



News and Events, September 2026 Edition

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

August gave the Tennessee Contest Group plenty to be proud of—both on the air and in front of a room full of contesters.

The August NAQP CW produced some serious TCG numbers. VE5MX, operating remotely as NJ4P, posted 1,044 QSOs, 276 multipliers and 288,144 points—sixth among the posted Single-Op Assisted Low-Power scores. Kirk, K4RO, made 1,194 QSOs and 231 multipliers for 275,814 points, placing 11th in the very competitive unassisted Low-Power field.

TCG 33 Fiddles combined NJ4P/VE5MX, K4RO, N6NT, W4CMG and AC6ZM for 895,084 claimed points. Other notable TCG scores included N6NT at 188,062, WF7T at 134,400, K1GU at 100,264, WK9M at 87,210 and AD4EB at 87,285. TCG fielded five teams and put a lot of members on the air.

The biggest team story came in NAQP SSB, where TCG Scorched Earth Alpha lived up to its name. The lineup was AC1NU, operated by LU9ESD, with 304,290 points; K6JO with 214,500; AD4EB with 171,760; N0GJW operating NJ4P with 115,624; and AC6ZM with 37,170.

Scorched Earth Alpha's claimed total was 843,344 points—379,208 ahead of the next-highest team total posted to 3830. To put that performance into perspective, even if AC1NU's team-leading 304,290 points were removed entirely, the remaining four operators would still have led the posted team standings with 539,054 points. I had never made teams before.. So I wanted to have some fun with it.

Individually, AC1NU and K6JO posted the two highest unassisted Single-Op Low-Power scores, while AD4EB was third in Single-Op Assisted Low Power. That was one hell of a team effort.

There were plenty of other substantial August scores. In WAE CW, AD4EB posted an outstanding 929,616 points, followed by W5MX with 650,760, N6NT with 501,030, K0EJ with 361,242 and WV4P with 351,000. In the SARTG WW RTTY Contest, WV4P posted 773,775 and AA4DD added 192,705. TCG members were active all month across virtually every contest on the calendar.

TCG was also extremely well represented at Mini Contest University during the Huntsville Hamfest and ARRL National Convention. Four TCG members were among the presenters. Trina, NR4L, and Ron, WV4P, presented "Station Building for 2026 and Beyond" in the

Contest Station Design session. Kirk, K4RO, presented “Contest Operating Techniques and Strategies,” and Jim, AD4EB, presented “Mobile Contesting.” Kirk and Jim's presentations were spectacular, as I'm sure anyone that attended will agree.

All of those presentations are now available on the Contest University website. If you missed CTU Huntsville—download the slides and take a look. Having four of our members teaching at Contest University says a great deal about the knowledge and experience inside this club. Now it is September, and September is big.

The Tennessee QSO Party is Sunday, September 6, from 1700Z until 0300Z. This is our contest, hosted by our club, and every TCG member needs to make a serious effort to participate. Operate all ten hours if you can. If you cannot, give it every minute you have. Tennessee stations need to get on, call CQ and hand out counties. Members outside Tennessee can chase counties, work the mobiles and help generate activity.

[Grab your reader's
attention with a great

We cannot expect the rest of the contesting world to support the Tennessee QSO Party if our own members sit on the sidelines.

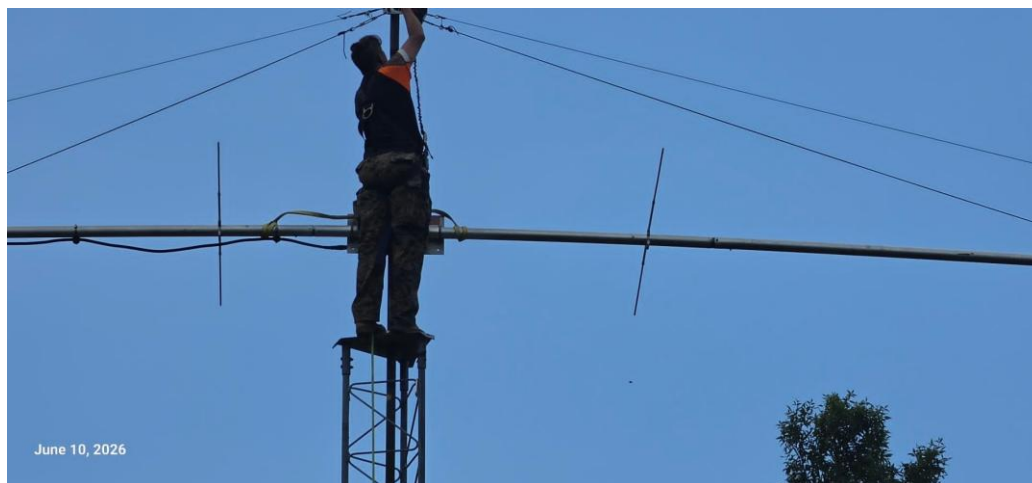
The K4TCG bonus station will be operating from NJ4P, so listen for us! Please work K4TCG, encourage others to participate, submit your log, post on the Online Scoreboard and post your score to 3830. Every QSO and every submitted log helps. We will be adding some emphasis on RTTY this year.. So there are more bonus points to be had !

September also brings a packed calendar of sprints, QSO parties, WAE SSB, Scandinavian Activity Contest CW and, on September 26–27, the beginning of the CQ WW season with CQ WW RTTY. TCG has a deep bench of experienced RTTY operators, and we should make our presence known. Start making your category, station and operating plans now.

August demonstrated that TCG can compete, organize winning teams and teach contesting at the national level. September is our opportunity to show what the entire club can do together. Get on the air, support TCG and make some noise.

Ron, WV4P

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Getting
ready to
contest:

NR4L
installing a
6m Yagi

CONTEST ACTIVITY: Here is a selected list, as of this publication, of those who put up scores on [3830 Scores Summary](#) in June:

North American QSO Party, CW

Single Op LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Team
K4RO	SO2R		1194	231	10	275,814	TCG 33 Fiddles
K1GU			604	166	8.2	100,264	TCG 33 Mandolins
WK9M			570	153	10	87,210	TCG 33 Banjos
W4NZ	SO2R		344	114	4	39,216	TCG 33 Dobros
K4KYN			250	110	6	27,500	TCG 33 Mandolins
W4UT			250	95	5.5	23,750	TCG 33 Dulcimers
K4AL		x	197	100	5:27	19,700	TCG 33 Mandolins
K4KO			202	86	5	17,372	TCG 33 Dobros
KS4X			125	73	3.5	9,125	TCG 33 Banjos
KV8Q			135	57	3	7,695	TCG 33 Dulcimers
AC4G			106	51	2:14	5,406	TCG
KT4RH			85	56	6:17	4,760	TCG
K4DZR			76	42	3	3,192	TCG
KØEJ			52	34	1	1,768	TCG 33 Banjos
K9QJS			40	28	2	1,120	TCG
WV4P		x	6	6	.5	36	TCG

Single Op Assisted LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Team
NJ4P(VE5MX)	SO2R	x	1044	276	10	288,144	TCG 33 Fiddles
N6NT			931	202	10	188,062	TCG 33 Fiddles
WF7T			640	210	10	134,400	TCG 33 Dulcimers
AD4EB			529	165	4	87,285	TCG 33 Dulcimers
W4CMG			516	150	9:07	77,400	TCG 33 Fiddles
AC6ZM			432	152	10:00	65,664	TCG 33 Fiddles
K3IE			325	108	5	35,100	TCG 33 Dobros
W4SSF			263	109	6:30	28,667	TCG 33 Banjos
K3FH			230	99	5	22,770	TCG 33 Dulcimers
K4DXV			175	98	04:47	17,150	TCG 33 Banjos
NS4X			158	97	3	15,326	TCG
WØSD(KTØW)			95	59	2:14	5,605	TCG
WV4AM			24	17	00:40	408	TCG 33 Mandolins
K4HWS			11	10	1.1	110	TCG

Single Op Assisted Youth LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Team
WV4AM			24	17	00:40	408	TCG 33 Mandolins

