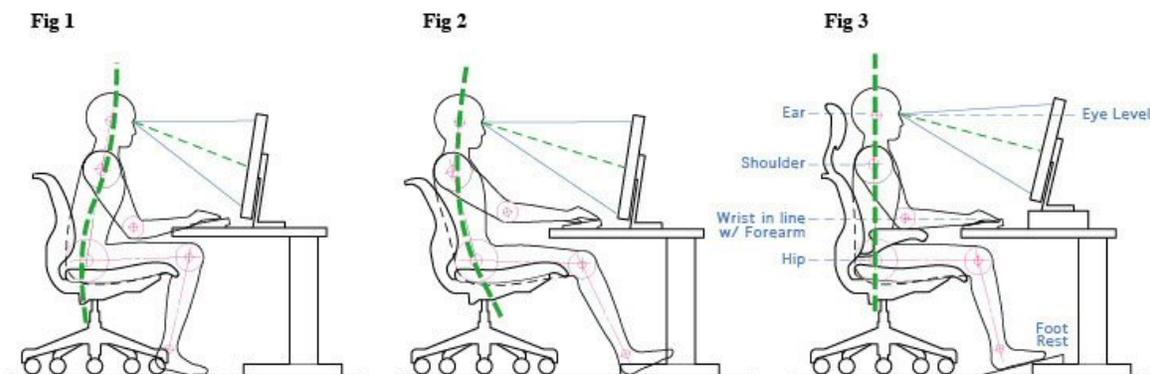
not in use. 3.) You can build a desk with a cutout to accommodate a permanent keyboard shelf that's at the correct height. Options 1 and 3 are fine if you're always competing as a single operator and never have guest ops. For multi-op stations, these solutions aren't practical. Option number 2 also has its drawbacks. The main one being that when you pull out the keyboard drawer you have to sit further away from the desk, making access to often-used equipment directly in front of you more difficult because you have to reach further to get to it. The desk dilemma is a great example that many times ergonomics end up being a compromise between comfort and practicality.

The monitor, another crucial component of the computer system, needs to be in the correct position to prevent eye strain, as well as neck and shoulder discomfort. You should position the monitor directly in front of you at a height where you can see the screen while looking straight ahead. If you're constantly looking down, up or to either side, you need to reposition your monitor. The distance from your eyes to the monitor screen is important, especially if you wear glasses. Without leaning forward in your seat, you should be able to see the monitor clearly. If your logging program allows you to adjust font sizes, take advantage of that option. For example, the N1MM logger allows you to choose the font and type size under "View," "Set Font." Pick a font that's easy to read and make it large enough that you don't have to squint to see it. If you have trouble focusing on the screen, you may want to consider getting "computer" glasses with a specific prescription that brings the screen into focus at your normal distance from the monitor. You'll need to visit your eye doctor to get fitted with the correct prescription.

The rig should be within the same field of vision as the monitor. You want to be able to see the display and the controls you use often without having to move your head. Generally, that means you want the rig in front of you or very slightly off to the side. Where you place the rig will be influenced by the ease with which you can touch and use the controls – the main tuning, notch/width/shift knobs, memory buttons, etc. You don't want the rig in a position where you have to stretch to get to it. Placing the monitor on top of the rig usually isn't the best option because it results in the screen being too high for most people. Instead, consider having the monitor on a boom mount so it can be adjusted for height and distance from your eyes, with the rig just below it on the desk. A few monitors have a boom-style base that allows height and front-to-back positioning adjustments.

Less frequently used equipment or gear that doesn't require constant tweaking can be positioned further to either side of your field of vision. Things like amps, antenna tuners and switches, that don't need constant attention can be set off to the side so you can see them with your peripheral vision (for instance, to keep tabs on the meters on an amp). An occasional glance to either side will let you see what's going on. And since you aren't constantly twisting the knobs and throwing the switches on them, they can be further away – but still within reach. Seldom used or accessed gear, such as power supplies, can be placed even farther away.

Station ergonomics comes down to personalization of your operating position. Because you're fitting your station to your physical traits and needs, your changes won't necessarily be the same as someone else's. And you probably won't be able to (or even want to) incorporate every possible ergonomic fix. So, concentrate on making your station more comfortable to operate, especially for a protracted period of time, and fatigue will be less of a factor as the contest goes on. If you're less fatigued and tired than your competition, all things being equal, you should make more QSOs and that's what contesting is all about. Start out with just one or two ergonomic improvements around your station. Once you get going, you'll probably find a number of enhancements that are easy to make. Just remember that comfort is your number one objective. Reduce fatigue and you'll improve your performance.



