

2014 ARRL November CW Sweepstakes Results

Tube gear, clean copy, and team efforts all played a role in CW Sweeps.

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Sweepstakes continues to be a popular contest, with 1300 operators submitting logs recording their efforts on November 1 – 3, and countless others who made QSOs without sending in an entry. The reasons for operating are as varied as the operators.

If you think contesting is all about operating costly superstations with robot-like efficiency and no distractions, don't tell that to Dan, VE6EX; Jim, N2EY, or John, AD8J.

Winning — A Hollow State of Mind

It's not too often a homemade, tube-based rig factors into any category victory, but such were VE6EX's magical 24 hours of Sweepstakes. Dan normally operates a Kenwood TS-690, but for 2014 he also fired up his four-tube "foxhunt" transmitter with a 5763 final and a homebrew VFO to add some hollow-state operation in a category that's almost exclusively solid state these days.

Dan made contacts with a combination of TS-690 and Two Tube Tuna Tin (www.qsl.net/wd8das/T5pix.html) rigs to win the QRP category of 2014 Sweepstakes from Calgary, Alberta. When fishing for contacts, a Drake R-4C handled receive duties. His 847 contacts and 81 sections handed him the QRP category and a Canadian QRP record.

Dan said the Two Tube Tuna Tin made all of his 80 and 40 meter contacts, about 96 in total. (The Tuna Tin name comes from a design by the legendary Doug DeMaw, W1FB (SK) in the May 1976 issue of *QST*.) The rest of the station is similarly modest, with a three-element trapped tribander and wire dipoles on the lower bands all crammed into a city lot.

Across the continent in Eastern Pennsylvania, Jim, N2EY, used homebrew equipment exclusively for his 450 QSOs and 80 sections. Jim calls his 100 percent vacuum-tube rig a Southgate Type 7, built in the 1990s to replace his former rig, also homebrew, called the Southgate Type 6.

The Type 7 is a 100 W CW transceiver for



Top Ten

Single Operator, High Power		Single Operator Unlimited, Low Power	
N9RV	232,898	AA4NC	174,134
W7RN		KB7Q	169,904
(N6TV, op)	224,930	K5CM	157,950
N2IC	213,974	N9CO	155,472
N2NT		K8BL	155,044
(N2NC, op)	212,148	KY4F	153,176
NR5M		N5DO	150,388
(K5GA, op)	210,156	W1UJ	147,420
W9RE	207,952	N2MM	142,024
K6LA	206,172	K0NE	139,072
N4OGW	205,674		
AA3B	201,556	Multioperator, High Power	
WX0B		W6VI	231,238
(AD5Q, op)	200,528	W0SD	223,104
Single Operator, Low Power		K0RF	217,128
K4RO	184,758	KL7RA	214,804
K7BG	180,110	W5RU	209,326
K2PO	177,454	W2FU	207,832
KP2RUM		W4RM	197,872
(N4BP, op)	176,300	AB0S	186,750
NA0N		N4GI	181,604
(@W0ZT)	165,240	KY7M	171,708
NP3A	164,492	Multioperator, Low Power	
N0AT		VE4DR	155,308
(N0KK, op)	162,324	NX6T	151,724
K4XU	161,186	N0UR	147,928
K0AD	159,900	W8TK	143,092
N8SS	159,572	K9MOT	106,758
Single Operator, QRP		KE0L	87,248
VE6EX	137,214	W6K	73,224
KE3X		N3FJP	71,176
(@N4RV)	132,348	KA9VVQ	46,576
K0AV	123,820	N9MT	45,122
N0AX	119,884	School Club	
N1RR		W6RFU	
(@K1TTT)	111,132	(AC6T, op)	176,126
N5EE	106,764	K0HC	
NN7SS		(W0BH, op)	175,628
(K6UFO, op)	105,786	W4UAL	83,830
K0OU	101,898	W8EDU	
N7IR	101,412	(W8WTS, op)	32,390
W7YAQ	99,220	K4KDJ	27,900
Single Operator Unlimited, High Power		N5XU	
K1ZZ	211,724	(AA5BT, op)	27,876
K9CT	201,026	W8SH	17,710
K6LL	200,362	W1AF	
KT0A	194,054	(W1PL, op)	5,200
W6YX			
(N7MH, op)	186,086		
W1SRD	184,592		
N4ZZ	182,434		
KH7XX			
(KH6SH, op)	182,434		
K6SRZ	176,628		
W0ZA	176,464		