SARTG WW RTTY Contest

SOAB HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Pts	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
WV4P	2BSIQ	x	365	4525	171	12	773,775	TCG
AA4DD			176	2215	87	7	192,705	TCG
WN8Y			109	1355	19	10	75,880	TCG
W4SDX			89	50180	52	2.5	50,180	TCG
AC6ZM			24	270	18	1	4,860	TCG
NR4L		x	10	115	14	1	1,610	TCG

SOAB LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Pts	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
AA4CS			76	830	27	2.5	42,330	TCG
K4HWS			57	650	44	2.5	28,600	TCG
W4CMG			47	555	36	04:32	19,980	TCG

WAE DX Contest, CW

Single Op HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	QTCs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
AD4EB			1087	1086	428	33	929,616	TCG
W5MX			872	869	374	21	650,760	TCG
N6NT			866	844	293	20:32	501,030	TCG
KØEJ	SO2R		641	640	282	11	361,242	TCG
WV4P		x	505	495	351	23	351,000	TCG
AC6ZM			184	179	174	10	63,162	TCG
NS4X			142	141	145	5	41,035	TCG
W4NZ			132	131	105	5	27,615	TCG
K4RO			114	101	104	1	23,192	TCG
W4CMG			202	90	103	06:15	20,806	TCG
NR4L		x	41	37	78	1	6,084	TCG
W4SDX			57	42	57	3	5,415	TCG
K4DXV			31	0	59	2	1,829	TCG
K1GU			16	10	32	1	832	TCG

Single Op LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	QTCs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
K3IE			118	105	134	5	29,882	TCG
K3FH			50	45	42	2.5	3,990	TCG
W4SSF			24	10	48	2:21	1,632	TCG
K4HWS			6	0	6	.3	72	TCG

North American QSO Party, SSB

Single Op LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Team
K6JO(@WA6TQT)	2BSIQ	x	1100	195	10	214,500	TCG Scorched Earth-Alpha
KØEJ	SO2R		233	73	3	17,009	TCG Scorched Earth-Bravo
W4SDX			223	68	4	15,164	TCG Scorched Earth-Charlie
K3IE			185	66	4	12,210	TCG Scorched Earth-Charlie
W4UT			150	68	4.5	10,200	TCG
K4HWS			116	76	5.2	8,816	TCG Scorched Earth-Charlie
AI4DB			111	67		7,437	TCG
KS4X			110	58	5	6,380	TCG Scorched Earth-Charlie
WA4JA			51	35	2	1,785	TCG
AC4G			45	35	1	1,575	TCG
AA4CS			31	28	2.0	868	TCG
AA4DD			20	10	1	200	TCG

Single Op Assisted HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Team
WN8Y			9	6	1	54	TCG
NR4L		x	4	4	1	16	TCG

Single Op Assisted LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Team
AD4EB	SO2R		904	190	10	171,760	TCG Scorched Earth-Alpha
AC6ZM			315	118	10:00	37,170	TCG Scorched Earth-Alpha
W4NZ			164	88	5	14,432	TCG Scorched Earth-Bravo
NS4X			142	78	3	11,076	TCG
WV4P		x	79	60	4	4,740	TCG
W4SSF			75	44	3	3,300	TCG
K4DXV			31	22	01:55	682	TCG Scorched Earth-Bravo
W4CMG			6	6		36	TCG

Hawaii QSO Party

SOAB HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	CW	Qs	Ph	Qs	Dig	Qs	Mults	Op	Time	Score	Club
WV4P		x		7	0	0	6	2				108	TCG
W4CMG				6	0	0	6					108	TCG
W4NZ				6	0	0	6	1				108	TCG
AD4EB				3	0	0	2	1				18	TCG

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YO DX HF Contest

SO CW HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	CW	Qs	Ph	Qs	Mults	Op	Time	Score	Club
AD4EB				136	0	70	2			37,730	TCG
WV4P		x		8	0	8	1			256	TCG

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World Wide Digi DX Contest

SO/Multi Signal LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op	Time	Score	Club
AA4RY(WV4P)		x	1061	187	22		394,196	TCG

SO/Single Signal HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op	Time	Score	Club
K4EA		x	171	40	16		15,440	TCG
NS4X			151	37	3		10,989	TCG
AC6ZM			45	24	3:00		2,424	TCG

SO/Single Signal LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op	Time	Score	Club
WA4WZR			273	85	9:27		39,525	TCG
NT6X(@K4EA)			140	29			10,672	TCG
AA4DD			112	47	4		10,058	TCG
K4HWS			110	40	5.75		8,360	TCG
K3FH			30	16	2		672	TCG

150 17,614,109 14,360,565 9,511
422 3,529,334 3,767,550 3,856
400 29,529,080 20,600,646 14,541
710 4,352,334 3,767,550 3,856
458 5,512,832 5,119,488 4,065
630 1,120
000

3830scores.com
Contest Score Rumors

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Kansas QSO Party

SO CW HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	CW	Qs	Ph	Qs	Dig	Qs	Mults	Op	Time	Score	Club
W4NZ				243	0	0	86	8				63,794	TCG
AD4EB				118	0	0	43	3.5				15,193	TCG
AC6ZM				66	0	0	32	2				6,436	TCG
W4CMG				41	0	0	23	1.5				2,929	TCG
K1GU				29	0	0	23	1				2,001	TCG
WV4P		x		5	0	0	4	.5				60	TCG

SO Mixed HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	CW	Qs	Ph	Qs	Dig	Qs	Mults	Op	Time	Score	Club
K4DXV				24	14	0	18	01:52				1,800	TCG

SO Mixed LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	CW	Qs	Ph	Qs	Dig	Qs	Mults	Op	Time	Score	Club
W4UT				153	41	0	74	9				40,134	TCG
K4KYN				60	5	0	35	4.5				6,650	TCG
KØEJ				40	36	0	34	1.5				6,528	TCG
K3IE				13	4	0	17	1				697	TCG
KEØL				15	2	0	13	.5				637	TCG
K9HIM				8	4	0	11	1:00				352	TCG

SO SSB HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	CW	Qs	Ph	Qs	Dig	Qs	Mults	Op	Time	Score	Club
AI4DB				0	74	0	33					4,884	TCG
WN8Y				0	11	0	22	1				198	TCG

SO SSB LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	CW	Qs	Ph	Qs	Dig	Qs	Mults	Op	Time	Score	Club
WA4JA				0	92	0	42	4				7,728	TCG

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Ohio QSO Party

Single Op HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	CW	Qs	Ph	Qs	CW	Mults	Ph	Mults	Op	Time	Score	Club
AD4EB				78	0	36	0	2					5,616	TCG
W4NZ				46	0	30	0	2					2,760	TCG
WV4P		x		12	14	10	12	2					836	TCG
AA4DD				14	0	12	0	1					336	TCG

Single Op LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	CW	Qs	Ph	Qs	CW	Mults	Ph	Mults	Op	Time	Score	Club
KV8Q				290	0	82	0	6					47,560	TCG
W4UT				89	11	37	9	5					8,694	TCG
K3IE				68	0	39	0	4					5,304	TCG
K4KYN				40	0	26	0	3					2,080	TCG
W3TB				27	0	22	0	1:00					1,188	TCG
WA4JA				0	23	0	17	2					391	TCG

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Didn't see your score listed? Next time, make sure to submit your score summary to 3830scores.com, and use the pull-down menu under "Club" to select "Tennessee Contest Group." Of course, it's also important to make sure that the Cabrillo file that you submit to the contest sponsor also contains the following line: CLUB: Tennessee Contest Group. This will ensure that your score will contribute to the TCG club aggregate score.

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Tennessee QSO Party
September 6, 2026
[Click Here to Activate Your County!](#)

(Editor's note: See the full article starting on page 19)
Put Tennessee on the air.

TCG's current TNQP site says the event is hosted by the Tennessee Contest Group, occurs on the first Sunday in September, and generates tens of thousands of contacts between Tennessee operators and amateurs around the world.

