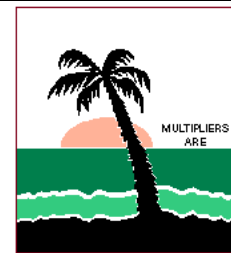




Contest Gazette

Florida Contest Group

<http://www.qsl.net/fcg/>



Volume 8 Issue 1

January 2001

From the President's Corner

By Dan Street, K1TO

Happy New Year!

As we take a moment to reflect on the tremendous year 2000, it sure will be a hard year to follow!

2000 IN REVIEW

- Unprecedented growth in membership to 73
Wonder if we will end 2001 with 88-hi! Such growth emanated from many different sources. Our rival group in FL for several years, the FCC, faded away early in the year and most of their troops have enthusiastically joined us. But we have seen extraordinary growth also from folks who heard about us via the Florida QSO Party, or who moved down to FL recently, or even who just heard good things about us from another member.

- The exciting new newsletter format and e-Gazette option Fred, K4LQ deserves unlimited kudos for his tireless efforts in this area. We are pioneers in the area of offering a tiered dues structure depending on the type of newsletter desired. I'm sure Fred lost count of the congratulatory e-mails that have flowed in!

- A revamped web site that is second to none
No slouch himself, Ron, WD4AHZ has improved an already leading-edge set of web sites. The colored map on the FQP site is legendary in its own time. We have ideas about adding more pictures to the FCG site. If you come across a neat URL, pass it along to Ron so that he can add it to the links page for all to share.

- More club meetings than ever before.
Beyond the standard hamfest meetings at Miami, Orlando, Fort Walton Beach and Melbourne, there was another VFB BBQ meeting at N4TO, the first annual January holiday party, another meeting on the UCF campus, a gathering at the first WCF Section Convention, a meeting in Brooksville, plus meetings at the homes of NA4CW, K1TO and K4XS. Never a dull moment with this group! The neat thing is that very few clubs that cover such a wide spread area even attempt to have meetings so frequently.

- Record club score submissions in every contest
The FCG submits aggregate scores in (at least) ARRL DX, WPX, CQ WW, SS and the 10-Meter Contest, in addition to fielding teams in the NAQPs and Sprints. Am I safe in stating that in EVERY ONE of those contests in Y2K that we exceeded our own record?!

- The new ARRL section - West Central Florida
Although the section officially was born in January, the first contest appearance was in June at FD. Ron "borrowed" K4WCF for both the FB 2A FD effort and again for both modes of Sweepstakes. Having been an operator with that call in SS SSB, I can't tell you how many people figured out the section more easily due to the callsign. That was a welcome change from 2 weeks prior in SS CW when "WCF" was met with either deafening silence or "SEC?". At the first annual WCF Section Convention last month, an FCG Contest Forum was held that attracted over 30 folks, including a number of non-, er potential members (see article in this issue).

- W1AW/4 spread over 6 locations across the state
Setting a new record in the process, this was an incredible team effort! I believe that it was over 30 members that participated in this, an unprecedented club activity. We can't expect this opportunity to return any time soon. Even if W1AW returns to W4 in 10 years or so, I would bet that other clubs might make a pitch to have their shot at it. So, making the most of it, a well-coordinated effort that involved 2 band/modes each at N4PN, NU4Y, W1CW, K4XS, N4TO and N8PR proceeded to blast the W1AW record into oblivion. Remember that W1AW has been hosted in recent years at stations such as W3LPL, W7RM and W0AIH.

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- WRTC 2000 and 3 fabulous weeks in Europe
See WC4E's FB article in this issue for lots of neat recollections. This produced a lifetime of memories. So far, the next WRTC has not yet been announced. The YCCC was considering hosting the WRTC-2004, while the OHs wanted to do something in 2002 to avoid crummier conditions further down the sunspot cycle.

- Record-setting performances galore in the 3rd FQP
K4XS smashes all conceivable QSO records with over 2600 SSB QSOs during the 20-hour period. Top scores in virtually every category set new records, including over 500 QSOs from N6MU, our out-of-state winner from California. Several LYs put up big numbers, too. Several out-of-staters swept all counties, for the first time ever! The number of log submissions went way up by over 40%. FQP management is another club effort with K4OJ relentlessly promoting the cause, AB4RL (soon to be KD4RWN) tracking the county operating commitments via the web page, WD4AHZ devoting many hours to keying in paper logs, K1TO checking the logs and producing results, WC4E and K4LQ working together on certificate generation, AB4RL (soon to be K4XS) getting plaques made and delivered and most of us finding a way to operate during the FQP to activate one or more counties.