80, 40, and 20 meters. It is a model of frugality, assembled from parts found at hamfests and spirited out of old television sets, as well as World War II surplus components. It uses a 12-tube single-conversion receiver and parts from a modified BC-221 frequency meter for tuning. For transmitting, the rig uses a 12BY7 to drive a pair of 807s.

His antenna is an 80/40 trap dipole (homebrew, of course) in inverted-V configuration with the apex at about 40 feet. He says it also works well on 20, evidenced by the 180 20 meter QSOs in his log. Like Dan, Jim's station is on an average-sized city lot.

"The first key challenge to operating homebrew gear in Sweepstakes is coming up with a suitable design for a rig, particularly if you want to use tubes, run more than QRP power, and build the thing out of available parts and without a shop full of fancy tools and test equipment," Jim says. "Suitable designs just don't exist in amateur publications. There are plenty of designs for hollow-state receivers and transmitters using tubes, but when you want a 100-watt band-switching CW transceiver it's drawing-board time."

"The second key challenge in operating homebrew gear in Sweepstakes is that band-changing is a little more complicated. However, once you are used to the rig, 30 seconds is more than enough time to change bands."

Jim upgraded to computer logging in 2007, mainly to eliminate manual dupe-checking, and recently added a keying interface. Between his rig, scrounged computer parts, and keying interface, Jim's costs were about \$120. "If, someday, using homebrew gear became impractical for me, I might go to 'modern' gear, but I don't see that happening any time soon," Jim said. Instead, Jim's already looking forward to building a Southgate Type 8.

Sponsored Plaque Winners



ARRL is pleased to award a Sweepstakes plaque to the Overall and Division Leaders in each entry category, thanks to Icom America and numerous clubs and individuals who sponsor these awards. For more information on plaque sponsorship or to order a duplicate plaque, contact ARRL Contest Branch Manager Matt Wilhelm, W1MSW, at 860-594-0232 or w1msw@arrl.org. Plaques cost \$75, which includes all shipping charges.

