

2007 CW Sweepstakes — Upsets Beset the Rest of the Test

Truman defeats Dewey, Team USA's
1980 Miracle on Ice, the Giants over the Patriots.

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Everybody loves a tale of the underdog overcoming seemingly insurmountable odds to snatch victory from the jaws of certain defeat. The 2007 running of the ARRL Sweepstakes CW contest is now no exception.

And behind all of it, from the 1948 Presidential election to Super Bowl XLII to N2IC — the 2007 champion of SS CW — the message is the same: Never give up, never get lazy and keep your spirits up.

The Newcomers

As full-weekend domestic contests go, Sweepstakes is the No.1 test of operator skill, with one of the longest exchanges in contesting. Yet it remains one of the most popular, drawing in operators whom you don't normally see entering contests.

Jim, N3BB, who finished fifth in high power, noted there were a lot of checks of 00 to 06 (check is part of the exchange; these numbers mean the stations were licensed between 2000 and 2006), and welcomed the new faces to SS CW. "Some of these operators were smooth and it was nice to hear the newer stations on. Unlike SSB, the CW SS seems to include more of the same group, so the KC9s and KE4s and so on were very welcome."

Some of the newcomers include Rowland, K4XD, who writes in his QRZ.COM listing that he's been a SWLer for 40 years and in 2006 "decided it was time to get licensed." Welcome Rowland.

Dana, AD5VC, is another newcomer. "After Hurricane Katrina, I resolved to get a ham license and help the next time we had a disaster. So, I bore down and studied," Dana writes on his QRZ.COM listing. Dana says

code is still a challenge, so Dana, welcome to CW contesting. Hope you come back.

One newcomer who we know will be in demand is Eric, VY1EI, in Whitehorse, Yukon. Eric, who was licensed in 2006, wasn't sure his mere 100 W would be able to control the pileups from the rarest section in Sweepstakes. "I'd never been in a CW pileup before. The first one was chaotic with a mish-mash of dots and dashes, but by the third pileup I learned to assert control and it got manageable." Look for Eric to help give J, VY1JA a bit of relief from the pileups in the future. "The Yagi is pointing towards Florida so I should have good coverage to the eastern United States. I wasn't operating on 80 or 40 meters for the CW contest. A rotor is in the plans so I should be able to better



Steve, K8BZ, seems content with his Clean Sweep effort from his Gladwin, Michigan location in the Single Op, High Power class.

focus my signal on the west coast when that path is at its best."

The Old Hats — High Power

Steve, N2IC, is the latest high-power champion, knocking the self-described Lance Armstrong of SS, Rich, KE3Q, out of the yellow jersey for the first time since 1999.

But you won't find Rich, kingpin of the WP3R dynasty, anywhere in the results. After a hectic weekend juggling work duties remotely and trying to pilot the Puerto Rico powerhouse, Rich came up a bit short of the lead in claimed scores and then a computer glitch ate his log.

For Steve, who has regularly consigned himself to the goal of being No.1 in the continental USA, the victory was a long time coming but no less sweet.

"It wasn't until the last hour, when it looked like I would break 1500 QSOs (raw QSOs) that I thought I could win," Steve writes in an e-mail. Steve claimed 1505 QSOs and ended with 1481 — an error rate of less than 2 percent! Way to go!

The race for first in high-power was the tightest of them all. Only 4,000 points separated Steve from K5TR, ably piloted by Gator, N5RZ. That's a mere 25 QSOs.

And it highlights Steve's philosophy about contesting. "Don't give up, even when things don't seem to be going well. Your competition may be in even worse shape!"

NØNI, piloted by Mark, AG9A, placed third from his Iowa location. The tightest race is undoubtedly for third. He finished a mere six QSOs ahead of No. 4, K5GO (N5DX, op).

Jim, N3BB, pointed out a key strategic decision that probably cost him a few places in the standings. Arriving home with only

minutes to spare before the contest, he made a snap decision to start on 20 meters, and while it took three minutes to settle down into a run frequency and grab his first contact and ended the hour with 96 QSOs. "Pretty good, but a sure way to fall behind the race horses like N2IC and N5RZ@K5TR," he writes.

Jim also notes his hectic schedule didn't allow him to fall into his rhythm early and he pretty much parked the second radio most of the first night. "Looking back, that was surely a mistake, as I probably could have made a handful of additional contacts off the 'low-hanging fruit'," he writes. His late arrival (he was at a retirement party in Fort Worth) also meant that when it came to breaks, he took one long one overnight and had little break time left for Sunday.

He needed every advantage he could get, as he was chased by WX0B, with K5GA at the helm, who finished only 7 QSOs behind.

