

Hamgram

Newsletter of the Winona Amateur Radio Club, Inc. – June 2001
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The June meeting will be held at the cottage of NØVV

The June meeting of the Winona Amateur radio Club, Inc. will be held at the river cottage of Dick, NØVV. Members who are uncertain of the location of the cottage must keep an ear tuned to the 04/64 repeater for directions. The meeting date is Thursday, June 21 and it will begin at 1900.

Field Day 2001 June 23 and 24th

The Winona Amateur Radio Club will be participating in the annual ARRL sponsored Field Day exercise Saturday June 23 for 24 hours straight through Sunday. This year's event looks to be one of the best ever with many active bands and antennas and no less than three operating positions from HF along with some of the VHF bands. Operation will take place from inside camping trailers this year (no tents!). Setup will most likely begin on Friday evening June 22 (WX permitting). For more information please attend the June Club meeting and/or call Lance Tagliapietra KBØYJU, at 453-0821 or lancetag@hbc.com.

June VHF contest goes QRP

By Matt, KFØQ

June is a special time of year. The sun is up around 5:00 a.m., flowers bloom, temperatures rise, the air gets heavy with morning fog, and the VHF enthusiasts look forward to the summer propagation season. For this reason the ARRL JUNE VHF QSO Party is the key event of the year for those slightly different individuals with interesting looking narrow antenna arrays who speak in “grids” and “bands.” I discovered this bunch a few years ago and must admit that attempting to work stations on the high bands and collect those “grids” has become somewhat contagious! Due to my valley location I have operated both portable and mobile to work the VHF stuff. The past couple of years I packed all my gear in and on my vehicle to participate in the “rover” class, moving between multiple grids. The rover class has the added benefit of being able to work stations all over again upon arriving at a new grid. This type of operating is quite interesting and challenging, but requires a great deal of preparation to get everything



working, and a route design that covers some “rare” grids to get other stations interested in working you. (Last year I drove in excess of 900 miles during the June contest).

2001 has been a different year for some reason. The thought of a big trip and the preparation (combined with a few home projects this spring) caused me to lose interest in being a “rover” this time out. Just one week before the contest I finally decided that the rover thing was out of the question for 2001, but with some quick organization I could pull off a “portable” operation that would be a challenge as well. A few e-mails went out and a trip to my favorite ridge-top location landowner’s farm and things were looking good. By Tuesday before the contest I had permission to set up the antennas and operate all weekend. I had a nice operating position (camping trailer courtesy NØQK), and the use of a really nice VHF/UHF multimode transceiver (courtesy NØWE). I was planning on operating every possible band I could for the event, which for me included 6 meters (50MHz) through 2304MHz a total of 7 bands. One stipulation of my operation this year was that I would attempt to be in the *Single-Op Low Power Portable* class, which means that all contacts must be made using 10 watts or less on all bands, and commercial power could not be used. The location of my setup was just inside EN43 south of Winona near I-90, which is a premium spot for VHF work.

On Friday night before the event with the help of Clare, KØNY, the biggest antennas in my fleet went up. The M2 5-element 6-Meter beam, 13B2 for 144, and my homebrew 16-element yagi for 222 were placed on a 36-foot pushup mast. The stack looked great!



Nine guy ropes were carefully placed 120 degrees apart holding the array, with an AR33 rotator at the bottom. The next stack was mounted to the camping trailer and contained 5 yagis for the 432, 902, 1296, and 2304 bands. I later added a 4-element beam for 146 FM contacts and 11 elements for 446 FM.

Start time for the contest was 1:00 p.m. local time June 9; the event goes for 33 hours ending at 10:00 Sunday night (0300Z Monday, June 11). I missed out on the first hour of operating due to a last minute trip down to the valley for supplies. Shortly after 2:00 p.m., I fired up the generator (courtesy KEØXI) and got on the air. A quick check on 6 meters told me that the magic band was open! The first contact was WØLSD in Colorado located in DM68. Fearing my 10 watt signal wouldn’t do the job I was used to, I would reply “QRP” to any station calling CQ. Moments later KØGU replied back to my “QRP,” “You don’t have to shout it!” (Clearly the 10 watts was plenty for this band opening). The first E’s opening lasted about 2 hours. Colorado was booming in, but I also worked stations in IL, MN, KS, NM, WY, UT, and Idaho most of which had S9+ signals. After the band quieted down somewhat I spent time on 2 meters on up working stations at a slower but steady pace. I kept an ear open on the 6 meter band just in case it came alive again. Sure enough at 0448Z, I heard NG4C from FM16 (VA) on six. This next opening was a marathon lasting until 0803Z (3:03 a.m.). I mopped up states and

grids from the NE, East and SE including NC, VA, MD, PA, CT, NJ, MA, WV, OH, TN, NY, NH, RI, ME, SC, GA. Shortly after this, I traveled down the valley and took a brief nap. I returned to the site at 6:30 a.m. and started again. The log was filling up with contacts and new grids on all bands. Within an hour Sunday morning I had 2 seven band sweeps with KØMHC/Ø EN26 from Northern MN, and K9PW in EN52 (IL).

The third six-meter opening started just before 8:00 a.m. but only lasted about an hour. Still, this opening provided some more new grids on six from states to the south. After this I had to focus on the higher bands of 144 on up. Things were not as good here as is typical for me with higher power. My 10 watt signal was not really an "attention getter" on 2 meters. I spent the rest of the day trying to pick up as many stations as possible within about 200 miles from me. I took a break around 6:00 p.m. local time and managed to get only a couple more contacts on 6 meters in the log before the end of the contest due to a slight problem with the generator. I closed up the station just before 10:00 p.m. Sunday. In total, I had 278 valid contacts from 133 grid squares. My score for the event was 52,402 points. Six-meter band openings really helped the outcome. The record for the Dakota Division for QRP portable for the June contest was set 9 years ago at just over 51,000 points. Did my station set a new record in 2001? I will have to wait until January 2002 for all the scores to be disclosed. Many thanks to Clare, Russ, Jim, and Walt for the assistance and use of their equipment, as well as those of you that worked me during the contest for those extra points!

FOR SALE

8-FOOT ROHN TRIPOD. Contact Gary, NØOWS

A note from the President

Hi Everyone,

This is really neat ... I'm on top of a mountain in the Yukon (about 50 miles away from Alaska) ... at a firewatchers house. She has an incredible cabin on top of the mountain with a view in all directions. About a 10-mile drive up a minimum maintenance road - but get this, she has a *high-speed Internet connection!*

Last night we camped along a wonderful lake with mountains and everything.

Have to run!

Take care,

-Jim

Color Experiment

This text is part of a color experiment to test the color conversion of my PDF Distiller. I want to begin to incorporate color images and features in the electronic version of Hamgram. The mailed version will continue to be distributed in black and white.

Hamgram is published monthly by
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