That might be the cleanest description there is.

SEPTEMBER 6, 2026

And now it's our turn.

The **2026 Tennessee QSO Party is Sunday, September 6.**

The scheduled operating period is:

1700Z September 6 through 0300Z September 7
Noon until 10:00 PM CDT

The contest is worldwide. Tennessee stations are the hunted stations. Fixed stations, mobiles and rovers are part of the game. CW, phone and digital operation are supported, and the basic exchange remains signal report plus county for Tennessee stations and signal report plus location for everyone else.

But forget the rules for a second.

You don't have to make 1,700 QSOs.

You don't have to build a rover.

You don't need stacked Yagis.

You don't need to operate all ten hours.

If you've never contested before, get on and make **ten QSOs**.

If you're a casual tester, make fifty.

If you've never operated CW in a contest, try it.

If your county isn't usually active, **put it on the air.**

If you're willing to drive, pick a few counties somebody needs and go mobile or rover.

If you've got a serious station, then quit screwing around and see what it'll actually do.

And if you're outside Tennessee, come hunt us.

There are **95 counties**, and we're going to do our damndest to put every one of them on the air.

SIXTY-TWO YEARS LATER

Somewhere in Tennessee in 1964, a group of amateurs decided it would be fun to hold a Tennessee QSO Party.

They could not possibly have imagined what amateur radio would look like in 2026.
They didn't have SDRs.
They didn't have packet spots.
They didn't have N1MM.
They didn't have remote stations.
They didn't have RBN.
They didn't have the Internet.
Most of them probably would have stared at a FlexRadio for ten minutes looking for the VFO knob.
But they understood the important part.

Get on the radio. Find somebody. Make a contact. Compete a little. Travel somewhere interesting. Put your part of Tennessee on the air. And have fun doing it.

Sixty-two years later, that part hasn't changed.

The Tennessee QSO Party has survived different sponsors, different rules, different dates, at least one disappearance, a resurrection, changing technology, terrible propagation, great propagation, new modes, new categories and generations of operators.

TCG didn't create it.

TCG rescued it.

And for roughly three decades, members of this club have kept it alive, promoted it, operated it, moved through counties for it, checked logs, made awards and turned it into one of the events that represents contesting in Tennessee.

Who exactly runs it today?

I'm still working on that.

Maybe by next year's newsletter I'll figure it out.

But I know exactly who's responsible for making it worth running:

Us.

So on **Sunday, September 6**, turn the radio on.

Call CQ.

Put your county in somebody's log.

Chase a mobile.

Work somebody you've never worked before.

Break a record.

Give a new tester his first pileup.

And help write the next page of a Tennessee amateur-radio tradition that started more than six decades ago.

CQ CQ CQ TNQP DE K4TCG...

de Ron WV4P

(Editor's note: See the full article starting on page 19)

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ARRL America250 Worked All States <https://www.arrl.org/america250-was>
73 de Cathy W4CMG

ARRL is celebrating a year-long Worked-All-States operating event celebrating America's 250th Anniversary. This is in conjunction with ARRL's 2026 Year of The Club celebration.

ARRL Tennessee Section Activity

The ARRL America250 W1AW/4 Tennessee second run will be September 16 - 22. Our week in June was very successful, with ~4000 QSOs total, including SSB, CW and Digital modes. The weeks for each state run from Wednesday through Tuesday UTC, so our activities start on Tuesday night.

The ACTIVATOR TN Section sign-up sheet is now available to those who participated in the June 2026 event at the link below. PLEASE only sign up for the shifts that you are able to participate in – one hour at a time. I recognize that the bands have not been fully cooperative recently:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1U5c7uFodwhcBBC9eyBNkmpY5luXNXICpKubOCilxBr0/edit?gid=0#gid=0>

IMPORTANT: PLEASE DO NOT OVERWRITE ANY SCHEDULED TIMES. Many of the shifts will be opened up as we get closer and various club stations report which bands/modes they plan to operate. Once that happens, there will be slots available. Recurring late and night and overnight shifts will be built out as we get a wider group of operators who are willing to operate, but if there are one-off shifts per band and mode, please include them in the spreadsheet.

Note that we have secured permission for W1AW/4 TN to use the station that will be set up at WD4DXCC (SEDCO) for part of the week, so if you are at the event, there will be a special sign-up on site for those who wish to have a run as W1AW/4 TN.

As for any event, there can only be one operator per band per mode (CW, SSB, Digital) on the air at any one time, so there was a lot of coordination to ensure that operators were scheduled as such – and stayed within their operating times and modes! I'll be looking more closely at club reservations so that we keep some slots free for individual operators.

de Cathy W4CMG

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Corporate Casuals – TCG Logo Items

Corporate Casuals now uses what's called a /*sharelink */in which they share the TCG logo with club members through their webstore platform. The link below will take you to their website and prompt you to create an account with them. The page will look like the screenshot below (and will show the logo at the bottom of the screen).

You can add a personal callsign as a personalization ("NAMES" icon in the product) and select the placement location on the purchased item (e.g., polo, bag, hat, etc.). Once the account is created, the logo will automatically upload to the account for use:

<http://www.CorporateCasuals.com/logoShare/tennessecontestgroup>



Past Hamfest Memories: TCG at Huntsville:



Upcoming Hamfests and Conventions:

W4DXCC DX and Contest Convention by SEDCO

- DATE: September 19, 2026
- LOCATION: LeConte Hotel and Convention Center (Formerly the MainStay Suites) Ascend, 410 Pine Mountain Rd, TN
- W4DXCC is back in Pigeon Forge TN after a brief break and a reboot of the Convention. The Hotel is available for September 18th and 19th with a special Convention price. Expect a new experience that is tailored to old and new amateur radio operators. We will also be having a Flea Market on Saturday morning.
- See the lineup of Presentations [here](#)

Hamfest Chattanooga

- Oct 15-17, 2026 – <https://w4am.net/hf2026/>

An ARRL-Sanctioned Hamfest



Hamfest Chattanooga 2026

Fri. Oct. 16 & Sat. Oct. 17, 2026

Ham & GMRS Radio Shopping, Fun & Education	Inside & Outside Vendors Spaces / Outside Flea Market
Forums & Door Prizes	FCC Testing Sessions
Exciting, New Venue: The Colonnade Civic Center catoosacolonnade.com	Free Event Parking Free Overnight Vendor RV Parking
2.5 Miles from I-75 GA-2 Exit 350	Fun for All Handicap Accessible

Check Our Website for the Most Up-To-Date Info:

HAMFESTCHATTANOOGA.NET

hamfest@w4am.net - 423-591-5091

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My road to WRTC 2026....de K0EJ

The story is long and with post WRTC travel, I didn't have enough time to get the whole thing written down before Cathy wanted to get the newsletter out. Part 1 will focus on the period before the contest. Part 2 will focus on Saturday and Sunday (contest days). Part 3 will be some post-WRTC stories and reflections.

Part 2: The contest

After the unseasonably warm weather, a front came through Friday evening and Saturday morning arrived with partly cloudy skies, breezy, and cool. It was finally a good night's sleep. A great omen! Roli and Phillip decided to leave HQ around 9am vice the previously planned 10am with a contest start time of 1pm local (1200Z). We made a quick stop for provisions at a grocery store (get what you want vice the organizers giving you something you may or may not want). Everyone has different eating habits for a contest. I got a few bananas, some OJ, breakfast bars, yogurt, and some trail mix. Water was already provided.

Shortly after leaving the store, we found that the route used to get to the site on Friday was closed for road maintenance. The detour route was anything but clear. We tried a few paths to try and get GPS to find a different route but it kept wanting us to do a U-turn and use the closed route. After some looking at a map and conferring with HQ for fear that we might find another road closure, we had a new route. A bit longer but not closed! I won't give you a blow-by-blow, suffice to say we finally arrived shortly before noon. We unsealed the tent, uncovered the operating position got the generator running with help from the site manager, and the team was in business. I tried calling HQ to let them know we had arrived and to thank them for the navigation assistance. The call dropped but was able to text them with our update. We were using an old Nokia flip-phone – used in prior WRTCs. Texting was not easy!