The "Three Bears" of seating posture. Fig. 1 shows too much forward lean ("sitting on the edge of the chair" syndrome) that engages too many lower back muscles. Fig. 2 is an example leaning too far back, which also causes discomfort because it makes the spine assume a position that's exactly opposite the natural curve of the back. Fig. 3 is just right! It shows all the correct positions: approximately a 90-degree bend at the hips and knees; arms hanging naturally from the shoulders with

forearms reaching straight to the keyboard and no bend in the wrists. This posture is the most neutral for your body, so no one muscle group has to work overtime to keep you in this position, which in turn, reduces fatigue. In other words, it's the most comfortable position of the three.



Although this is an illustration of computer workstation, it's not that different from a setup that would work well for contesting. The keyboard and mouse are placed in a comfortable position. The monitor is directly in front of the worker/op (ideally, above the main rig). A wrap-around desk shape allows equipment to be within easy reach, while being visible with peripheral vision. Use your imagination to envision how you could adapt this planform to suit your operating position.

Next Meeting
Saturday, April 10th, 1 - 5PM
Holiday Inn – Boxborough, MA

Agenda

- Elections: Nominations open from the floor, (present officers are willing to run again)
- K1HT – Score Roundup
- Speaker - K2RS Ergonomics for the Contester.
- This should be interesting as Jack is a professional in this field.

Sensor-Tech International
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Commercial & Amateur Communications

YCCC Regular Meeting

February 7, 2010

Sturbridge, MA

The meeting was called to order by K1RX at 1:22 pm at the Sturbridge Host Hotel & Conference Center with a review of the meeting agenda.

W1EBI gave the secretary's report. Active membership was 389, with 289 current with dues paid to 31 March 2010 and 100 still one year in arrears. George announced that WB1DX had taken on the role of publisher of both the print and online editions of Scuttlebutt. N1SR continues as editor. Both Ken and Steve got a seated-O for their services to the club. KA2D intends to hold a NYC-LI area meeting on 16 March in Bethpage. The YCCC eligibility list for CQWW 2009 has been vetted by K1HT and forwarded to K3EST. The December meeting minutes were accepted by the attendees.

Mark initiated a round of self-introductions by meeting attendees, including each op's plans and QTH for ARRL DX.

K1EP gave the treasurer's report, which was accepted by the meeting attendees.

Ticket sales at \$25 per ticket for the annual raffle began to support the club's annual contribution to the ARRL Scholarship Fund. The goal is to net \$1,200 to \$1,500, which will require the sale of approximately 160 tickets. The top prize, with winner to be drawn at the April meeting, will be a K3/100 from Elecraft. Tickets may be purchased with cash, check, credit card or PayPal.

K1DG gave an overview of Contest University 2010 to be held at Dayton. Attendees receive all course materials, lunch and a diploma.

The bi-annual ARRL New England Convention, Boxboro 2010, will be held in August. RX-Mark is looking for suggestions for the YCCC program. Mark, W1MAW, will be the YCCC chairperson to organize the agenda. Several ideas for program content were presented from the floor, including a CW-copying competition with some take-away prizes, Contesting 101, Multi-op 201, mentoring, "Radiosport", and linking contesting skill development to EMCOM.

W1MAW presented an update on the reincarnation of the club award program. Information is on the website. Included are special club and annual operating awards, an individual ladder showing final scores posted by club members, and recognition of ops as well as owners of multi-op stations. Mark has also added a "Stations & Operators" button on the website linking to a secure online contest management application for station owners looking for ops and for ops looking for stations.

Scorekeeper K1HT presented an update on CQWW 2009, showing aggregate claimed scores for YCCC of 294.5 million (vs. 282.3 meg in 2008) compared to FRC's 292 million. These uncomfortably close figures compare to the 2008 published scores of 262.2 million for YCCC vs. 260.3 million for FRC. A further discussion followed on points per member compared to FRC. Dave pointed out the 7.1% UBN reduction for YCCC in 2008, but did not have a way to determine the comparable figure for FRC.

K1RX announced the receipt of several new contest awards for YCCC-- gavels for top large club scores in ARRL DX 2009 and ARRL 160 2008; plaque to WA1Z for top SOLP USA in CQ 160 2009, a new record; and a plaque to K1EP for SOLP USA in CQ 160 2009. Congrats to Bob and Ed.

Prior to the break, the club inducted one new member and welcomed three former members back aboard:

KK1X John Griswold, Ayer, MA

NF1A Art Pizer, Billerica, MA

K1MM Bill Poellnitz, Southborough, MA

N1RD Jeff Struven, Windham, NH (ex-N1OEK)

Coffee and cake (thanks again to K1SFA) followed with a break for conversation and QRM.

W1VE gave an update on GetScores.org, created in recognition of a changing competitive paradigm (Gerry's phrase) and to foster motivation, community, education and fun. GetScores.org 2.0 is an information portal, but information can be distributed to many websites. The site will be active for the newly-created six-hour ARRL Rookie Roundup to be held 18 April with additional versions in August and December. Gerry cited the special involvement in the new version of GetScores.org by K1TTT and N1MM.