- W3AU receiving the CQ Contest Hall of Fame plaque
Truly a contesting legend, this was a great honor to present this long-lost plaque to Ed. He actually was inducted into the Hall of Fame in the early 1990s, but somehow the plaque was lost for a while. Several of our current members fondly recall operating at Ed's M/M efforts up in MD.

- W1CW receiving his ARRL 60-year membership plaque
Presented by W1YL, this was another fine milestone for a lifelong achiever.

- K4OJ winning a big prize at Dayton
Had to work this in - how sweet was it for OJ to hear his number called for one of the biggest prizes at the Dayton Contest Dinner from Force-12 antennas?!

- The first of potentially many out-going QSL parties
(See article elsewhere in this issue.)

- Lots of antenna work and station upgrades
It seems like most of the club had some project going in Y2K. Helping guys with antenna and tower projects is one area that I thoroughly enjoy, and I personally had the opportunity to help a number of members this year to build up their "infrastructure". We have a number of talented climbers in the club. Don't hesitate to post a note to the FCG e-mail reflector if you have a project that could use some extra manpower.

- FCC license restructuring
April 15, 2000 was more than the IRS deadline. Immediate effects were felt 2 weeks later in the FQP (see K4XS' score!) and in all SSB contests for the year with far more /AG and /AE than ever before. Maybe I was just overly sensitive to it, but on the flip side, it seemed like the SS CW ops were already a little less proficient than in the past.

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT IN 2001?

- Even higher levels of membership
Fred and I are working through a budget for this year that will help us accurately assess the dues levels needed to sustain the club activities. Results of that study should be available shortly, since technically, dues are already due!

- Expanded FCG participation in all contests
Although I could not join the Chad effort this weekend as "Dubya", certainly we are starting 2K1 with a bang in the NAQP CW Test! Expanding our horizons in VHF Contests will be inevitable. VHF contesting requires many of the same skills as HF contesting and many folks do both anyway. If I had a 6M-capable rig, I'd be tempted to check that band out or at least join a multi for a while!

- One more year of sunspot peak propagation, before we slide down hill

- Just as many club meetings, if not more
One thing that we will try to do at many meetings is to pick a topic to concentrate on at that meeting. Examples might be "how to S&P efficiently" and "effective low band listening antennas". Continuing to hold meetings at members' homes will give us a diverse number of settings throughout the year and the ability to see some subtle station installations up close.

- An opportunity to help shape the future of the ARRL Club Competition
As many of you are aware, the CAC has been asked to look at every aspect of the ARRL Club Competition. Of course, we have been continually frustrated by having half of our 175-mile circle club territory be water and to not be able to pool our Panhandle members' results into the FCG aggregate. If you have ideas on making things better, make your voice heard!

- Seeing the results of the rest of our Y2K contest efforts!
Keep your eyes peeled for SS results in April and May QST, ARRL 10M results in the summer (July?) and CQWW results in Sept. and Oct.

Enough rambling. HAVE FUN and CU on the bands!
vy 73, Dan

Claimed Scores

By Jeff Bolda , WC4E

(originally collected by WC4E - updated by K1TO)

2000 ARRL 10 Meter Contest

N4TO MS MIX HP 2492 254 1,876,044
 (+G4BUE, M0BUE)
 N2NL MS MIX HP 1268 268 1,204,928 Assisted
 N4DL MS MIX LP 1009 211 20 606,414 Assisted

N4BP SO CW HP 2216 144 31 1,276,416
 K1PT SO CW HP 1872 149 23 1,116,308
 K4OJ SO CW HP 1614 145 24 936,120
 K5KG SO CW HP 1327 134 17 711,272
 W3TMZ SO CW HP 102 80 33,372