The team was making Qs to make sure all was working...well most all was working. Their testing was not as methodical as it could've been as a few things weren't discovered until the contest. I collected cellphones at T-30 minutes and handed Phillip the callsign envelope at T-15 minutes. He opened it and MB3G was theirs. Not a bad call – but not the best either. They updated their F-key messages, I wrote out a copy of the callsign for posting at the operating position, Roli made new voice keyer messages and they were ready. Just waiting for start time. They decided they would start with Roli on 20SSB and Phillip on 15CW. I gave both VFO dials a good spin and we left the tent. One minute to go, I wished them Good Luck and at T-2seconds, they sat down and strapped on their headphones just at T-0seconds struck.

Before I talk about the contest, let me address a bit as to how Roli and Phillip got there as a team: LY4A competed from area EU #1 which basically included Scandinavia and the Baltic states. Roli finished 3rd behind ES7GM and LY4L. Only 2 Team Leaders(TLs) were assigned to EU#1 so Roli just missed the cut. Phillip competed from EU #3 which included Denmark, Germany, Czech Republic, Switzerland and HB0 (spell that one yourself). Selection criteria were such that only 1 TL could come from any one country, with DL being an exception with 2. There were many OL/OK and DL stations that finished above Phillip, but the selection process had to go to the #29 finisher to meet selection rules-HB9ARF. Phillip recognized his selection was somewhat of a fluke but to be the 1st HB9 to ever compete, he was not going to pass that up. Who can blame him?! How Roli and Phillip connected was not clear to me but it seemed Roli was planning to go one way or another and since he was willing to provide the station components, it was an easy choice for Phillip. The team did one practice contest

together, the Italian ARI test, at Roli's QTH running 100W, using antennas similar to WRTC and using WRTC logging constraints. The 2, as operators, are very different. Phillip is almost 100% CW and uses WinTest, Roli does both CW and SSB and REALLY likes SSB and uses N1MM. Roli is CAPITAL TYPE A, while Phillip is quite laid back. As different as they were, they were nevertheless a team. Roli made most of the tactical calls on bands/modes/yagi direction.

Now on to the contest: You may recall conditions leading up to the contest were mediocre at best. But, just like the weather, contest time was quite different. Rates were terrific and Es on 10 and 15 sure helped. WRTC organizers really expected this would be a 40M/20M slugfest, never expecting the winners to reach close to 6000 Qs. MB3G started on 20 SSB and 15 CW with the beam pointed East. Roli was...rolling...Phillip was steady. One thing to note, Phil's CW speed was typically 30-32 WPM. Roli ran at about 38 WPM. A blow-by-blow is pretty well covered by the rate sheet though it doesn't split out CW vs SSB. They kept the beam East a lot more than I probably would have, seemingly seeking rate vice QSO points. With only a 2L yagi (3L on 10M), not a lot of gain or front/back, they got plenty of calls off-direction. I don't recall them ever moving the beam south of East, and seldom south of West either. Looking at the great-circle map centered on London (close enough), I really expected more beam turning. For stations in EU, it's more like a USA domestic contest on 40M. Spending some time on 40M early resulted in great rate, just not a lot of points. Being as far north as we were, the night was short. 80M DX time was brief. Thankfully QRN was not as brutal as July in TN!

A few interesting events over the contest period. It got fairly cool (50's) during the night, and quite windy. We did not hear any of the shooting our site manager warned us about, however at around 10PM or so, we heard this horrendous machine noise outside the tent, getting louder..and LOUDER! Fearing we may get run over by something, or worse, run over the antennas, I went outside to investigate. Did I mention we were nestled around some farm fields? Well, it apparently was harvest time and a huge combine/threshing machine was starting to do laps around the fields. This continued throughout the night. There was a continuous drone, with QRM peaks about every 10 minutes when closest to the tent. It was annoying and made SSB ops somewhat problematic. It was THAT loud.

At around midnight, the generator died. I called the site manager which went to voicemail. I then called HQ and reported the problem. The site manager arrived within about 5 minutes. The generator gas tank was empty and the keep-full tank still had gas. The problem was the keep-full system relied on the generator tank syphoning from the external tank as gas was consumed. Apparently, the gasket on the generator tank/external tank hose deteriorated and allowed air into the generator tank. No vacuum=no syphon=no gas moving. Actual down time was only about 20 minutes but felt like an hour. Things were restarted and the game was back on. The only other equipment-related issue was discovering the left station 10M position on the 2x6 antenna switch was bad. That was fairly quickly worked around on the fly and served to be just a minor inconvenience.

Though windy, we didn't suffer any tent stake failures like another team did who almost lost their tent. We did suffer some damage – see picture below. I discovered this shortly after sunrise. No one was hurt in this potentially fatal event 😊

I will not do any lengthy critique of the team's performance. I have included some stats from higher finishing teams and you can draw your own conclusions, the most obvious one being not enough emphasis on working 5-pointers (e.g. USA) than 2-pointers (EU). Though they did not do as well as most other teams, 4800+ Qs with 100W and minimal antennas is still pretty remarkable. Even though I would've done a few things differently, I can't declare I would've done a whole lot better. I listened to

The planned SSB spotting by HQ did not work as planned. Several stations (MB3G included) had issues with the score reporting system. Several attempts to get it going were ineffective. Manual spotting was too cumbersome so was abandoned. Even manual score updates could not be entered into the scoreboard system. I did check how the team was doing occasionally. They remained low in the leaderboard throughout most of the contest.



TENNESSEE
TCG
CONTEST GROUP

Summary: "official" results

Band	CW Qs	Ph Qs	Mults
------	-------	-------	-------

80:	376	141	73
40:	773	244	83
20:	1134	597	99
15:	658	351	83
10:	355	176	49

Total: **3296 1509 387** Total Score **4,673,025**

68.6% CW 31.4% SSB 2.51 pt/Q

2.2% error rate

Day ▾	Hour ▾	QSOs								
		80m ▾	40m ▾	20m ▾	15m ▾	10m ▾	All ▾	Accum. ▾	Pts ▾	Avg. Pts ▾
11-07_2026	12:00Z			219	139		358	358	818	2.3
	13:00Z			136	81	24	241	599	542	2.2
	14:00Z			164	72	37	273	872	642	2.4
	15:00Z		34	90	76	81	281	1,153	583	2.1
	16:00Z		138	28	79	2	247	1,400	545	2.2
	17:00Z		3	30	59	148	240	1,640	531	2.2
	18:00Z			131		137	268	1,908	650	2.4
	19:00Z			142	77	31	250	2,158	857	3.4
	20:00Z		45	55	97	3	200	2,358	673	3.4
	21:00Z	60	116	3	56		235	2,593	626	2.7
	22:00Z	98	61				159	2,752	348	2.2
	23:00Z	127	126	29			282	3,034	720	2.6
12-07_2026	00:00Z	75	49	83			207	3,241	675	3.3
	01:00Z	68	109				177	3,418	591	3.3
	02:00Z	30	36	74			140	3,558	517	3.7
	03:00Z	63	66	17			146	3,704	430	2.9
	04:00Z	7	76	27	2		112	3,816	377	3.4
	05:00Z	1	69	36	14		120	3,936	306	2.5
	06:00Z		59	70	19		148	4,084	362	2.4
	07:00Z		52	110	23		185	4,269	415	2.2
	08:00Z		10	84	48	5	147	4,416	324	2.2
	09:00Z			90	41	70	201	4,617	423	2.1
	10:00Z			39	81	6	126	4,743	276	2.2
	11:00Z			103	65	1	169	4,912	386	2.3

TOP 10 COUNTRIES

Fed. Rep. of Germany		874
United States		665
England		358
Poland		296
Italy		292
European Russia		280
Czech Republic		257
Hungary		165
Ukraine		127
Slovak Republic		96

93 different countries

MB5O (#2 DJ5MW and DM5EE)

