

2016 ARRL September VHF Contest Results

Perseverance is an important aspect of successful VHF contesting.

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The September 2016 VHF Contest will be remembered for two things: average conditions and participation, and continued integration of new rules allowing for more real-time interaction during the contest. A complete discussion is available in the full results at www.arrl.org/contest-results-articles.

Band Activity

This contest saw 2 meters win the prize for most active band, with about 13,000 QSOs in the submitted logs. Without any real propagation enhancement on 50 MHz, the band fell off to second most active, with over 11,000 QSOs. Likewise, grid totals on 144 MHz were higher than the total for 50 MHz, further confirming the lack of E_s, F2, TEP, and other types of propagation. About 6,000 QSOs were made on 432 MHz, the next most active band, followed by 222 MHz.

While there was a distinct lack of propagation enhancement generally, a few participants who stuck with it experienced some exciting conditions on 144, 222, and 432 MHz on Sunday evening. As seems to happen frequently in the September contest, mountaintop Multioperator stations AA4ZZ in EM96 and W4NH in EM85 seemed to be on one end of the opening. There was very nice enhancement to the upper mid-west as far as K9MU in EN44

for both stations. This tropo helped Single Operator, Low Power (SOLP) winner K2DRH work numerous new grids in the last few hours.

This type of opening highlights what it takes to succeed at VHF contesting. For most of the stations that worked the

opening, these were by far the best conditions of the contest. For some, the opening was brief. Justin, K9MU, noted that the opening only lasted about half an hour at his location. Others noted giving up before the opening, missing the fun and a chance to improve their score. Perseverance is an important aspect of successful VHF contesting.

Activity Trends

Overall participation was down slightly, with just over 500 submitted logs. Conditions were so-so, with a few stations experiencing interesting tropo conditions, allowing long-haul contacts on Sunday night.

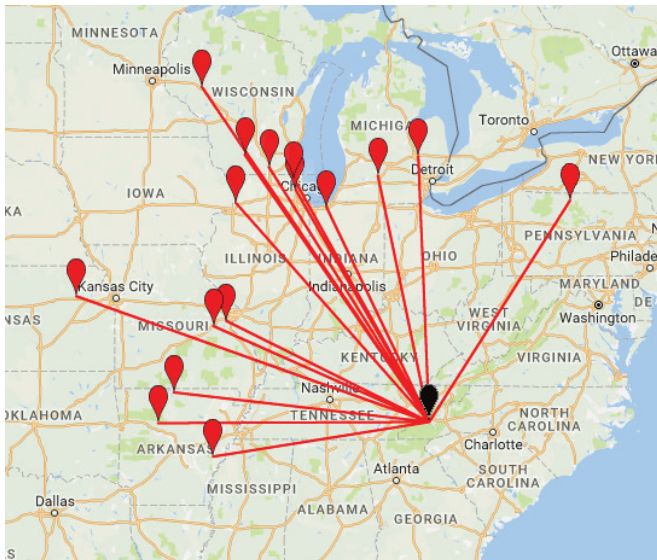
This year marked the fourth time around for the relatively new Single Operator, Three-Band (SO3B) and Single Operator, FM Only (SOFM) categories. The SO3B category continues to gain popularity, with 73 submitted logs — the biggest total for the category so far. Over the past 4 years, the SOLP category has seen a drop-off of nearly 50 logs. Overall, Single Operators running less than full power are up about 10% during that timeframe. The interest in SO3B has helped the overall pool of Single-Operator participants. The SOFM category has yet to gain full traction, though submitted logs doubled



K2EZ's Rover completed a 26-grid jaunt. The full results online include Andrea's travelogue. [Andrea Slack, K2EZ, photo]