Division/Plaque Category	Winner	Plaque Sponsor	Division/Plaque Category	Winner	Plaque Sponsor
Overall Winners			New England		
Single Operator High Power CW	N9RV	Trey Garlough, N5KO	Single Operator High Power CW	K5ZD	Mark Olsen, KF1V
Single Operator Low Power CW	K4RO	Radiosport Manitoba — VE4VV Memorial	Single Operator Low Power CW	K1XM	Michael McKaughan, K1DM
Single Operator QRP CW	VE6EX	QRP Amateur Radio Club International	Single Operator QRP CW	N1RR (@K1TTT)	Mark Olsen, KF1V
Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	K1ZZ	Joe KH6GA & Victoria N4WV	Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	K1ZZ	Mark Olsen, KF1V
Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	AA4NC	Icom America	Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	W1UJ	Icom America
Multioperator High Power CW	W6Y1	Icom America	Multioperator High Power CW	K1LZ	Mark Olsen, KF1V
Multioperator Low Power CW	VE4DR	Icom America	Multioperator Low Power CW	No Entrant	Icom America
School Club CW	W6RFU (AC6T, op)	Straight Key Contest Club	School Club CW	W1AF (W1PL, op)	Icom America
Atlantic			Northwestern		
Single Operator High Power CW	AA3B	Icom America	Single Operator High Power CW	N9RV	Icom America
Single Operator Low Power CW	WY3A	Potomac Valley Radio Club	Single Operator Low Power CW	K7BG	Icom America
Single Operator QRP CW	K2QO	Milt Coleman, K4OSO	Single Operator QRP CW	NN7SS (K6UFO, op)	Phil Yasson, AB7RW
Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	N3RR	Icom America	Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	K7RL	Icom America
Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	N2MM	Icom America	Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	W7ZRC	Icom America
Multioperator High Power CW	W2FU	Icom America	Multioperator High Power CW	KL7RA	Icom America
Multioperator Low Power CW	N3FJP	Icom America	Multioperator Low Power CW	No Entrant	Icom America
School Club CW	No Entrant	Icom America	School Club CW	No Entrant	Icom America
Central			Pacific		
Single Operator High Power CW	W9RE	Society Of Midwest Contesters	Single Operator High Power CW	W7RN (N6TV, op)	Icom America
Single Operator Low Power CW	AJ9C	Society Of Midwest Contesters	Single Operator Low Power CW	N6ZFO	Robert A. Wilson, N6TV
Single Operator QRP CW	K9UIY	Sean Kutzko, KX9X	Single Operator QRP CW	W6JT1	Icom America
Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	K9CT	Straight Key Century Club	Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	W6YX (N7MH, op)	The Carroll Dean Jensen Memorial (K6CDJ)
Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	N9CO	Icom America	Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	N6EE	Icom America
Multioperator High Power CW	W9YK	Icom America	Multioperator High Power CW	K6MMM	Icom America
Multioperator Low Power CW	K9MOT	Icom America	Multioperator Low Power CW	W6K	Icom America
School Club CW	No Entrant	Icom America	School Club CW	No Entrant	Icom America
Dakota			Roanoke		
Single Operator High Power CW	N71V	Minnesota Wireless Assoc	Single Operator High Power CW	N4AF	Potomac Valley Radio Club
Single Operator Low Power CW	NA0N (@W0ZT)	Minnesota Wireless Assoc	Single Operator Low Power CW	W4OC	Icom America
Single Operator QRP CW	K0PC	Tod Olson, K0TO	Single Operator QRP CW	KE3X (@N4RV)	Icom America
Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	K1QA	Minnesota Wireless Assoc	Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	N1LN	Icom America
Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	K1KD	Icom America	Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	AA4NC	Icom America
Multioperator High Power CW	W0SD	Minnesota Wireless Assoc	Multioperator High Power CW	W4RM	Icom America
Multioperator Low Power CW	N0UR	Icom America	Multioperator Low Power CW	KG4W	Icom America
School Club CW	No Entrant	Tod Olson, K0TO	School Club CW	K4KDJ	Icom America
Delta			Rocky Mountain		
Single Operator High Power CW	N4OGW	Icom America	Single Operator High Power CW	N2IC	Icom America