Day ▾	Hour ▾	QSOs								
		80m ▾	40m ▾	20m ▾	15m ▾	10m ▾	All ▾	Accum. ▾	Pts ▾	Avg. Pts ▾
11-07_2026	12:00Z			212	145	56	413	413	1,009	2.4
	13:00Z			173	135	9	317	730	862	2.7
	14:00Z			158	138	50	346	1,076	785	2.3
	15:00Z		12	158	107	6	283	1,359	860	3.0
	16:00Z		94	165	64	9	332	1,691	784	2.4
	17:00Z			13	118	167	298	1,989	689	2.3
	18:00Z		86	34	175	24	319	2,308	1,046	3.3
	19:00Z			115	134	32	281	2,589	889	3.2
	20:00Z	86	1	156	59		302	2,891	946	3.1
	21:00Z	93	119	74	47		333	3,224	930	2.8
	22:00Z	81	182	37	4		304	3,528	791	2.6
	23:00Z	103	106	79	8		296	3,824	913	3.1
12-07_2026	00:00Z		147	140			287	4,111	1,168	4.1
	01:00Z	73	81	52			206	4,317	748	3.6
	02:00Z	75	23	65			163	4,480	536	3.3
	03:00Z	58	80	15			153	4,633	474	3.1
	04:00Z	25	96	32			153	4,786	453	3.0
	05:00Z		76	47	16		139	4,925	356	2.6
	06:00Z	1	76	34	17	1	129	5,054	339	2.6
	07:00Z	1	77	72	33	13	196	5,250	428	2.2
	08:00Z			112	46	32	190	5,440	392	2.1
	09:00Z			61	53	53	167	5,607	364	2.2
	10:00Z			54	81	28	163	5,770	383	2.3
	11:00Z		1	82	62	11	156	5,926	336	2.2

105 countries

TOP 10 COUNTRIES		
United States		1,165
Fed. Rep. of Germany		956
England		456
Italy		355
Poland		283
European Russia		276
Czech Republic		265
Hungary		167
Ukraine		155
Asiatic Russia		114

80:	436	153	71	
40:	984	268	94	
20:	1463	658	119	
15:	1108	321	108	
10:	307	182	62	
Total:	4298	1582	387	Total Score 7,369,782

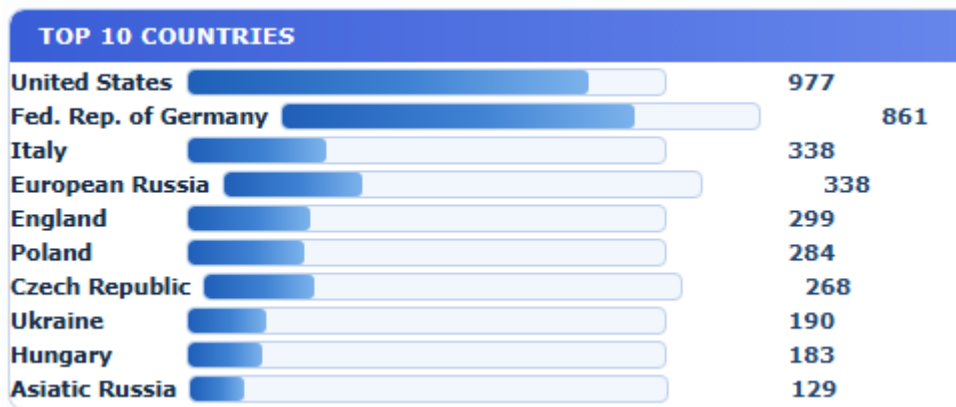
3.1% CW 26.9% SSB 2.76 pt/Q

0.7% error rate

MB4G (#4 N6MJ and KL9A)

Day ▾	Hour ▾	QSOs								
		80m ▾	40m ▾	20m ▾	15m ▾	10m ▾	All ▾	Accum. ▾	Pts ▾	Avg. Pts ▾
11-07_2026	12:00Z			172	175		347	347	1,054	3.0
	13:00Z			144	117	23	284	631	694	2.4
	14:00Z			157	54	60	271	902	719	2.7
	15:00Z			153	23	124	300	1,202	657	2.2
	16:00Z			150	74	22	246	1,448	648	2.6
	17:00Z			120	70	33	223	1,671	563	2.5
	18:00Z		61	51	164	21	297	1,968	963	3.2
	19:00Z		72	125	64	64	325	2,293	776	2.4
	20:00Z		66	137	62		265	2,558	935	3.5
	21:00Z	116	190		25		331	2,889	752	2.3
	22:00Z	147	146	1	3		297	3,186	648	2.2
	23:00Z	80	85	147			312	3,498	1,059	3.4
12-07_2026	00:00Z	48	97	99	1		245	3,743	928	3.8
	01:00Z	121	112				233	3,976	814	3.5
	02:00Z	86	87	1			174	4,150	552	3.2
	03:00Z	56	73	6			135	4,285	399	3.0
	04:00Z	4	79	43	2		128	4,413	424	3.3
	05:00Z		65	49	3		117	4,530	297	2.5
	06:00Z		53	91	15		159	4,689	402	2.5
	07:00Z		40	117	16		173	4,862	379	2.2
	08:00Z		4	81	93	30	208	5,070	449	2.2
	09:00Z				99	92	191	5,261	415	2.2
	10:00Z			68	110	15	193	5,454	434	2.2
	11:00Z			120	82		202	5,656	455	2.3

107 countries



Band	CW Qs	Ph Qs	Mults	
80:	499	159	72	
40:	1049	180	97	
20:	1425	590	126	
15:	971	275	105	
10:	351	132	62	
Total:	4295	1336	462	Total Score 7,062,132

76.3% CW 23.7% SSB 2.71 pt/Q

0.4% error rate. They won the trophy for best error rate of all teams.



Sunday morning



The “scoring computer” was tied into the station LAN and was supposed to send logged data back to HQ via cellphone link for the scoreboard and for automatic SSB spotting. Several stations (MB3G included) had issues with it.



Source of the horrendous noise during the night. It continued for a few hours after sunrise.



Recall the picture from last month. The wind was pretty intense during the night. No one was hurt!

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UPCOMING CONTESTS

The following table is a list of the upcoming contests which qualify for the TCG Most Radioactive Award. For more information on the MRA, please refer to K4TCG.ORG under the TCG INFO section. Thanks to Jim AD4EB for this list, and to Ted W4NZ for administering the TCG Most Radioactive Award.

September

September 5, 2026	All Asian DX Contest, Phone
September 5, 2026	CWOps CW Open
September 6, 2026	Tennessee QSO Party
September 12, 2026	ARRL September VHF Contest
September 12, 2026	Colorado QSO Party
September 12, 2026	WAE DX Contest, SSB
September 12, 2026	New Jersey QSO Party
September 13, 2026	North American Sprint, CW Sep
September 19, 2026	Iowa QSO Party
September 19, 2026	New Hampshire QSO Party
September 19, 2026	Scandinavian Activity Contest, CW
September 19, 2026	Texas QSO Party
September 19, 2026	Washington State Salmon Run
September 20, 2026	North American Sprint, RTTY Sep
September 26, 2026	Maine QSO Party