K1TO SO CW LP 1996 139 28 1,110,888
 WD4AHZ SO CW LP 1395 137 30 765,556

W4FMS SO CW QRP 504 91 18 183,456

WC4E SO MIX HP 3014 298 30 2,509,208
 AD4TR SO MIX HP 2206 214 1,172,720
 K4LQ SO MIX HP 831 197 572,876
 W4SAA SO MIX HP 804 195 521,040
 N4EK SO MIX HP 675 172 298,936
 N4KW SO MIX HP 284 116 3.5 112,520
 W4ZW SO MIX HP 109 42 1 18,228

N4IG SO MIX LP 1146 222 817,404
 W4UM SO MIX LP 1395 231 727,188
 AE4RO SO MIX LP 798 246 24 604,176
 KB4N SO MIX LP 1029 181 19 553,498
 W4/YV5DTA SO MIX LP 503 172 23 294,120
 W0EBA SO MIX LP 465 161 232,162
 KK4TA SO MIX LP 513 91 16 93,366
 N4RP SO MIX LP 81 51 4 16,218

NA4CW SO MIX QRP 838 188 497,072

K4XS SO SSB HP 3204 158 1,018,872
 N8PR SO SSB HP 256 67 2 34,304

K4UCF SO SSB LP 1110 126 23.5 279,720 op
 KD4RWN

K4FB SO SSB LP 1114 114 16 256,680

N4PK SO SSB LP 895 96 171,648

A52UD SO SSB LP 100 op K4VUD

NA4AR SO SSB LP 75 37 5,550

V47UY SO ??? ??? ? ? op KJ4UY

Total 35 ENTRIES! =====> 20,628,280+ !!

Panhandle:

N4OX SO SSB LP 1512 139 420,336

KN4Y SO CW LP 630 111 280,164

NF4A SO MIX LP 357 86 5 111,456

Others:

VP5DX MS MIX HP 4037 296 32 3,231,136 NU4Y &
 N4KE

NP4Z SO CW HP 2126 138 1,173,552 op NP3A

NP3X/W4 SO CW LP 708 59 11 337,484 op WP3A at
 KP4AM/W4

CQWW CW Claimed Scores

Call QSO Zone Cty SO2R Time Score

M/S HP

K4XS 4255 182 671 48 10,400,000

(ops: K4XS K1TO N2NL)

N4TO 3268 166 607 48 7,095,452

(ops: N4KM, N4TO, W4IR, WD4AHZ)

SOHP

K1PT 2413 140 416 40 3,859,752

N2AN (WC4E) 2191 131 356 28 3,090,015

N4IG 1187 114 351 39 1,570,770

K4LQ 1114 1,472,528

W4SAA 542 81 236 481,523

W7QF 343 88 188 262,461

NU4Y 241 76 213 194,208

W3TMZ 224 86 182 1 65,088

(continued on next page)

Holiday Party Scheduled

By Jim White, K4OJ

When: Sunday January 21 at Noon

Where: The Marriott World Center
8701 World Center Drive
Orlando FL 32821

Take I-4 Towards Orlando

Take Exit 26A SR-536 East towards South
International Drive

As you peel off the exit ramp look for the absolutely
HUGE hotel on the left as you head South.



The Marriott World Center has a phenomenal brunch which offers up both breakfast and lunch/dinner eats....awaiting you on one of their many MANY tables will be many things you enjoy, I guarantee.... It is \$ 22.95 per person, and I feel it is worth that.

Hope to c'yall there.

73, Jim K4OJ

Designated Volunteer Holiday Affair Coordinator

Welcome Aboard



The following new members have joined FCG since the last newsletter:

W4/YV5DTA Steve Romagni, 9485 NW 45 PL, Sunrise FL 33351 E-Mail: eromagni@yahoo.com