Single Operator Low Power CW	K4RO	Icom America	Single Operator Low Power CW	W0ETT	Icom America
Single Operator QRP CW	N5EE	Icom America	Single Operator QRP CW	K0AV	Colorado QRP Club
Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	N4ZZ	Icom America	Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	W0ZA	Icom America
Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	N4UW	Icom America	Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	KK6MC	Icom America
Multioperator High Power CW	W5RU	Icom America	Multioperator High Power CW	K0RF	Icom America
Multioperator Low Power CW	No Entrant	Icom America	Multioperator Low Power CW	KK5OV	Icom America
School Club CW	No Entrant	Icom America	School Club CW	No Entrant	Icom America
Great Lakes			Southeastern Division		
Single Operator High Power CW	K1LT	Mad River Radio Club	Single Operator High Power CW	K4BAI	Icom America
Single Operator Low Power CW	N8SS	Mad River Radio Club	Single Operator Low Power CW	KP2RUM (N4BP, op)	Icom America
Single Operator QRP CW	K18K	Mad River Radio Club	Single Operator QRP CW	K3TW	Icom America
Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	K8AZ (K8NZ, op)	KD8LL & K4EQ — N8CVH Memorial	Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	K1ZZI	Charlie Wooten, NF4A
Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	K8BL	John S. Comella N8AA	Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	KY4F	Icom America
Multioperator High Power CW	No Entrant	Icom America	Multioperator High Power CW	N4G1	Icom America
Multioperator Low Power CW	No Entrant	Icom America	Multioperator Low Power CW	No Entrant	Icom America
School Club CW	W8EDU (W8WTS, op)	In memory of Raleigh Wert, W8QOI	School Club CW	W4UAL	Icom America
Hudson			Southwestern		
Single Operator High Power CW	N2NT (N2NC, op)	Icom America	Single Operator High Power CW	K6LA	Icom America
Single Operator Low Power CW	W2LK	Icom America	Single Operator Low Power CW	AA6PW	Icom America
Single Operator QRP CW	K2YGM	Icom America	Single Operator QRP CW	N71R	N6HE and W6DLL
Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	W2VQ	Icom America	Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	K6LL	Icom America
Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	NT2A	Icom America	Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	KB7Q	Icom America
Multioperator High Power CW	AB2DE	Stuart Silverstein, K3UEI, Memorial	Multioperator High Power CW	W6Y1	Icom America
Multioperator Low Power CW	No Entrant	Icom America	Multioperator Low Power CW	NX6T	Icom America
School Club CW	No Entrant	Icom America	School Club CW	W6RFU (AC6T, op)	Icom America
Midwest			West Gulf		
Single Operator High Power CW	NS0R	Icom America	Single Operator High Power CW	NR5M (K5GA, op)	Icom America
Single Operator Low Power CW	N0AC	Society Of Midwest Contesters	Single Operator Low Power CW	W8FN	Icom America
Single Operator QRP CW	N0AX	Icom America	Single Operator QRP CW	K5NZ	Icom America
Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	N0XR	Icom America	Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	K5RT	Icom America
Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	K0NE	Icom America	Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	K5CM	Icom America
Multioperator High Power CW	AB0S	Icom America	Multioperator High Power CW	No Entrant	Icom America
Multioperator Low Power CW	No Entrant	Icom America	Multioperator Low Power CW	N5PJ	Icom America
School Club CW	K0HC (W0BH, op)	Icom America	School Club CW	N5XU (AA5BT, op)	Icom America
			Canada		
			Single Operator High Power CW	VE7SZ (KL7SB, op)	Icom America
			Single Operator Low Power CW	VA3DF	Icom America
			Single Operator QRP CW	VE6EX	QRP Amateur Radio Club International
			Single Operator Unlimited High Power CW	VE3CX	Icom America
			Single Operator Unlimited Low Power CW	VE3MGY	Icom America
			Multioperator High Power CW	VE3MIS	Icom America
			Multioperator Low Power CW	VE4DR	Icom America
			School Club CW	No Entrant	Icom America