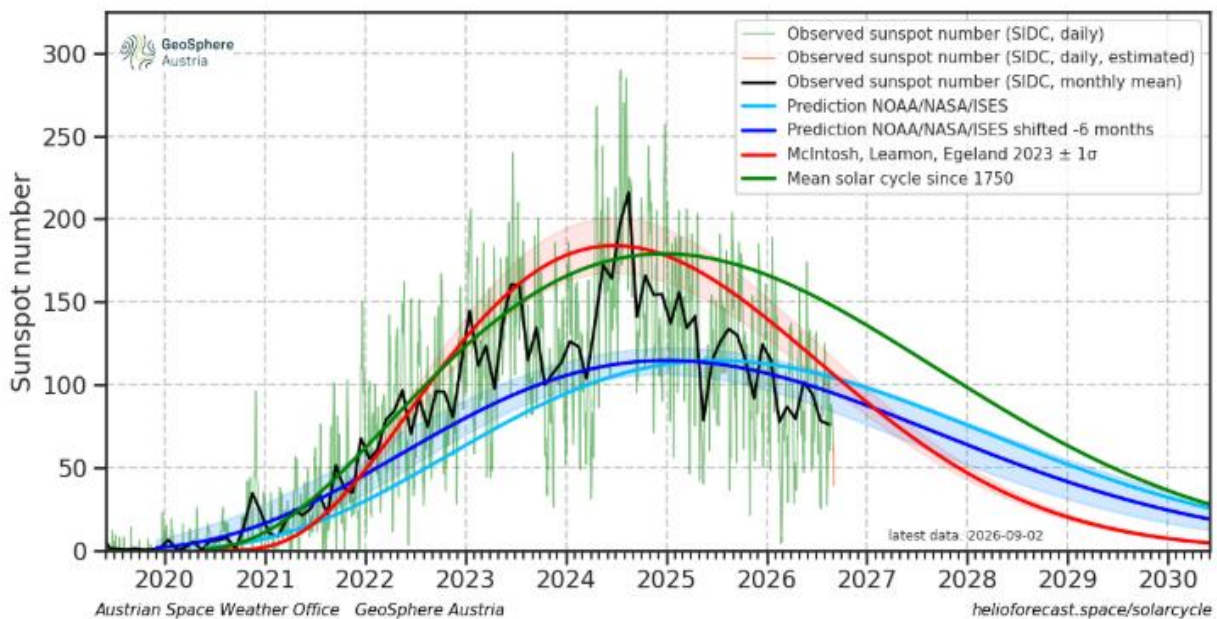
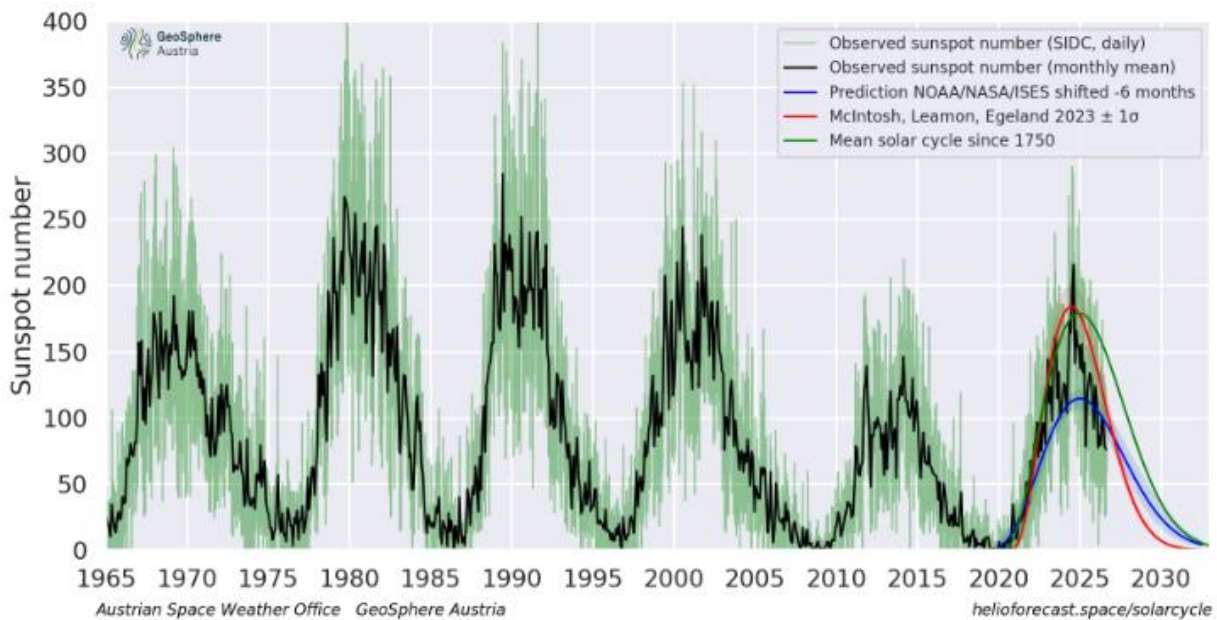
October

October 2, 2026	URC DX RTTY Contest
October 3, 2026	California QSO Party
October 3, 2026	Oceania DX Contest, Phone
October 3, 2026	Russian WW Digital Contest
October 10, 2026	Scandinavian Activity Contest, SSB
October 10, 2026	Arizona QSO Party
October 10, 2026	Pennsylvania QSO Party
October 10, 2026	South Dakota QSO Party
October 10, 2026	Makrothen RTTY Contest
October 10, 2026	Oceania DX Contest, CW
October 17, 2026	New York QSO Party
October 17, 2026	JARL WW RTTY Contest
October 17, 2026	Stew Perry Topband Challenge-Oct
October 17, 2026	Worked All Germany Contest
October 18, 2026	Illinois QSO Party
October 24, 2026	CQ Worldwide DX Contest, SSB

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Progression of solar cycle 25

Sunspot numbers including predictions: <https://heliocast.space/solarcycle>



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The Tennessee QSO Party
62 Years, 95 Counties, and a Little Bit of Mystery
de Ron WV4P

Nobody really knows who runs the Tennessee QSO Party.
At least, I don't.

I tried to figure it out a few years ago and never really got a straight answer. Who makes the rules? Who decides when they change? Who checks and adjudicates the logs? Who decides the plaques? Who possesses the sacred TNQP rulebook and disappears back into the mountains until next September?

I have no idea.

But every September, almost as if summoned by some ancient Tennessee radio ritual, the bands come alive with stations sending county abbreviations. Mobiles start tearing across the state. Guys in Europe start hunting Moore and Pickett Counties like their lives depend on it. Somebody screws up Lauderdale and Loudon. K0EJ starts making plaques out of Tennessee barn wood. Scores appear. Logs get checked. Winners are declared.

And everybody has a h of a good time.

So I started digging.

And what I found was considerably more interesting than I expected.

The Tennessee QSO Party isn't a little contest TCG invented sometime in the 1990s. Its documented history goes all the way back to 1964.

That means Tennessee amateurs have been doing some version of this for more than six decades.

BEFORE TCG — ALL THE WAY BACK TO 1964

The oldest documented Tennessee QSO Party I have found was held in **1964**.

This isn't somebody remembering it over coffee 40 years later. Contemporary amateur-radio magazines document it.

A 1966 announcement calls that year's event the “**third annual Tennessee QSO Party**” and identifies the sponsor as the **Radio Amateur Transmitting Society**. That makes 1964 the beginning of that series. A 1969 QST listing then calls that year's event the **sixth annual Tennessee QSO Party**, again sponsored by the Radio Amateur Transmitting Society, independently confirming the same timeline.

So we can put a stake in the ground:

1964 — THE FIRST DOCUMENTED TENNESSEE QSO PARTY

The original sponsoring organization was the **Radio Amateur Transmitting Society**, or

RATS, associated with Nashville.

And apparently the contest caught on.

A QST report from the 1960s noted that the Tennessee party was well participated in on CW, although phone participation was considerably lighter. In other words, some things haven't changed nearly as much as we might think.

By 1968, RATS was still running it. By 1969 it had reached its sixth running.

Then the historical trail gets strange.

THE SECOND BEGINNING

If 1964 was the first TNQP, why did a 1977 announcement call itself the **seventh annual Tennessee QSO Party**?

Because somebody apparently started counting again.

The April 1977 event was explicitly billed as the **7th annual party** and sponsored by the **Tennessee Council of Amateur Radio Clubs**.

Counting backward puts the beginning of this numbered series at about **1971**.

And another independent piece of evidence nails it down.

The 1983 contest was advertised as the **13th Annual Tennessee QSO Party**, again sponsored by the Tennessee Council of Amateur Radio Clubs. Thirteen annual events ending in 1983 also produces a 1971 beginning.

So TNQP appears to have had at least two distinct early eras:

1964–1969: the original RATS-sponsored series.

Beginning around 1971: a new series under the Tennessee Council of Amateur Radio Clubs.