Low Power

For Randy, K0EU, Sweepstakes is only the culmination of his favorite parts of Amateur Radio. "I get the most fun out of constantly trying to improve my station, and my operating abilities. I like working on antennas and plan on doing some upgrades this summer. This year, I've made an effort to try some serious entries in other contests besides SS and CQWW CW."


Randy is this year's low-power champion, beating out K5NZ by only 4600 points, or only about 30 contacts. Randy won last year too, so we'll give the underdog title to someone else. Randy thinks that could soon be Matt, K7BG: "Matt continues to improve every time he enters SS, and it won't be long before he cleans my clock." What do you say, Matt?

Randy's miss of a sweep could have been costly. K5NZ finished with a sweep but 44 QSOs behind. Because K5NZ had a sweep, he only needed to cover 30 additional QSOs to overtake Randy.

QRP — The Brave

Tor, N4OGW, took on the arduous task of 24 hours of SS with less than 5 W of output power, and won. Anyone who can complete a contest with a power output 12 times less than an average light bulb, let alone win the class, deserves congratulations. This was just his second time in QRP. He usually plies the water of the low power class, but like Randy, is never sure when someone like an N5TJ or N6TR might decide to turn off the amplifier.

"After a while it seemed like I had a good chance of winning. The thing about SS is you never quite know what category the best ops are going to enter (like the year N6TR went QRP!). I knew that K4RO would probably be Q-power, but starting out I wasn't sure who else was. By Sunday morning I hadn't heard any other big numbers from Q stations, so I was pretty sure it was just between RO and me," he writes. Kirk,



2007 ARRL Sweepstakes CW Top Ten

Single Operator, QRP		Single Operator, Low Power	
N4OGW	143,680	K0EU	185,966
K4RO	120,080	K5NZ	181,280
KC5R	118,720	K4XU	172,160
K0AV	95,160	K7BG	171,680
N0UR	93,760	N6MJ	169,920
KB7Q	90,398	W4OC	169,760
N7IR	89,440	K0AD	168,744
WA7LNW	87,840	WJ9B	164,478
W6JTI	87,532	AJ9C	163,040
WI9WI	85,332	N4PN	156,160

Single Operator, High Power		Single Operator, Unlimited	
N2IC	236,960	K6LL	209,600
K5TR		K3MM	203,360
(N5RZ, op)	232,960	N11N	198,080
N0NI	229,120	K5YA	196,480
(AG9A, op)		W8MJ	193,600
K5GO		K7OX	184,000
(N5DX, op)	228,160	K6TA	
N3BB	226,080	(N6BV, op)	181,920
WX0B		W6YX	
(K5GA, op)	224,960	(N7MH, op)	181,280
N2NT		K07X	180,480
(N2NC, op)	217,760	NP2B	
N5OT	216,000	(N4BP, op)	178,080
WDDT			
(KD0S, op)	214,880		
W5KFT			
(K5PI, op)	211,520		

Multi-Operator		School Club	
K9NS	216,320	K0HC (W0BH, op)	188,960
N6VR	206,880	N9UC	114,866
K4TD	201,280	(W09S, op)	111,360
K5TA	193,600	K5LSU (AD5VC,	
K2NNY	184,960	N5IB, ops)	16,632
W7RN	180,960	N5XU	
VE6EX	179,680	(AA5BT, op)	14,400
W4RM	179,680	W8SH (KD8DAO,	
W0NO	168,160	KD8BXT, WB8LZG,	
WX3B	164,320	W8EKR, ops)	8,256

K4RO, would finish second.

Ironically enough, part of Tor's strategy is calling CQ. When you consider that even some low-power stations at 100 W think they don't have what it takes to call CQ, Tor's strategy is a lesson for everyone.

"At least for SS, you *have* to call CQ a lot. Many QRP stations think that is not possible, but with just S&P you won't work all the guys who never call CQ," he writes.

"It's also the best way to get mults in SS. For example, VY1JA called me while I was CQing. Much easier than trying to break the usual pileups on J!"

When to search and pounce and when to call CQ is one of the more critical skills an operator learns. Some learn it the hard way. Randy, K0EU, notes he missed a sweep but discovered that a few VO1s, his only missing section, were S&P while he was too.

No guarantee that if he was calling CQ at the time he'd have worked them, but it does illustrate the challenge of knowing when to keep calling CQ.

Single Operator Unlimited

Another dynasty could be in the making in Arizona, with Dave, K6LL, capturing the Unlimited category for another year. But he's been nervously following the progress of Ken, N6RO, who had been climbing the Unlimited ladder recently. "...So it was a relief when I worked him and found he was in B category this year," Dave writes.

He beat the No. 2, Ty, K3MM, by only 39 QSOs, which means that Ty closed the gap considerably after the two worked each other. "I was about 90 Qs ahead of K3MM when we QSOd at 0400Z. I know Ty is always dangerous! I did keep track of him from time to time as the contest progressed."