AA4Z Bruce Savage, 143 Hardy Road, Rincon, GA 31326 E-Mail: aa4z@arrl.net

NJ2F Jeff Buerger, 4236 5th Avenue SW , Naples FL 34119 E-Mail: nj2f@arrl.net

Events Calendar

Jan 13 - NAQP CW 1800Z, - 0600Z, Jan 14

Jan 14 - WCF First Contact with K4XS, N4TO

Jan 20 - NAQP SSB 1800Z, - 0600Z, Jan 21

Jan 26 - CQ 160-Meter Contest, CW 2200Z, - 1600Z, Jan 28

Feb 3 - NA Sprint, Phone 0000Z - 0400Z, Feb 4

Feb 10 - NA Sprint CW 0000Z - 0400Z Feb 11

Feb 17-ARRL Inter. DX Contest, CW 0000Z, - 2400Z, Feb 18

Feb 23 - CQ 160-Meter Contest, SSB 2200Z, - 1600Z, Feb 25

Mar 3 - ARRL Inter. DX Contest, Phone 0000Z, - 2400Z, Mar 4

Mar 24 - CQ WW WPX Contest, SSB 0000Z, - 2400Z, Mar 25

SOLP						
AE4RO	408	91	254	17	391,230	
NF4A	262	55	127	6	133,042	FCGP
W0EBA	283	53	134	19	147,917	
KB4N	238	57	132		126,252	

SOAB(A) LP						
W4/YV5DTA	341	71	204		259,875	
N4DL	105	34	82		4 32,712	

SOSB/10 HP						
K4OJ	1500	35	139	36	754,812	
N4BP	1649	34	115	27	701,194	
K4FAU (AB4RL)	10	7	8	1	435	

SOSB/15 LP						
KN4Y	289	24	74	21	7	8,302 FCG P

SOSB/15 HP						
N4PN	1593	39	149	28	849,760	

SOSB AB QRP						
N4PK	4	4	4	.5	96	

SOSB/20 QRP						
K4FB	243	29	88		81,549	

SOSB/10 QRP						
NA4CW	459	28	89		154,440	

Total FCG Score so far =====
30,619,841 !!!
Great Job!

Florida QSO Party Update

By Ron Wetjen, WD4AHZ

I hope everyone had a good Contest & Holiday Season!
Just a quick Florida QSO Party update for everyone.

The date for FQP 2001 is set for April 28 and 29. Start making your plans! The rules for 2001 have been posted on the FQP Web site, along with some updates and corrections to the paper entry forms. The rules have also been sent to the major magazines as well as various contest calendar Web sites.

We have added a new "School" category, which allows schools of all kinds, to compete for top in-state and out-of-state honors. Unlike our other classes, there will only be 2 winners, with no regard to power, single-op or multi-op, etc. This way, the top schools will have to figure out which operating strategy will work best for them to win. It will add a bit of planning and strategy to the School category. They will also be competing in the "regular" categories, and if any to win there, the certificates will be "School" endorsed.

Art, AB4RL, who had been handling the FQP Plaques and maintaining the "Counties on the Air" page in the FQP Web site, has asked to be relieved of those duties. Beginning with the 2001 FQP, Bill, K4XS, will be handling the FQP Plaques, and Ulysses, KD4RWN, will be updating the "Counties on the Air" page. Thanks to Art for his service over the last 2 years, and to Bill and Ulysses for stepping in.

Speaking of awards, the FQP Plaques for 2000 have been mailed out, and appear to be in the hands of the winners! Fred, K4LQ, is working on getting the certificate winners sorted out. Once the winners are sorted and certificates are printed, they will go out in the mail as well.

Finally, thanks for everyone's support and patience, while Dan, K1TO, worked on the results for FQP 2000! Unfortunately, it takes a little bit of time if you want to do things right.

73, Ron WD4AHZ

Europe & WRTC 2000 Memories

By Jeff Bolda, WC4E

After being selected to represent the Florida Contest Group for WRTC 2000, I needed to start planning on the trip over to Europe. Dan K1TO convinced me to take some extra time and see more of Europe. I am very glad he did, here is just a glimpse of our three-week adventure.

Dan and I landed in Germany on June 22, 2000, off to wonder around Europe, see some sights and meet some great people. That we did! We started in Stuttgart, headed south to the Friedrichshafen hamfest. We met hundreds of great European contesters at the fest, contest dinners and the contest forum. Even KC1XX and WX0B made the trip over to put on talks at the forums. After an amazing couple days in Germany, Dan and I headed off to see more of Europe and the beautiful Alps. I think we saw every part of the Alps from Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Italy, Switzerland, and France. We escaped ham radio for a short while, but still managed to spend some time with a contester or two. We stopped by the contest QTH of Johannes DK1NO and managed to make a few Field Day QSOs. We had a great afternoon with Toby DH1TW, Stefan DH1SGS, and John ON4UN who gave me a personal lesson on low band antennas while in the car on the way back to Stuttgart to stay an evening at Frank DL2CC's place. Two days later, Marcus DK5AX showed us around Bern Switzerland for a quality afternoon. These European hams are very hospitable! Dan and I later headed south to Milan Italy to pick up Jeff N5TJ. We stopped in Monaco for a couple days and met up with Martti Laine OH2BH who was putting 3A on the air on 6 Meters for the first time ever. Martti even let us make a few qsos with our calls over the couple days!