Division Winners

Category	Call	Score	Category	Call	Score	Category	Call	Score
Classic Rover			Single Operator, Low Power			Single Operator, FM Only		
Atlantic	KF2MR/R	41,952	Atlantic	N3RN	38,359	Atlantic	W2EV	855
Central	W9SNR/R	22,177	Central	K2DRH	144,840	Central	WB9WOZ	351
Dakota	KC0P/R	12,735	Dakota	WB0HHM	2,684	Dakota	WD9IGX	20
Delta	W5YY/R	13,694	Delta	N4QWZ	34,160	Delta	WX4ET	32
Midwest	WA0CNS/R	420	Great Lakes	WZ8T	7,729	Northwestern	KL2DN	33
Northwestern	KE7MSU/R	4,901	Hudson	WB2JAY	39,494	Pacific	K6KQV	477
Roanoke	K8GP/R	202,365	Midwest	WB0NRV	2,040	Roanoke	KM4KMU	4,221
Rocky Mountain	W7QQ/R	24,702	New England	AF1T	81,716	Southwestern	NA6AA	530
West Gulf	N0LD/R	3,535	Northwestern	KE0CO	5,868	Limited Multioperator		
Canada	VE3OIL/R	89,377	Pacific	KC6ZWT	8,424	Atlantic	W3SO	129,860
Limited Rover			Roanoke	KJ4ZYB	11,610	Central	N9UHF	13,144
Atlantic	NF2RS/R	67,009	Rocky Mountain	K7ULS	195	Dakota	W0VB	1,107
Central	W9YOY/R	9,810	Southeastern	KX4R	26,600	Delta	NE5BO	9,966
Dakota	N0SPN/R	65	Southwestern	W6IT	3,472	Hudson	N2NT	96,068
Hudson	WB2SIH/R	589	West Gulf	KC5WX	6,732	New England	WW1VT	495
Midwest	KB0ZOM/R	1,305	Canada	VE3DS	32,704	Roanoke	AA4ZZ	89,019
New England	K1SIG/R	6,750	Single Operator, Portable			Southeastern	W4JNB	1,219
Rocky Mountain	AB0YM/R	1,368	Atlantic	N3KCM	294	West Gulf	K5QE	39,893
West Gulf	K2EZ/R	37,168	Central	W9SZ	5,375	Unlimited Multioperator		
Canada	VE7JH/R	2,128	Hudson	WB2AMU	1,166	Atlantic	K2LIM	308,328
Unlimited Rover			Midwest	N0JK	620	Central	N2BJ	2,808
Atlantic	N2SLN/R	29,412	New England	N1PRW	160	Great Lakes	N8ZM	33,705
Delta	WD5DJW/R	36	Northwestern	K7ALO	3,740	Hudson	WE1P	43,442
New England	KJ1K/R	10,810	Pacific	W6KKO	1,892	New England	W2SZ	567,469
Pacific	N6JET/R	7,029	Southwestern	WA7JTM	2,655	Northwestern	K7VHF	16,956
Rocky Mountain	W0VOA/R	6,256	Single Operator, Three-Band			Pacific	WB6W	7,995
Single Operator, High Power			Atlantic	N3MWQ	3,720	Rocky Mountain	N0KE	1,980
Atlantic	K1RZ	234,117	Central	KO9A	10,679	Southeastern	WK4U	2,132
Central	W0UC	51,712	Dakota	KE0Z	154	West Gulf	KC5MVZ	440
Dakota	W0GHZ	17,952	Delta	W4TTM	130	Canada	VA3ELE	43,792
Delta	KG5MD	5,568	Great Lakes	K8XX	400			
Great Lakes	K8TQK	36,894	Hudson	KA2BPP	2,574			
Hudson	N2GHR	33,579	Midwest	K0JQA	375			
Midwest	K0TTP	10,414	New England	W9JJ	630			
New England	K1TEO	315,805	Northwestern	KX7L	1,071			
Northwestern	N7EPD	15,340	Pacific	KK6ZIZ	264			
Pacific	WA6OSX	7,920	Roanoke	WA4LDU	792			
Roanoke	W3IP	87,913	Rocky Mountain	KC4YLV	91			
Rocky Mountain	WB2FKO	3,813	Southeastern	K5OLV/4	1,175			
Southeastern	N4TWX	7,252	Southwestern	N7IR	1,272			
Southwestern	N6VI	1,780	West Gulf	K15YG	1,144			
West Gulf	K5LLL	8,250	Canada	VE6NR	672			
Canada	VE3ZV	26,966						
DX	XE2CQ	384						



Fourlanders Contest Team, Inc., W4NH, experienced this nice opening on 144 MHz on Sunday night, with these QSOs exceeding 400 miles. [Map generated by Andy Zwirko, K1RA]

this time around, with a total of 18.