Regional Leaders

Boxes list call sign, score, and class (Q = QRP, A = Low Power, B = High Power, U = Single Operator Unlimited, High Power; UL = Single Operator Unlimited, Low Power; M = Multioperator, High Power; ML = Multioperator, Low Power; S = School Club)

Northeast Region (New England, Hudson, and Atlantic Divisions; Maritime and Quebec Sections)			Southeast Region (Delta, Roanoke, and Southeastern Divisions)			Central Region (Central and Great Lakes Divisions; Ontario East, Ontario North, Ontario South, and Greater Toronto A)			Midwest Region (Dakota, Midwest, Rocky Mountain, and West Gulf Divisions; Manitoba and Saskatchewan Sections)			West Coast Region (Pacific, Northwestern, and Southwestern Divisions; Alberta, British Columbia, and NWT Sections)		
N2NT (N2NC, op)	212,148	B	N4OGW	205,674	B	W9RE	207,952	B	N2IC	213,974	B	N9RV	232,898	B
AA3B	201,556	B	N4AF	198,276	B	K1LT	171,872	B	NR5M			W7RN		
KD4D	180,892	B	K4BAI	181,602	B	AA9A			(K5GA, op)	210,156	B	(N6TV, op)	224,930	B
K5ZD	175,480	B	NX4N	179,778	B	(NQ6N, op)	163,782	B	WX0B			K6LA	206,172	B
KD2RD	173,016	B	K0LUZ	177,122	B	W5MX	162,196	B	(AD5Q, op)	200,528	B	K6XX	199,752	B
WY3A	152,056	A	K4RO	184,758	A	W19WI	152,640	B	N5RZ	199,532	B	VE7SZ		
W2LK	142,024	A	KP2RUM			N8SS	159,572	A	K5TR			(KL7SB, op)	191,398	B
K3AJ	141,598	A	(N4BP, op)	176,300	A	W1NN	156,784	A	(K5OT, op)	198,536	B	K7BG	180,110	A
K1XM	137,596	A	NP3A	164,492	A	AJ9C	154,324	A	NA0N			K2PO	177,454	A
K3UA	135,464	A	KU8E	151,700	A	W8CAR	152,356	A	(@W0ZT)	165,240	A	K4XU	161,186	A
N1RR			N4PN	148,404	A	KV8Q	131,528	A	N0AT			AA6PW	149,400	A
(@K1TTT)	111,132	Q	KE3X			VE3KI	98,564	Q	(N0KK, op)	162,324	A	W9CF		
K8CN	84,132	Q	(@N4RV)	132,348	Q	KT8K	90,396	Q	K0AD	159,900	A	(@K8IA)	148,912	A
W1QK	81,120	Q	N5EE	106,764	Q	VE3VN	86,400	Q	W8FN	147,928	A	VE6EX	137,214	Q
K2QO	76,314	Q	WF7T	89,262	Q	K9UIY	85,116	Q	N0AC	144,180	A	NN7SS		
NA1CC	63,358	Q	K3TW	88,724	Q	K9XZ	73,944	Q	K0AV	123,820	Q	(K6UFO, op)	105,786	Q
K1ZZ	211,724	U	K4QPL	85,374	Q	K9CT	201,026	U	N0AX	119,884	Q	N7IR	101,412	Q
N3RR	172,856	U	N4ZZ	182,434	U	VE3CX	163,016	U	K0OU	101,898	Q	W7YAQ	99,220	Q
K1G	170,814	U	N1LN	161,352	U	NE9U	155,044	U	K0PC	97,686	Q	W6JTI	94,770	Q
AB3CX	165,502	U	K1ZZI	153,052	U	K9NR	153,384	U	KE0Z	73,470	Q	K6LL	200,362	U
WR3Z	164,430	U	N4DW	150,060	U	K8AZ			KT0A	194,054	U	W6YX		
W1UJ	147,420	UL	N1TO	138,580	U	(K8NZ, op)	134,622	U	W0ZA	176,464	U	(N7MH, op)	186,086	U
N2MM	142,024	UL	AA4NC	174,134	UL	N9CO	155,472	UL	N0XR	170,724	U	W1SRD	184,592	U
NT2A	121,688	UL	KY4F	153,176	UL	K8BL	155,044	UL	K5RT	165,502	U	KH7XX		
WQ2N	113,324	UL	WD4AHZ	135,956	UL	K9WX	119,884	UL	N5ZC	164,838	U	(KH6SH, op)	182,434	U
N3HEE	111,684	UL	N4UW	128,982	UL	KB9S	114,308	UL	K5CM	157,950	UL	K6SRZ	176,628	U
W2FU	207,832	M	W4MPS	117,588	UL	VE3MGY	103,812	UL	N5DO	150,388	UL	KB7Q	169,904	UL
K3CCR	72,738	M	W5RU	209,326	M	VE3MIS	144,088	M	K0NE	139,072	UL	W7ZRC	131,528	UL
K1LZ	72,504	M	W4RM	197,872	M	W9YK	68,224	M	K1KD	121,920	UL	N6EE	111,848	UL
AB2DE	2,516	M	N4GI	181,604	M	KK9V	1,242	M	NM5M	121,196	UL	K9JM	110,224	UL
N3FJP	71,176	ML	N4FX	112,914	M	K9MOT	106,758	ML	W0SD	223,104	M	KO7AA	99,548	UL
N2ASD	25,488	ML	W4ZYT	61,560	M	KE0L	87,248	ML	K0RF	217,128	M	W6Y1	231,238	M
W1AF			KG4W	31,416	ML	KA9VVQ	46,576	ML	AB0S	186,750	M	KL7RA	214,804	M
(W1PL, op)	5,200	S	W4TG	17,360	ML	N9MT	45,122	ML	NY6C	151,470	M	KY7M	171,708	M
			W4HFFH	1,120	ML	N9GTC	2,000	ML	K0HB	144,088	M	K6MMM	161,850	M
			W4UAL	83,830	S	W8EDU			VE4DR	155,308	ML	K6LRG	125,132	M
			K4KDJ	27,900	S	(W8WTS, op)	32,390	S	N0UR	147,928	ML	NX6T	151,724	ML
						W8SH	17,710	S	N5PJ	41,120	ML	W8TK	143,092	ML
									KK5OV	11,448	ML	W6K	73,224	ML
									K7EMR	416	ML	W6RFU		
									K0HC			(AC6T, op)	176,126	S
									(W0BH, op)	175,628	S			
									N5XU					
									(AA5BT, op)	27,876	S			

