

W4NH January 2018 Contest Summary

Well, we didn't do as bad as last January or even our shortened September effort but the lack of propagation sure didn't help our efforts this time. We seem to have had very few computer problems this time at least during the contest but none of us would say that about the day before and the morning of the contest when everything seemed to go wrong with the computers. We even had one contest computer that couldn't correctly add two numbers together at the end of the contest. It did not agree with all the other networked computers and didn't add the score up correctly even though it appeared to have the exact same data to work with. Murphy!!

Score Summary: 18,040 points. The log has been submitted and posted on 3830scores.

Band	QSO's	Grids
50	93	43
144	53	23
222	15	7
432	<u>22</u>	<u>9</u>
	183	82

Interesting observation and I'm going to keep mode statistics from now on. Of the 93 Q's on 6m, 33 were phone, 23 were FT-8 and 39 on MSK 144. This is a real change in 6m activity and will probably affect our strategy in future. We also think that we copied our EME echo on 6m using WSJT echo mode at moonrise. Not sure but we'll try again. On 2m we collected 14 EME Q's on what was predicted as about the worst moon conditions for the year. Just goes to show what power WSJT has for us. On 222 we also tried to hear our echo at moonrise but not sure if we really did see anything. We did try 222 EME with K5QE but no decodes. Ron made 2 EME Q's on 432. Also interesting is that we didn't make a single CW QSO during the contest. That is very rare. Usually someone hears a CW signal and we manage to work them and I know Ron called CQ on CW a good bit on 432 but strangely no CW contacts for the contest. I also tried to make several contacts on 1296 with no success. I could hear the beacon weakly but nothing else. I think my front end FET had been 'compromised'!! Couldn't hear beacons on 903 or 2304 although the stations seemed to be working. I haven't had them on the air for a couple of years and will continue with some further troubleshooting on the microwave gear.

Operators: Johnny K4SQC 6m Band Captain, Kos N4NIA 2m Band Captain, Bob W4ZST 222 Band Captain, Ron WW8RR 432 Band Captain, Kim WG8S, Bill KI4US, Jerry W5TDY and Rick KK4LPP. Visitors included Russ K4WQS, Mike KC4RI, Brad KM4QHJ and Rob WB4GKI with his family.

Several of the operators and visitors got together for Saturday lunch at Rooster's and then returned to the shack to kick off the contest. Rick cooked spaghetti casseroles, bread and salad for our Saturday night dinner. Pancakes and sausage for Sunday breakfast, hot dogs with slaw or chili for lunch and we got a couple of good take-out pizzas from Johnny B's for Sunday evening.

Johnny used the Flex 6500 again for the 6m station with the Maestro this time. Worked well all weekend but you see we only had 93 Q's on 6. Kos's station with the Yaesu FT-991 again but this year with his new Beko SS 2m amp. Thanks again to Brian NX9O for use of his excellent 222 station for the contest when he couldn't make it for the contest. Ron had his usual station and antennas for 432.

We conducted the required annual FourLanders meeting on Sunday afternoon. Bill KI4US volunteered to take over as President and give me a much needed break after 15 years on the job! The other officers agreed and were re-elected, WW8RR VP, N4NIA Secretary and W4KXY Treasurer. We had the treasurers report and we have sufficient funds after collection of this years dues. Anyone else wishing

to pay dues and continue as full members, please contact Jim W4KXY.

Discussions were held on new contesting computers and problems we've had and continue to have with WriteLog and also the lack of horsepower and memory for running the MSK144 mode. We also again discussed changing over to N1MM and a plan was made for Johnny and Kos to learn N1MM, networking and interfacing and use it for this years CQWW VHF contest since it is only two bands. Decisions were also made to cut back on portable operations as we just seem to not have a large enough group to keep going to NC with the 7 trailers and have enough ops and trailer pullers. We proposed and agreed to do the June 9,10 2018 contest at the W4ZST shack and a limited portable operation for the CQWW July 21,22 both to try a new location, MontEagle in TN and for the two stations to test out N1MM. Jim W4KXY is working on the details and location on MontEagle. We don't know if we can operate there yet. We do plan to try to go to Mile High for the September 8,9 contest, again if we can get a viable group together.

We are still looking for a new cook and as always new operators and members interested in VHF weak-signal operating and contesting.

Thanks again to all our operators, visitors and stations who worked us during the contest.

Be sure to put the June, July and September contest dates on your calendars.

Thanks.

73, Bob W4ZST