One major activity change over the last few years is that Multioperator participation is down almost 40% from the peak year of 2014. That has clear implications for the activity levels heard tuning the bands, as Multioperators tend to be the ones calling CQ the most.

New Rules and Modes

Use of the new rules allowing use of the Internet and other non-amateur means of communication during the contest continues to evolve. Many operators noted that getting on the ON4KST chat page (www.on4kst.com/chat) was helpful in adding to their QSO totals. Those on Ping Jockey (www.pingjockey.net) were able to utilize digital modes — especially WSJT protocols (physics.princeton.edu/pulsar/k1jt/wsjt.html) — more effectively than in the past. Long-time contester K1RZ enjoyed being able to hook up with

Band Designators

In order to keep VHF+ contest tables and listings brief, ARRL uses the following table of abbreviations and single-character designators to indicate band.

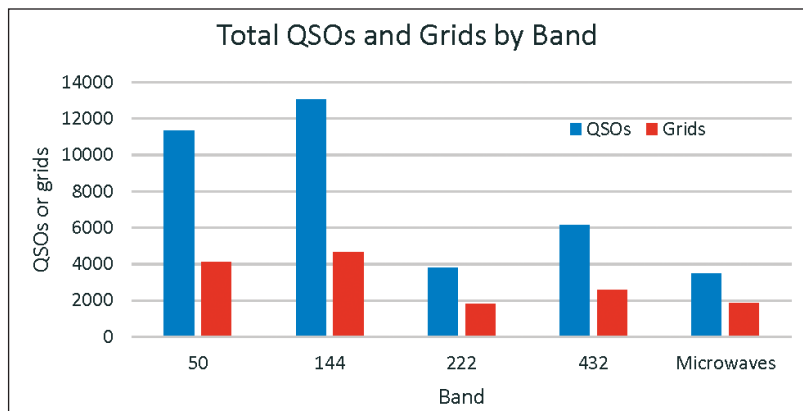
Band Name	Abbr.	Des.
6 meters	6M	A
2 meters	2M	B
222 MHz	222	C
432 MHz	432	D
902 MHz	902	9
1.2 GHz	1.2G	E
2.3 GHz	2.3G	F
3.4 GHz	3.4G	G
5.7 GHz	5.7G	H
10 GHz	10G	I
24 GHz	24G	J
47 GHz	47G	K
75 GHz	75G	L
119 GHz	119G	M
142 GHz	142G	N
241 GHz	241G	O
Light	Light	P

Affiliated Club Competition

Club	Score	Entries
Medium		
Mt. Airy VHF Radio Club	764,221	19
North East Weak Signal Group	533,327	15
Potomac Valley Radio Club	475,366	45
Contest Club Ontario	224,929	8
Society of Midwest Contesters	164,803	11
Northern Lights Radio Society	113,432	15
Frankford Radio Club	97,658	4
Pacific Northwest VHF Society	92,479	29
Carolina DX Association	89,246	3
Rochester VHF Group	76,129	9
Yankee Clipper Contest Club	33,566	4
Northern California Contest Club	18,313	6
Roadrunners Microwave Group	8,608	3
Southern California Contest Club	5,268	3
Grand Mesa Contesters of Colorado	4,648	3
Arizona Outlaws Contest Club	3,753	12
Wayne County Amateur Radio Club	3,087	5
DFW Contest Group	2,752	5
Florida Contest Group	991	6
Willamette Valley DX Club	832	3
Alaska VHF-Up Group	332	4
Local		
Niagara Frontier Radiosport	68,353	4
Michigan VHF-UHF Society	29,209	5
Badger Contesters	24,503	5
Florida Weak Signal Society	20,223	7
Bergen ARA	3,913	3
Bristol (TN) ARC	3,910	3