After a couple great weeks of wandering around Europe with the Champs K1TO and part way with N5TJ we headed into Bled, Slovenia the central place for WRTC 2000. Dan and Jeff were confident, I was still wondering if my partner George W0UA made it into the country. George's fear of flying is well known, and I think some money was on the line here. We drove into Bled on Tuesday, a day early to get checked in the Hotels and start meeting everyone. The check-in location was the Hotel Astoria, where activity was already high with many people already there meeting and drinking. Bob K3EST was one of the first people I met there, he passed on the great news, George has made it, he made the big flight across the pond! Several people were really surprised and very happy that George made it over. I wasn't surprised, I knew he would make it because he did not want to miss an event like this and went to great lengths and expense to make it happen. See what WRTC can do to you? I didn't run into George that evening, but 'UA spottings were still coming in. We headed off to dinner with Ralph K9ZO and later some late night drinks by the lake with Tine S50A, Robert S53R, Roger G3SXW, and couple other S5's, it was going to be a great week!

Wednesday morning, my mission was to actually confirm the presence of W0UA, sure enough, I found him in a great hotel on the water operating his 1000MP on the 3rd floor balcony! Wednesday they held a noon picnic where everyone could meet everyone else. Wow, it was absolutely amazing to meet all those European guys that we've all worked hundreds of times over the years! Far too many to mention here, but we tried to meet them all.

Thursday morning, team meetings were held where any questions that anyone had could be answered. Many of the fine points of the contest were discussed and worked out. The afternoon held the pile up tape competitions. Now, I get a bit nervous for the SSB tape, approximately 18 people at a time, we all go in and take the test. I was expecting 100 calls in 5 minutes as posted in one of the FAQs. The tape starts and the calls rip out faster than expected, I had trouble writing them all down. By the time I get a call started, the next call is right there. I wrote down a lot of 2 letter combos for the first minute, then I realize I just need to get a complete call then get the next one. I get a bit better by the time the tape ends 3 minutes and 21 seconds after the start. I end up getting less than 40 calls in the log. What a disaster, I knew I bombed that, hearing that many guys got mid 50 calls. George W0UA is very good the CW tapes and pulls out 57 calls in the CW test. Whew, at least the team score is salvaged. Dan K1TO wins the CW tape with 61 calls! The tapes were very difficult! I had to put that behind me, I go back to the Hotel to check on the radio. I heard reports that a few teams had problems with their radios, some damaged in the transit. I plug in the FT 1000MP that George let me take over with me. &#\$%!! The radio powers up but it has no front panel functions at all. We need to find another radio fast! After 2 hours trying to fix it unsuccessfully, we head to the opening ceremony late.

That evening was the official opening ceremony it was very similar to the Olympics. Each country was announced and we all marched into the flag-lined square where many people from town were lined around the entire area. As each country came, in the crowd cheered, very cool! My mind was on how we are ever going to find another radio for the contest in a short time. A few speeches and entertainment then off to the hall for dinner and meet and greet. There we worked some local contacts and found a radio. Good news, it will arrive at noon Friday.

Friday morning came and the second final meeting where everyone got together with their respective judges and station hosts for a final check to see if there was anything needed. After the meeting we started to pack the truck (Slovenian military vehicle). One more item was still needed, the second radio. At 1pm we finally see the radio; an Icom 775 DSP! Fantastic!!! Brand new in the box, never used. We tested it at the HQ hotel then we packed it into the truck and off to the station, or so we thought. The three-hour trip was filled with many stops including a fine visit with the mayor of Slovanj Gradec, the town near the station, convenience stores looking for grocery items. .