Whether there was a clean organizational handoff, a missed year, a restart, or somebody simply decided to reset the counter is something I have not yet been able to document.

Which, frankly, fits the whole mysterious TNQP theme perfectly.

AND THE OLD RULES WERE WILD

The 1977 Tennessee QSO Party would still look surprisingly familiar to a modern operator.

Tennessee stations sent a signal report and county. Out-of-state stations sent a report and state, province or country. Stations could be worked on different bands, and mobiles and portables could be worked again as they changed counties.

County activation was already a major part of the game.

But there were some interesting twists.

The contest ran in two operating periods — Saturday night and again on Sunday — and there was even a special **75-meter bonus period** during which out-of-state stations could work Tennessee mobile and portable stations.

Mobiles and portables received bonus points for activating counties outside their home county.

In other words, nearly fifty years ago the basic concept was already recognizable:

Put Tennessee counties on the air. Get people moving. Give everybody outside Tennessee something to chase.

That remains the soul of TNQP today.

BY 1985, THE FAMILY TREE GETS EVEN MORE INTERESTING

The 1985 rules identify the event as the:

15th Annual Tennessee QSO Party

It was formally **sponsored by the Tennessee Council of Amateur Radio Clubs** but **directed by the Radio Amateurs Transmitting Society of Nashville**.

So RATS hadn't disappeared from the story at all.

The rules that year provided **1.5 points for a CW QSO and one point for phone**. Out-of-state stations multiplied their QSO points by Tennessee counties worked. Tennessee stations counted states, Tennessee counties and Canadian areas as multipliers.

Mobiles and portables received **500 bonus points for each county activated outside their home county**, provided they made at least ten contacts from it.

There were plaques for Tennessee home, mobile and portable stations as well as the top out-of-state station.

This wasn't some casual Sunday net with points attached.

By the mid-1980s, Tennessee already had a real competitive state QSO party with county chasing, mobile strategy, multiple operating categories and physical awards.

QST was still listing the Tennessee QSO Party in **1987**.

And then...

It vanished.

THE DARK AGES

Exactly when the old Tennessee QSO Party stopped is still one of the gaps in the record.

But we know it did.

Doug Smith, **W9WI**, later wrote about the experience of running contests and opened his story with one enormously important sentence:

“In the early 1990s, I enthusiastically agreed to help relaunch the Tennessee QSO Party after a lengthy absence.”

So there really was a break.

TNQP didn't simply morph uninterrupted from the Tennessee Council era into today's contest.

It died.

And somebody brought it back.

ENTER THE TENNESSEE CONTEST GROUP

TCG traces its own beginning to **August 1993**, when a group of dedicated Tennessee contest operators formed what became the Tennessee Contest Group.

An excellent 1999 *National Contest Journal* profile of TCG fills in more of the story.

It says the initial push for TCG came from Ric Painter, then WA6KUI, after the 1992–93 winter contest season. The early group included calls that will be very familiar to longtime TCG members: K4RO, N4ZZ, K0EJ, W4PA, W9WI and others.

Most importantly for our story, that contemporary profile says:

The Tennessee Contest Group, under the guidance of W9WI, had revived and become sponsor of the Tennessee QSO Party.

It specifically mentions the **September 20, 1998 TNQP** and the use of **K4TCG** as a 100-point bonus station.

That is the clearest contemporary statement I've found establishing TCG as the organization that revived the modern TNQP.

What I have **not** found is a piece of paper saying:

“On this date TCG officially assumed control of the Tennessee QSO Party.”

It may never have happened that neatly.

The old event had apparently disappeared. TCG was formed. W9WI and others revived the contest. TCG became its sponsor.

No ceremonial transfer of power appears to have been necessary.

SO WHEN DID THE MODERN TNQP ACTUALLY BEGIN?

The surviving official results give us another clue.

The **1997 results** list the standing mobile record as:

WB4NNX — 15,120 points — 1995.

They also say 1997 activity was roughly equal to **1996**.

So we know the revived contest existed by at least:

1995

That makes 1995 the earliest year I can presently document in the modern TNQP era.

By 1997 the connection to TCG was already obvious. W9WI's results mention multiplier files he had posted on the **TCG WWW page**.

My best reconstruction therefore looks like this:

- **1987:** old TNQP still documented.
- **Sometime afterward:** contest disappears.
- **August 1993:** TCG forms.
- **Early/mid-1990s:** W9WI and other TCG members revive TNQP.
- **1995:** earliest hard evidence found so far of the revived event.
- **1997:** surviving modern results show an established contest and direct TCG involvement.
- **1998:** contemporary NCJ history explicitly identifies TCG as the sponsor of the revived Tennessee QSO Party.

If somebody has a box of old *Radioactive Reports*, TCG meeting minutes, or 1993–95 correspondence hiding in the attic, there may still be another chapter waiting to be discovered.

THE 1997 TNQP LOOKS ALMOST TINY TODAY

The surviving 1997 results are fascinating.

KF4ZR won Tennessee Single Op with **48,852 points**, with W9WI second.

There was exactly **one multioperator entry**, W4CAT, and the results identify it as TNQP's **first multi-op entry**.

The results also tell us something else important: the contest organizers were actively experimenting.

CQ WW RTTY was clobbering TNQP CW activity, particularly on 40 meters, so they proposed moving the 1998 event by a week. They were considering a team competition specifically to create club rivalry and generate more participation, and they were trying to encourage more VHF/UHF activity.

This wasn't a contest whose rules had been carved into granite.

It was being built.

WHY SUNDAY?

That decision was deliberate too.

W9WI later explained that TNQP borrowed heavily from the successful **Wisconsin QSO Party**, including its relatively short, one-day format.

There were practical reasons. A shorter event meant more people could make a full-time effort. Mobile operators didn't have to spend 24 hours driving around the state.

And there was another very Tennessee consideration.

TCG members occasionally asked why the party was held on Sunday. According to W9WI, somebody would inevitably point out that if Tennessee amateurs were forced to choose between TNQP and a **University of Tennessee football game**, football was probably going to win.

Some contest rules are based on propagation.

Some are apparently based on the SEC schedule.

Either way, it worked.

THE RULES WERE NEVER SACRED

Another detail from W9WI's account explains how TNQP evolved.

After the log deadline, TCG would solicit suggestions for the following year's contest. Those suggestions were developed into specific proposals and subjected to an up-or-down vote. A new rules package would then be prepared. TNQP experimented.

At one point it even used what Doug called “**triple mults**,” a scoring system sufficiently strange that he doubted any contest logging program ever supported it properly.

That history matters.

The TNQP we operate today wasn't designed in one sitting.

It has been tuned, broken, fixed, argued about, changed and improved for decades.

Which is exactly how a good contest ought to evolve.

THEN IT STARTED TO GROW

By 2000, the club callsign itself had become a serious TNQP operation.

K4TCG scored 185,016 points and shattered the existing multi-op record.

The same results describe some genuinely bizarre propagation. Auroral signals were heard on six meters around sunset and even produced 10-meter auroral QSOs — unusual conditions that far south.

But the truly dramatic growth came a few years later.

The official 2007 report gives us an excellent snapshot:

Year	Submitted Entries	Claimed QSOs
------	-------------------	--------------

2005	71	4,005
------	----	-------

2006	91	5,989
------	----	-------

2007	138	10,732
------	------------	---------------

In only two years the number of entries nearly doubled.

The number of QSOs **more than doubled**.

The report directly credited promotional work by TCG members, particularly **Greg Tomerlin, K4KO**, for helping drive the increased activity.

94 OF 95 COUNTIES

The other huge accomplishment in 2007 was county coverage.

Activity was reported from:

94 of Tennessee's 95 counties.

Only Lawrence County escaped.

The logchecker confidently promised, "We'll fix that in 2008!"

That gets directly to what makes a state QSO party different from an ordinary contest.

Nobody gets excited because somebody activated "Tennessee."

The game is **all 95 counties**.