Top Ten

Classic Rover		
K8GP/R	202,365	
VE3OIL/R	89,377	
KF2MR/R	41,952	
WA3PTV/R	41,752	
VE3WJ/R	31,800	
W7QQ/R	24,702	
WA3RGQ/R	23,296	
W9SNR/R	22,177	
AB4CR/R	19,435	
W5VY/R	13,694	
Limited Rover		
NF2RS/R	67,009	
K2EZ/R	37,168	
W3ICC/R	28,269	
W9YQY/R	9,810	
K1SIG/R	6,750	
K0BAK/R	5,952	
W1RGA/R	5,688	
NL7CO/R	2,294	
VE7JH/R	2,128	
VE6WK/R	1,712	
Unlimited Rover		
N2SLN/R	29,412	
KJ1K/R	10,810	
N6JET/R	7,029	
W0VOA/R	6,256	
WD5DJW/R	36	
Single Operator, High Power		
K1TEO	315,805	
K1RZ	234,117	
K3TUF	139,072	
W3IP	87,913	
K1GX	76,608	
W0UC	51,712	
WA3DFC	44,310	
K8TQK	36,894	
N2GHR	33,579	
WZ1V	33,440	
Single Operator, Low Power		
K2DRH	144,840	
AF1T	81,716	
WB1GQR	74,011	
K1KG	51,060	
WB2JAY	39,494	
N3RN	38,359	
WA3EOQ	36,855	
N4QWZ	34,160	
VE3DS	32,704	
W3SZ	29,520	
Single Operator, Portable		
W9SZ	5,375	
K7ALO	3,740	
W4DVE	2,844	
WA7JTM	2,655	
A6EA	2,163	
W6KKO	1,892	
WB2AMU	1,166	
N0JK	620	
N3KCM	294	
KE7UQL	240	
Single Operator, Three-Band		
KO9A	10,679	
N3MWWQ	3,720	
N3ALN	3,450	
K3UHU	2,925	
N3XF	2,613	
KA2BPP	2,574	
K2OEQ	2,250	
KA2VLP	1,776	
WV3P	1,750	
N7IR	1,272	
Single Operator, FM Only		
KM4KMU	4,221	
W2EV	855	
NA6AA	530	
K6KQV	477	
W6IA	410	
WB9WOZ	351	
KE6PLA	264	
N9VM	138	
K2SI	133	
K6YAP	72	
Limited Multioperator		
W3SO	129,860	
N2NT	96,068	
AA4ZZ	89,019	
W4NH	57,001	
K5QE	39,893	
W2KV	25,174	
N9UHF	13,144	
NE5BO	9,966	
W4COV	7,552	
K3CCR	5,456	
Unlimited Multioperator		
W2SZ	567,469	
K2LIM	308,328	
W2EA	218,504	
VA3ELE	43,792	
WE1P	43,442	
N8ZM	33,705	
N2PA	24,480	
K7VHF	16,956	
WB6W	7,995	
W6TV	5,106	



Total QSOs and grids submitted in the 2016 logs.

more distant stations using the chat pages, working stations previously missed prior to the new rules. VA3ELE agreed, noting how many contacts would not have been possible without the real-time connection on the chat page.

In areas where VHF activity is generally low, digital modes can make a large difference, allowing contacts well beyond normal coverage areas. VE1SKY enjoyed the new possibilities, as 90% of his QSOs were made via digital modes, allowing him to participate in the contest from Nova Scotia.

He noted how well the new WSJT protocols work and encouraged others to try them.

Score Enhancements

Of course, another long-standing way to make things more interesting and increase your score is to add a band, or improve your station. The Niagara Frontier Radiosport group, NF2RS/R, improved their score through “a pile of work” to enhance their capabilities. The hard work paid off with a Limited Rover win for the team of K2ZR and K2QO. In the Pacific Northwest, Rover activity and high participation from the

Pacific Northwest VHF Society kept things hopping.