The Thrill of the Chase

If John, AD8J, decides to enter a contest requiring a name in the exchange, he might want to choose Sylvester — as in Sylvester the Cat. “I was operating and I saw a movement out of the corner of my eye,” John said of his effort in Sweepstakes. “It was a mouse running across the carpet in the shack.” Sufferin’ succotash — talk about breaking up a run!

“I hated to lose my run frequency but this couldn’t wait. I grabbed the towel I use to rest my arm on, yelled for my wife, and took off after that bad boy. I was able to take him outside and release him. That was almost as much fun as working rare ND.” When John wasn’t chasing rodents, he was racking up a respectable 723 contacts in 81 sections in A category from his North Carolina station.

A Little Too Much Excitement

Ever been operating and had your computer logging system go south? You probably thought, “I bet this doesn’t happen to the winners.” You’d lose that bet. “Well, I didn’t find



Jim, N2EY, used this all-homebrew station to make 450 contacts in 80 sections in the A category. Built as two separate units working together as a transceiver, the receiver is on the table and the transmitter is on the shelf.

it humorous, but it would have been to someone else watching,” said Low Power (A) category winner Kirk, K4RO. “This was my first serious attempt with *NIMM Plus*. After a few minutes and nine QSOs, it became apparent that the second radio function keys were not working. After short panic, I had to stop the contest and start over again (at serial No. 1) with *NIMM Classic*. Those were some exciting moments at the start.”

Kirk likes Sweepstakes for a few reasons; it rewards perseverance, the work-only-once rule means operators don’t need a superstation to win, and the determined operator has a legitimate chance at working all the available multipliers. “The techniques for A power are different than QRP. For starters, it is much easier to hold a run frequency. The skills acquired during 10 years of QRP SS were still very helpful using A power. No matter which category, you have to try to work every station possible to succeed in SS,” Kirk writes.

Kirk is a determined SO2R (single operator, two-radio) operator, but he admits splitting



Kirk, K4RO, finished atop the Low Power (A) category this year after being the top dog of QRP in past years. Kirk credits his win from Tennessee to 10 years of operating at QRP levels during Sweepstakes. [Photo courtesy of Kirk Pickering, K4RO]

concentration hurts his accuracy. “I am pretty adamant about pushing the second radio hard, and that has its pluses and minuses. On the plus side, I wind up with more QSOs. On the minus side, my error rate increases as I try to split my concentration between two audio streams.”

Pat, N9RV, won the High Power (B) category, but not without some serious concerns about conditions from his northern QTH in Montana. “Got a great start on 10 and 15 [and] had high hopes. Conditions were great on 40, but I couldn’t get anything going [and I] was beginning to think that this would be another year back in the pack.” As expected, he was in a battle with both Bob, N6TV, at W7RN in Nevada and Steve, N2IC, in New Mexico.

Pat reminds us that Sweepstakes requires stamina and not becoming discouraged as the one-QSO-per-station results in a slow pace on Sunday. “Sunday Sweepstakes is like a long car ride with a bunch of people where you’ve all told every story you know and there are still hours left to go,” he said. Pat’s storytelling abilities held up, allowing him to finish ahead of W7RN and N2IC by 9000 and 19,000 points, respectively.

Accuracy Takes the Prize

Another category with a clear-cut case of accuracy winning the day is Unlimited, Low Power (UL). Will, AA4NC, who has in the past used a club call (W4MR) but has always played at home, is the winner here. Thanks to his Clean Sweep, he was already winning before log checking, but KB7Q’s extra 30 QSOs meant that had Gene only matched Will’s ac-

curacy, he’d have won by about 2000 points.