- Davidson is easy.
- Hamilton is easy.
- Knox is easy.
- But somebody has to put Clay on.
- Somebody has to put Pickett on.
- Somebody has to drive through Moore, Lake, Hancock, Perry or whatever county is about to leave a bunch of stations one short of the sweep.

The mobiles and rovers aren't a sideshow in TNQP.

They're part of what makes the contest work.

The current TNQP site still describes mobile operations as the key to working many counties.

2007 ALSO BROUGHT RTTY

For a contest group with more than a few RTTY addicts, this part deserves mentioning.

The 2007 report says it was the **first year TNQP specifically emphasized RTTY operation**.
The result?

99 reported RTTY QSOs.

That isn't much by today's standards, but every mode has to start somewhere. The organizers were already encouraging operators to try both RTTY and PSK31 the following year.

Today the official TNQP site still advertises:

CW — SSB — RTTY.

BY 2012, IT WASN'T A LITTLE PARTY ANYMORE

The 2012 results reported:

182 logs

19,309 QSOs

Of those:

13,618 were CW

5,690 were SSB

and QSO number 19,309 was a lonely **2-meter FM** contact.

Roughly two-thirds of all contacts were made on 40 meters.

Several first-time TNQP entrants also immediately broke category records that year — a useful reminder that you don't need 20 years of experience in TNQP to jump in and compete.

THEN CAME 2020

If you're looking for the high-water mark in raw participation, 2020 is hard to beat.

The old participation record had been **249 entries**, set in 2017.

In 2020:

415 LOGS WERE SUBMITTED.

The official results didn't say the old record was beaten.

They said it had been “**shattered.**”

That's an appropriate description.

A contest that had received only 71 entries fifteen years earlier had now attracted more than four hundred.

Think about that for a minute.

A state QSO party centered on 95 Tennessee counties had grown into an event capable of pulling hundreds of submitted logs from around the country and the world.

30 YEARS OF TCG — AND MORE THAN 31,000 CONTACTS

The 2023 TNQP was held during TCG's 30th-anniversary year.

The results contained:

31,221 QSOs

broken down as:

Mode QSOs

CW 18,460

Phone 12,741

RTTY 20

Total 31,221

And by band:

Band QSOs

160	155
80	4,516
40	16,136
20	9,722
15	558
10	112
6	1
2	20

Forty meters remained king, with more than sixteen thousand contacts.

Compare that with 2005:

4,005 QSOs.

Eighteen years later:

31,221.

That's not a contest barely hanging on.

That's growth.

2024 — TEN HOURS AND ROVERS

One of the largest modern rules changes arrived in **2024**.

The operating period grew by an hour, making TNQP a **ten-hour contest**, and an official **Rover category** was added.

The results were immediate:

347 submitted logs

33,393 QSOs

CW accounted for **21,520**, phone for **11,736**, and RTTY climbed to **128 QSOs**.

And K4TCG absolutely unloaded.

The club station made **1,667 QSOs** and posted a new record score of:

1,594,362 POINTS.

The 2024 results also contain one of my favorite TNQP traditions:

The winners received plaques handmade by **Mark, K0EJ, from genuine Tennessee barn wood.**

You can win certificates in a thousand contests.

There is only one Tennessee barn-wood plaque.

AND THEN 2025 GOT EVEN BUSIER

The 2025 TNQP produced **316 submitted logs** — fewer than 2024.

But here's the important number:

34,080 QSOs

Despite 31 fewer submitted logs, the total QSO count increased by more than 700.

Activity was recorded from **92 of 95 Tennessee counties**.

From outside Tennessee, VE3NNT managed to work **76 counties**, OM2VL worked **74**, and AA3R found **72**.

And then there were the mobiles.

Jim, **AD4EB**, partnered with Kirk, **K4RO**, and made:

1,784 QSOs IN TEN HOURS

from a moving mobile operation.

That's nearly **178 QSOs an hour averaged across the entire contest**, while changing counties and driving around Tennessee.

Andrew, **AA5JF**, came up from Georgia and put **688 QSOs** in the log as a Rover.

Several all-time records fell.

- W9SN pushed the Single-Op Low-Power Fixed CW record to **478,224**.
- N4ZZ set a new Single-Op High-Power Fixed CW record at **361,446**.
- AA5JF established a Rover Mixed benchmark of **260,436**.
- And OM2VL set a new out-of-state standard of **133,268**.

K4TCG itself operated from **NJ4P in Hardin County**, combining local and remote operators and even testing N1MM's new text-to-speech capability on phone. The final score was **1,420,119**, only about 68,000 points behind W4NZ's winning 1,488,180.

Not bad for a contest nobody can explain who's running.

THE CONTEST HAS CHANGED — THE IDEA HASN'T

Look back at those 1977 rules.

Work Tennessee.

Work counties.

Make mobiles valuable.

Give people a reason to get unusual counties on the air.

Now look at TNQP nearly fifty years later.

Same basic mission.

The technology is different.

Paper logs became computer logs.

Cross-check sheets became automated log checking.

A handwritten county activation list became a website.

TRLog files became N1MM configuration.

A guy parked beside the highway with a key and paper log became a rover with GPS, laptops and multiple radios.

But the objective is still beautifully simple:

Put Tennessee on the air.

TCG's current TNQP site says the event is hosted by the Tennessee Contest Group, occurs on the first Sunday in September, and generates tens of thousands of contacts between Tennessee operators and amateurs around the world.

That might be the cleanest description there is.

SEPTEMBER 6, 2026

And now it's our turn.

The **2026 Tennessee QSO Party is Sunday, September 6.**

The scheduled operating period is:

1700Z September 6 through 0300Z September 7

Noon until 10:00 PM CDT

The contest is worldwide. Tennessee stations are the hunted stations. Fixed stations, mobiles and rovers are part of the game. CW, phone and digital operation are supported, and the basic exchange remains signal report plus county for Tennessee stations and signal report plus location for everyone else.

But forget the rules for a second.

You don't have to make 1,700 QSOs.

You don't have to build a rover.

You don't need stacked Yagis.

You don't need to operate all ten hours.

If you've never contested before, get on and make **ten QSOs**.

If you're a casual tester, make fifty.

If you've never operated CW in a contest, try it.

If your county isn't usually active, **put it on the air**.

If you're willing to drive, pick a few counties somebody needs and go mobile or rover.

If you've got a serious station, then quit screwing around and see what it'll actually do.

And if you're outside Tennessee, come hunt us.

There are **95 counties**, and we're going to do our damndest to put every one of them on the air.

SIXTY-TWO YEARS LATER

Somewhere in Tennessee in 1964, a group of amateurs decided it would be fun to hold a Tennessee QSO Party.

They could not possibly have imagined what amateur radio would look like in 2026.

They didn't have SDRs.

They didn't have packet spots.

They didn't have N1MM.

They didn't have remote stations.

They didn't have RBN.

They didn't have the Internet.

Most of them probably would have stared at a FlexRadio for ten minutes looking for the VFO knob.

But they understood the important part.

Get on the radio. Find somebody. Make a contact. Compete a little. Travel somewhere interesting. Put your part of Tennessee on the air. And have fun doing it.

Sixty-two years later, that part hasn't changed.

The Tennessee QSO Party has survived different sponsors, different rules, different dates, at least one disappearance, a resurrection, changing technology, terrible propagation, great propagation, new modes, new categories and generations of operators.

TCG didn't create it.

TCG rescued it.

And for roughly three decades, members of this club have kept it alive, promoted it, operated it, moved through counties for it, checked logs, made awards and turned it into one of the events that represents contesting in Tennessee.

Who exactly runs it today?

I'm still working on that.

Maybe by next year's newsletter I'll figure it out.

But I know exactly who's responsible for making it worth running:

Us.

So on **Sunday, September 6**, turn the radio on.

Call CQ.

Put your county in somebody's log.

Chase a mobile.

Work somebody you've never worked before.

Break a record.

Give a new contester his first pileup.

And help write the next page of a Tennessee amateur-radio tradition that started more than six decades ago.

CQ CQ CQ TNQP DE K4TCG...