Category and Club Winners

Overall results were led by some frequent visitors to the top spots, including K2DRH, K1TEO, and W2SZ in the SOLP, SOHP, and Multioperator categories, respectively. K8GP racked up a huge score to take the Classic Rover category, with NF2RS and N2SLN at the top of Limited and Unlimited Rover categories.

The increased competition in the SO3B and SOFM categories crowned two new

Regional Leaders

Boxes list call sign, score, and class: LM = Limited Multioperator; R = Classic Rover; RL = Limited Rover; RU = Unlimited Rover; SO3B = Single Operator, Three-Band; SOFM = Single Operator, FM Only; SOHP = Single Operator, High Power; SOLP = Single Operator, Low Power; SOP = Single Operator, Portable, and UM = Unlimited Multioperator.

West Coast Region (Pacific, Northwestern, and Southwestern Divisions; Alberta, British Columbia, and NT Sections)	Midwest Region (Dakota, Midwest, Rocky Mountain, and West Gulf Divisions; Manitoba and Saskatchewan Sections)	Central Region (Central and Great Lakes Divisions; Ontario East, Ontario North, Ontario South, and Greater Toronto Area Sections)	Southeast Region (Delta, Roanoke, and Southeastern Divisions)	Northeast Region (New England, Hudson, and Atlantic Divisions; Maritime and Quebec Sections)
KE7MSU/R 4,901 R	W7QQ/R 24,702 R	VE3OIL/R 89,377 R	K8GP/R 202,365 R	KF2MR/R 41,952 R
K7SWS/R 3,390 R	KC0P/R 12,735 R	VE3WJ/R 31,800 R	W5VY/R 13,694 R	WA3PTV/R 41,752 R
VE7JH/R 2,128 RL	KK6MC/R 9,261 R	W9SNR/R 22,177 R	AG4V/R 8,544 R	WA3RGO/R 23,296 R
VE6WK/R 1,712 RL	N0HZO/R 9,143 R			AB4CR/R 19,435 R
N6JET/R 7,029 RU	N0LD/R 3,535 R	W9YOY/R 9,810 RL	WD5DJW/R 36 RU	K1DS/R 5,780 R
N7EPD 15,340 SOHP	K2EZ/R 37,168 RL	KC9PCP/R 600 RL	W3IP 87,913 SOHP	NF2RS/R 67,009 RL
KE7SW 9,246 SOHP	NL7CO/R 2,294 RL	W0UC 51,712 SOHP	N3MK 21,280 SOHP	W3ICC/R 28,269 RL
K7YDL 8,184 SOHP	AB0YM/R 1,368 RL	K8TQK 36,894 SOHP	K1HTV 13,908 SOHP	K1SIG/R 6,750 RL
WA6OSX 7,920 SOHP	KB0ZOM/R 1,305 RL	VE3ZV 26,966 SOHP	W4RX 7,436 SOHP	K0BAK/R 5,952 RL
K7CW 6,750 SOHP	W3DHJ/R 1,276 RL	KB8U 15,662 SOHP	N4TWX 7,252 SOHP	W1RGA/R 5,688 RL
KC6ZWT 8,424 SOLP	W0VOA/R 6,256 RU	WA8RJF 7,316 SOHP	N4QWZ 34,160 SOLP	N2SLN/R 29,412 RU
K2GMY 7,904 SOLP	W0GHZ 17,952 SOHP	K2DRH 144,840 SOLP	KX4R 26,600 SOLP	KJ1K/R 10,810 RU
KE0CO 5,868 SOLP	K0TPP 10,414 SOHP	VE3DS 32,704 SOLP	KJ4ZYB 11,610 SOLP	K1TEO 315,805 SOHP
K6CLS 3,720 SOLP	K5LLL 8,250 SOHP	WZ8T 7,729 SOLP	WA7TOF 5,476 SOLP	K1RZ 234,117 SOHP