It’s Will’s first time to win, after finishing in the top three and top five in the past. He attributes part of this to a recent focus on copying correctly. “It is interesting that this win basically came down to more accuracy,” he said. “Since the accuracy numbers have been published in recent years, I have been interested in comparing my numbers with others that I’m competing against and trying to consciously improve my accuracy.

“My recipe for increased accuracy has simply been to not let the quest for rate stop me for asking for a fill or repeat. In prior years, I was more hesitant to slow down and ask when I wasn’t sure because I was overly focused on rate. In contests with complex exchanges such as Sweepstakes, accuracy has to be your focus.”

Similarly in Unlimited, High Power (UH), Dave, K1ZZ, was winning this category going into log checking but, consider that Dave missed a section compared to second-place operator Craig, K9CT, who scored a sweep. If you transpose their error rates, Craig would have won.

Still, Dave is humble in victory. “The only advice I can offer about accuracy is to copy what is sent and to ask for a repeat if you’re not sure. Sweepstakes victory margins are so tight and Sunday afternoons are so slow, that it makes no sense to sacrifice accuracy for rate when so many logs are available for cross-checking.”

Good Friends and a Good Score

For multioperator stations, the contest is about the camaraderie of coming together on a common goal. The Multioperator, High Power (MH) winning team at W6YI took 2013 off, but wanted to resume their winning streak. Jim, W6YI, had a stellar crew lined up. “This time, three of us were veterans of WRTC2014. WRTC champ Dan, N6MJ, had to miss all day Sunday but really smoked on Saturday. John, K6AM, was the glue to keep us on track as we all had some missing time due to other commitments. John’s partner, David, N6AN, kept us running on Saturday. Marko, N5ZO, helped us on Sunday and kept our rate up while Dennis, N6KI, was our night relief.” Another winning streak, coming right up!

For Multioperator, Low Power (ML) winner VE4DR, the goal was a reunion of operators from as far away as British Columbia, Montana, and the Toronto, Ontario area. It’s been a while since a VE4 was at the top of the national record charts, so installing themselves

as a new Canadian record holder felt especially good. That they did it surrounded by a treasure trove of Amateur Radio history, operating from the station at the Manitoba Amateur Radio Museum in Austin, Manitoba, about 85 miles west of Winnipeg, made it that much more special.

Eric, VA7DZ, said the group was initially motivated to operate from Manitoba due to the then-rarity of the section. “It’s still relatively rare, although much less so recently with the formation of Radiosport Manitoba,” Eric said. (Full disclosure: the author is a founding member.) “By operating at the Manitoba Amateur Radio Museum, we were able to support and attract a little more publicity for this wonderful national museum on such a scenic and attractive site. It helped that the weather was warm and sunny!”

The operation brought together Eric; Fred, KE7X; Vic, VE3YT; Bill, VE3BXI, and Chet, VE3CFK. They used the museum’s tribander at 50 feet and brought and assembled a 40 meter four-square to improve their 7 MHz numbers.

Big Ham on Campus

The tiniest category in Sweepstakes is usually home to the epic battle between Stanford and Hesston: the big-name university versus the small but proud faith-based community college. While the battle may still have been epic, it didn’t involve Stanford (W6YX) this year. Bob, W0BH, who has often piloted Hesston’s K0HC to the top, was on track to take the title again, but playing spoiler this time was Steve, AC6T, operating at the University of California Santa Barbara station, W6RFU.

Like most such battles, this one came right down to the wire. Past it, actually, as Bob won in raw scores, but it was Steve who prevailed once the log-checking was complete. “I was so surprised I ended up in first place,” Steve said. “K0HC was well ahead in QSOs. Also, I assumed W6YX [Stanford] would enter in the S category. If that was the case, we were toast.” As it turned out, W6YX entered the Unlimited, High Power category and W6RFU grabbed the top spot.

On Your Marks, Get Set, Sweep!

None of the overall records fell and scores were down almost across the board, but the 2014 CW Sweepstakes still managed to write some compelling stories, including 102 Clean Sweeps of all 83 sections. The 2015 contest runs from November 7 through the 9. However (and whatever) you choose to operate, have fun and log a story of your own!