Dave credits his location in Yuma, Ariz. for his success. "Certainly the antennas are no big deal, with a tribander at 48 feet and 2 el shorty 40 at 54 feet. From Yuma, my first hop on 10, 15 and 20 covers from Chicago to the state of Maine, and there are a ton of hams in that zone."

For single operators, who can only work 24 out of the 30 hours of the contest, a key strategic decision is when to take off times. As we noted, Jim, N3BB, got caught short on break times on Sunday by sleeping for 4½ hours Saturday night. Dave, K6LL, noted he changed his off-time strategy this year, taking less time for overnight sleep and leaving more time for short breaks Sunday. "I got up in time for the east coast sunrise and took short breaks through the day. The rate increased significantly after each short break."

Multioperator

In multi-op, we have another returning champion in the crew from K9NS, The Mount Frank Contesters, winning handily with a 10,000 point margin over N6VR. The crew operates out of Frank, K9HMB's station in Illinois, a station large enough you can see it in satellite photos. Given that most stations who win credit their distance from the major population centers (see K6LL, above), Illinois is an unlikely location to mount a dynasty, yet this crew has pulled together and stayed on top of the pact even while the category gains new interest — and more serious challengers — every year.

In the past, Pete, K9PW, has credited the team's success to the number of years working together, which has created the kind of ESP you see in team sports where everyone knows what another is thinking. That, and they make sure that everybody on the team has fun. It's been said that luck is when opportunity meets preparation, and this team certainly has preparation.

K0HC, at Hesston College in Hesston,

2007 November CW Sweepstakes Results Plaque Winners

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of numerous clubs, individuals and ICOM — the principal awards sponsor for the 2007 ARRL November Sweepstakes — we are pleased to announce that the Overall and Division leaders in each category receives a sponsored Sweepstakes plaque. The ARRL wishes to thank the plaque sponsors for their continued commitment to the ARRL Plaque Program. Without their support and dedication, the Plaque Program would not be possible.