W6IT 3,472 SOLP	K0SIX 7,290 SOHP	K8CC 7,632 SOLP	K4FJW 3,458 SOLP	K3TUF 139,072 SOHP
K7ALO 3,740 SOP	K0AWU 5,640 SOHP	K9MU 7,504 SOLP	K5OLV/4 1,175 SO3B	K1GX 76,608 SOHP
W4DVE 2,844 SOP	KC5WX 6,732 SOLP	W9SZ 5,375 SOP	WA4LDU 792 SO3B	WA3DRC 44,310 SOHP
WA7JTM 2,655 SOP	WB0HHM 2,684 SOLP	KO9A 10,679 SO3B	KK4MA 285 SO3B	AF1T 81,716 SOLP
A16EA 2,163 SOP	AF5Q 2,088 SOLP	WB9TFH 1,100 SO3B	N4MM 187 SO3B	WB1GQR 74,011 SOLP
W6KKO 1,892 SOP	WB0NRV 2,040 SOLP	W9ZB 540 SO3B	W4TTM 130 SO3B	K1KG 51,060 SOLP
N7IR 1,272 SO3B	N0LL 1,288 SOLP	K8XX 400 SO3B	KM4KMU 4,221 SOFM	WB2JAY 39,494 SOLP
KX7L 1,071 SO3B	N0JK 620 SOP	WB8BZK 140 SO3B	WX4ET 32 SOFM	N3RN 38,359 SOLP
KA6BIM 676 SO3B	K15YG 1,144 SO3B	WB9WOZ 351 SOFM	KW4LU 8 SOFM	WB2AMU 1,166 SOP
VE6NR 672 SO3B	K0JQA 375 SO3B	N9UHF 13,144 LM	AA4ZZ 89,019 LM	N3KCM 294 SOP
WA2KDL 637 SO3B	KE0Z 154 SO3B	VA3ELE 43,792 UM	W4NH 57,001 LM	N1PRW 160 SOP
NA6AA 530 SOFM	K5ND 117 SO3B	N8ZM 33,705 UM	NE5BO 9,966 LM	WX3P 70 SOP
K6KQV 477 SOFM	N0AT 96 SO3B	N2BJ 2,808 UM	W4COV 7,552 LM	N2TEB 60 SOP
W6IA 410 SOFM	WD9IGX 20 SOFM	VA3NW 1,885 UM	W4JNB 1,219 LM	N3MWQ 3,720 SO3B
KE6PLA 264 SOFM	KE0OR 14 SOFM		WK4U 2,132 UM	N3ALN 3,450 SO3B
N9VM 138 SOFM	KE0FMX 1 SOFM		AD4ES 588 UM	K3UHU 2,925 SO3B
K7VHF 16,956 UM	K5QE 39,893 LM			N3XF 2,613 SO3B
WB6W 7,995 UM	W0VB 1,107 LM			KA2BPP 2,574 SO3B
W6TV 5,106 UM	N0KE 1,980 UM			W2EV 855 SOFM
K6YK 3,078 UM	KC5MVZ 440 UM			K2SI 133 SOFM
VE6AO 833 UM				W3SO 129,860 LM
				N2NT 96,068 LM
				W2KV 25,174 LM
				K3CCR 5,456 LM
				WB3IGR 2,784 LM
				W2SZ 567,469 UM
				K2LIM 308,328 UM
				W2EA 218,504 UM
				WE1P 43,442 UM
				N2PA 24,480 UM



Barry, AC7MD, enjoyed the view with his solar-assisted station during the September VHF Contest from his perch atop Mount Walker, in Washington. [Barry Williams, AC7MD, photo]

top finishers, KO9A and KM4KMU. W9SZ had another fine effort in the Single Operator, Portable category, as did the crew at W3SO when they took Limited Multioperator.

A familiar group won the Club competition, as the Mt. Airy VHF Radio Club came in with over 750,000 points. The Niagara Frontier Radiosport group was first in the Local Club competition.

Next Time

The 2017 September VHF contest is just around the corner (September 9 – 10). Let's hope for some interesting band conditions. As 2016 demonstrated, with or without band openings, there's plenty of action and lots of ways to have fun.