K1XM presented an update on the SO2R box, v1.1, with new features. This version is now in field test. Price is \$175 for two radios and \$195 for four radios. Paul said there is no plan for a third build. He is contemplating an antenna switch box as a new design project.

The club is looking for ideas, support and volunteers to help create a "near-live" video of actual SO2R operation as an instructional video to present at Boxboro 2010. The capture at K5ZD's station would ideally take place during the ARRL

weekends in February and March. This would be an extension from Randy's audio recordings to better demonstrate two-radio contest operation.

The next meeting, featuring the annual election of officers and the drawing of the raffle prize winners, is scheduled for the second weekend of April.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
George Harlem, W1EBI, secretary

YCCC NYC/LI Area Meeting for NYC/LI
March 16, 2010
Town of Oyster Bay - Ice Skating Center, Community Room 1, Bethpage, NY

Meeting sponsored by Long Island DX Assoc. (LIDXA) started at 8:30Pm after an half hour of eyeball QSOs and introductions. Brief business meeting by LIDXA was closed and floor was turned over to Tom KA2D for the YCCC portion of meeting. An introduction of the history, purpose and goals of YCCC followed by a Power Point presentation of "Why Contest". This presentation was focused on benefits of contesting to DXers for the awards, boost band/mode totals, station automation, pileup techniques and the " fun of contesting". The presentation slides were from YCCC website and edited for this group. A Q&A followed, with an invitation to join YCCC.

No new members, four renewals. Attendance was down due to previous weekend storm which caused power outages and heavy wind damage in our area.

YCCC renewals W2FX, W2GW, N2KA, WB2OQQ

Thank you to Great South Bay ARC for use of the computer.

Submitted by
Tom Carrubba KA2D
Area Manager
New York City / Long Island

Dues Reminder

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:

Pymment of dues IS NOT a prerequisite for contributing scores to the Club aggregate, but IS for the various YCCC Awards Programs

Full Member - \$20 (\$35/2 yr) (Eligible for YCCC awards programs and paper delivery of Club newsletter)

Full Member - \$15 (\$25/2 yr) (Eligible for YCCC awards programs and electronic "Ebutt" delivery of Club newsletter)

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What Radio Sport Has Done for Me.

Barry – WB1EDI

On June 13 1977, The USPS delivered a piece of paper to me in South Sutton NH that would impact the rest of my life. It had the Call of WB1EDI on it and was a Novice Amateur Radio license.

I made my first contact that afternoon on 80 meter CW with Bill, W2BXP. I was hooked and knew that I was in for a great time with my new hobby. From June 77 until Sept 77 I made many contacts, but all were in the US and were slow as I was still learning the art of CW.

In Sept of 77 I passed my General written but failed the 13 WPM CW in Boston. Three days later I was off to Great lakes IL for US Navy boot camp and then to Millington TN for Avionics school.

During my 6 ½ years of Navy service I thought of the fun of Ham radio but did very little operating. Upon getting out of the Navy in 1984 and moving into an apartment where I could not set up my station, I was still not getting much Air time on HF, I had 2 meter mobile but it was just not what I really wanted. Finally after too many years, I bought a new IC725 and tuner and hooked up a TV twin lead dipole in my condo. It was tacked to the ceiling but would tune from 40 and up. In 1993 I was finally back on the air and I wanted to go farther. I started working some DX and convinced my wife to get her license so she could get in contact with me on 2 meters. She got her Tech plus and I upgraded to Advanced in 93 and Extra in 94.

After getting my Adv in 93 I entered my very first contest, I decided that I would try out the 1993 CQWW SSB contest. That was a real eye opener. I set up a 10-20 wire vertical and an 80-40 dipole at my parents house in Sutton NH to do better then I could with my indoor dipole. After about 45 minutes, I had my first contact in the log. Why weren't they hearing me? I was thinking. Now I realize it was the 20000 people calling them with KW amps. I was using my 725 at 100 watts into wires. By the time it was over I had over 300 QSOs in the log and many were new countries for me.

I played in several other contests, after that and sent hundreds of QSLs to the buro, and before long I started getting envelopes from the buro with many cards from lots of new countries and many direct from new states. In May of 94 I realized that I had enough for an award. I had enough for the Phone WAC, and I sent the cards to get that award. I was also close to having my WAS and I got my final state while working the ARRL DX from home and worked HI. I got the card and in Aug of 95 had the WAS on the wall. By the end of 95 I also had DXCC Mixed and SSB.