Division/Plaque Category	Winner	Plaque Sponsor	Division/Plaque Category	Winner	Plaque Sponsor
Overall			New England		
Single Operator High Power CW	N2IC	Trey Garlough, N5KO	Single Operator High Power CW	K1FX	ICOM America
Single Operator Low Power CW	K0EU	ICOM America	Single Operator Low Power CW	K1BX	ICOM America
Single Operator QRP CW	N4OGW	ICOM America	Single Operator QRP CW	K1XM	QRP Club of New England
Single Operator Unlimited CW	K6LL	Hal Kennedy, N4GG	Single Operator Unlimited CW	W1SJ	ICOM America
Multioperator CW	K9NS	ICOM America	Multioperator CW	KT1D	ICOM America
School Club College Division CW	K0HC (W0BH, op)	ICOM America	School Club CW	W1MX	ICOM America
Atlantic			Northwestern		
Single Operator High Power CW	KD4D	North Coast Contesters	Single Operator High Power CW	W7RM (N6TR, op)	ICOM America
Single Operator Low Power CW	K1HTV	Potomac Valley Radio Club	Single Operator Low Power CW	K4XU	ICOM America
Single Operator QRP CW	N3HU	ICOM America	Single Operator QRP CW	KB7Q	ICOM America
Single Operator Unlimited CW	K3MM	ICOM America	Single Operator Unlimited CW	K7OX	ICOM America
Multioperator CW	K2NNY	North Coast Contesters	Multioperator CW	NN7SS	ICOM America
Central			Pacific		
Single Operator High Power CW	W9RE	Society Of Midwest Contesters	Single Operator High Power CW	N6RO	ICOM America
Single Operator Low Power CW	AJ9C	Society Of Midwest Contesters	Single Operator Low Power CW	N6NF	Robert A. Wilson, N6TV
Single Operator QRP CW	W19WI	Sean Kutzko, KX9X	Single Operator QRP CW	W6JTJ	ICOM America
Single Operator Unlimited CW	N9CO	ICOM America	Single Operator Unlimited CW	K6TA (N6BV, op)	ICOM America
Multioperator CW	K9NS	ICOM America	Multioperator CW	W7RN	ICOM America
School Club CW	N9UC (W09S, op)	ICOM America			
Dakota			Roanoke		
Single Operator High Power CW	WD0T (@KD0S)	Minnesota Wireless Association	Single Operator High Power CW	N4AF	Potomac Valley Radio Club
Single Operator Low Power CW	K0AD	Minnesota Wireless Association	Single Operator Low Power CW	W4OC	Raleigh Amateur Radio Society - W4
Single Operator QRP CW	N0UR	Tod Olson, K0TO	Single Operator QRP CW	K3AN	Bill Harding, K4AHK
Single Operator Unlimited CW	WA2MNO	Minnesota Wireless Association	Single Operator Unlimited CW	N1IN	ICOM America
Multioperator CW	K0HB	Minnesota Wireless Association	Multioperator CW	W4RM	ICOM America
Delta			Rocky Mountain		
Single Operator High Power CW	K5GO (N5DX, op)	ICOM America	Single Operator High Power CW	N2IC	ICOM America
Single Operator Low Power CW	WQ5L	ICOM America	Single Operator Low Power CW	K0EU	ICOM America
Single Operator QRP CW	N4OGW	ICOM America	Single Operator QRP CW	K0AV	Colorado QRP Club
Single Operator Unlimited CW	N4DW	ICOM America	Single Operator Unlimited CW	KO7X	ICOM America
School Club CW	K5LSU (AD5VC, N5IB, ops)	ICOM America	Multioperator CW	K5TA	ICOM America
Great Lakes			Southeastern		
Single Operator High Power CW	K1LT	North Coast Contesters	Single Operator High Power CW	N4WW (WQ5W, op)	ICOM America
Single Operator Low Power CW	N8SS	Mad River Radio Club	Single Operator Low Power CW	WJ9B	ICOM America
Single Operator QRP CW	K8DD	Mad River Radio Club	Single Operator QRP CW	N4JF	ICOM America
Single Operator Unlimited CW	W8MJ	ICOM America	Single Operator Unlimited CW	NP2B (N4BP, op)	ICOM America
Multioperator CW	W8EDU	ICOM America	Multioperator CW	K4TD	ICOM America
School Club CW	W8SH (KD8DAO, KD8BXT, WB8ZLG, W8EKR, ops)	ICOM America			
Hudson			Southwestern		
Single Operator High Power CW	N2NT (N2NC, op)	ICOM America	Single Operator High Power CW	KO7AA	ICOM America
Single Operator Low Power CW	W2LK	ICOM America	Single Operator Low Power CW	N6MJ	Larry Serra, N6NC
Single Operator QRP CW	KR2Q	ICOM America	Single Operator QRP CW	N7IR	N6HE and W6 added
Single Operator Unlimited CW	K2ONP	ICOM America	Single Operator Unlimited CW	K6LL	ICOM America
Multioperator CW	WQ2N	Stuart Silverstein, K3UEI, Memorial	Multioperator CW	N6VR	ICOM America
Midwest			West Gulf		
Single Operator High Power CW	N0NI (AG9A, op)	ICOM America	Single Operator High Power CW	K5TR (N5RZ, op)	Ken Adams, K5KA
Single Operator Low Power CW	K0PY	Society Of Midwest Contesters	Single Operator Low Power CW	K5NZ	ICOM America
Single Operator QRP CW	N0LY	ICOM America	Single Operator QRP CW	WA8ZBT	ICOM America
Single Operator Unlimited CW	K0OU	ICOM America	Single Operator Unlimited CW	K5YA	ICOM America
Multioperator CW	W0NO	Lincoln Amateur Radio Club	Multioperator CW	W5TM	ICOM America
School Club CW	K0HC (W0BA, op)	ICOM America	School Club CW	N5XU (AA5BT, op)	ICOM America

If you wish to order a duplicate plaque, contact ARRL Contest Branch Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X, at 860-594-0232 or by e-mail at kx9x@arrl.org. The cost for duplicate plaques is \$67 (includes shipping).

Kansas, again took the School category by a wide margin. That Kansas multiplier, one of the less easily obtained, certainly helps, as does the central location, which makes high-band hops into the eastern seaboard easier and gives the crew a good advantage on 80 and 40. K0HC was piloted by Bob, W0BH, whose own call shows up in a number of contests as well.

Bob says he just fired up the school station as preparation for the Phone weekend. His students haven't got the CW bug yet, but he says the CW contest provided some market-

ing for the Phone weekend.

"As an assignment, I gave some of the (computer) students the CW log to work with. They asked a lot of good questions, about checks and sections," he said.

I'd say the station checked out.

W1MX, at MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts, placed second.

Looking Forward

The 2007 SS CW ended with a few surprises and a few things that were not so surprising. Some 234 of you earned your Sweep-

Nobody, at least among those who entered, played the 80 in 80 game (working all 80 sections in only 80 contacts), but N5XU (AA5BT, op.) came closest with 80 sections in 90 QSOs.

But all 1260 who entered seemed to have fun. And that's the whole point.

Get ready for the 2008 Sweepstakes, which runs November 1-3 (CW) and November 15-17 (Phone). Perhaps we'll even have some sunspots this time.