The vast majority of my award contacts have been due to my contest activity. I have some new ones from rag chews and from Dxpeditons but contesting has been by far the biggest contributor to my wall paper collection. I started getting back to CW and even started playing with RTTY along the way and have managed to get WAC, WAS and DXCC in each of those modes. In 2004 I got the first of the 5 banders when I got 5BWAC and in 2009 got my 5BWAS when in the ARRL DX CW I finally got KL7RA on 40 for the last one. I now have 5BWAS # 2945 on my shack wall and in March of 2010, I got the 100th country confirmed on 80 for the 5BDXCC. As I write this, I do not know my number as I have not gotten the Cert yet but the LOTW page shows it has been issued.

So now I have all of the majors that the ARRL has to offer and I am still going. I have 200 countries confirmed mixed, so there is room to keep going and I am sure that I will find many new ones in future contests. Along the way, My wife (NE1F) has gotten to enjoy contesting as well, and we do many contests in a tag team approach. She has earned her WAS SSB and RTTY and DXCC mixed and is almost to DXCC RTTY.

In addition to the awards, contesting has taught me some operating tricks for getting through to the DX quicker, and I have also greatly improved my CW skills due mostly to contesting. Through it all, I still do not consider myself a contester. I am still a Dxr more then a contester. The contesting lure is the possibility of the new one. I do not follow the rule of YCCC about "don't be a Dxr) in a contest. If its one I need, ill keep at it till I get it. (I had more then an hour of calling KL7RA)

I have also yet to graduate to more power, every contact I have made has been with barefoot 100 Watt radios, I have had outdoor antennas since 1998 and have a TA33JR at 30 ft and wires in the trees for the other bands. I am very glad to have discovered the art of contesting. I am also glad to have finally gotten around to joining the YCCC as I have gotten far more from it then I have given.

73 and thanks to all.
Barry
WB1EDI (since 1977)

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

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SCUTTLEBUTT ARTICLES should be sent to the Scuttlebutt editor, Steve Rodowicz N1SR, preferably by E-mail at n1sr@arrl.net or on 3½" disk (in MS-Word format or text file) by snail mail to Steve Rodowicz, 809 Pendleton Avenue, Chicopee, MA 01020. The deadline for each issue is the 10th of the preceding month..

Scuttlebutt Advertising: Nominal Business Card sized ad, \$50 per year (6 appearances)

CONTEST SCORES should be sent to the club scorekeeper, Dave Hoaglin, K1HT, preferably by E-mail at scores@yccc.org. 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 Bob Rogers KB1LN@yahoo.com

YCCC LOGO ITEMS <http://www.cafepress.com/n1ik>

QSL CARDS are ordered through Burt Eldridge, W1ZS. To order, send Burt an email at w1zs@arrl.net, detailing card information per "QSL Request" form available at http://www.yccc.org/members/yccc_qsl.htm. You will receive a proof by email. Approve the proof, making any corrections, and return to Burt *with payment* (make checks out to Burt, not YCCC). Current price is \$50 (delivered) for 1,000 cards. Also available is the glossy version for \$70/1000.

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER is posed on the YCCC website. 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. Insert only the word "subscribe" in the subject of the mail message. (Do not send messages to the reflector that have file attachments, HTML formatting, use boldface or other fancy fonts, etc.)

WWW HOME PAGE Come visit us at <http://www.yccc.org> Our Webmaster is Mike Gilmer, N2MG.

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 20 cents each. Address: W1 QSL Bureau, PO Box 7388, Milford, MA 01757-7388. Email address: w1qsl@yccc.org.

ARRL COMMITTEE REPS are:

CAC: New England Dick Green, WC1M Hudson George Wilner, K2ONP Atlantic Michael Gilmer, N2MG

DXAC: New England Bob Beaudet, W1YRC Hudson John Sawina, NA2R Atlantic Chris Shalvoy, K2CS

VUAC: New England Ed Parish, K1EP Hudson Frederick Lass, K2TR Atlantic Joe Taylor, K1JT

ARRL LIAISON: Tom Frenaye, K1KI.

Upcoming Meetings

Date	Type	Place
April 10	General	Boxborough, MA

Ship's Log	April 2010	Issue 203
Captain's Cabin	Mark Pride - K1RX	1
Meeting Directions		2
Flotsam & Jetsam	Jack Schuster - W1WEF	3
For Sale / Planned 6M EME Operation from 3D2		4
Contesting Ergonomics	Jack Russell - K2RS	5 - 7
February Meeting Minutes	George Harlem - W1EBI	8
What Radiosport has Done for Me	Barry Whittemore - WB1EDI	10

Next Meeting:

Saturday, April 10th - 1PM to 5PM

Holiday Inn - Boxborough, MA

The YCCC Scuttlebutt
18 Bancroft Tower Road
Worcester, MA 01609

FIRST CLASS MAIL