We then briefly visited Tom S59DCD with largest EME dish in Slovenia. After that brief visit, we headed off to a small airport where we were treated to a 20 minute small plane ride around the station and up around the station. What an experience! Got some great views of the station and surrounding areas. After landing, we headed to another restaurant where we were treated to another fine dinner. By the time we got there it was already setup and prepared! Our hosts did a great job of calling ahead to everywhere we went and things were ready, amazing! Time was getting short and I felt we needed to get up the mountain and start setting up. At 7PM we finally make it up the mountain and start unpacking and start setting up the station. The station was a simple small metal storage building covered with a wood roof, but the view was super being on one of the highest locations in Slovenia. At 9pm we finally got on the air to make a few QSOs and get a feel for the station. George found Chuck K0RF and gave a report of the setup. The time on the air was short lived; we had to get off the air because static discharges from the clouds passing over the mountain were causing sparks from the coax. In fear of damaging the equipment we disconnected and got some sleep. The weather forecast for region was not good, a front was moving through and we could expect some rain. Early Saturday morning, I got up early to tackle a computer problem. We needed to get the logging program and logs on and off the computer. I remembered I let K1TO borrow my floppy drive for his digital camera. After a couple hours of trying to figure this out, we headed back into town to visit another ham that had a laptop I could copy the logs to. Back at the station at noon (The contest starts at 2pm!) I was disappointed that we got so very little operating time before the contest. We got things together finally and started the contest on time. Fifteen minutes before the start we found out our call sign: S588S, good, I was hoping for one the "double number" calls. This was it the moment we had worked so hard for! At 12:00z we were off and running! I started on 15SSB and that was slow so I quickly retreated to CW for a higher rate work mostly Europe and some Asian stations. We ended the first hour with 116 QSOs. First quarter of the contest was mostly rates in the 70 and 80s, we kept trying 10M but it never did pick up much. George and I were expecting much higher rates, much like 1996 in San Francisco. We put off serious multiplier hunting until the second half. Around 20:00 the clouds were building the winds were picking up. It then started to rain, hard, for many hours. We had to take some brief off times to let some thunderstorms pass through. The toughest part was the rain static and discharge. For most of the night we had to transmit on the tribander and listen on the wire antenna because static was a constant S9 on the tribander. That left the second radio almost useless for listening for mults for many hours. We fought through it for most of the night getting a few good hours on the low bands. The wire antenna with the higher elevation seemed to work well there. The Europeans are LOUD on 40 and 80 there! George and I swapped positions every 2 hours so each could get some time on the run radio. As night kept on the temperature kept dropping. I estimated it easily got into the 30s.

With the cold winds and rain, I stopped eating and drinking just so I didn't have to go outside in the elements and navigate the 100 yard trek down the mountain (in the dark) to use the facilities in the ski cabin. (Which was almost out of water) Keeping warm was the challenge. I tucked my hands under my arms in between every qso just to stay warm and finger nimble enough to type. We were not expecting this kind of conditions in July so we didn't pack much cold weather clothes. Finally 07z and the sun came up to warm things up, also the rains let up allowing us hear better. On one of my breaks on Sunday morning I came out to find a new layer of snow on the mountaintops just 10KM north of us in Austria. (I had to remind myself again that this is really JULY) Most hours had slow rates but we did have some brief openings where we broke 100 QSO/hr but settled back slow again. At one point I was calling CQ on 15 (I think) I so desperate for a QSO I faded back into my FQP "CQ Contest anyone anywhere please" type CQ. K1TO hears it and comments later on how funny it was. Knowing we're behind on QSOs and mults, we picked up our multiplier hunt. Rates dropped to where we had to take more off time. We sat and listened to competing stations run like crazy while we couldn't buy a QSO. We took our final off time around 09:30 and our Judge (Kele YT3T) gets on the radio and works the competition around the bands. Just great, this is turning into a disaster! We get back on the contest on the last hour make 63 qsos and finish with roughly 1600 QSOs and 300 mults. After the contest our hosts gave us the news that many stations had over 2000 QSO and 350 mults. After hearing that news, we quietly dismantled the station and packed up the truck. We had one last fine meal (a local pot roast dish) in the cabin made by our hosts. We reviewed the contest and elements we had to deal with overnight. George, our station hosts, and I agreed that the 5000KM elevation may have not been the optimal location for this contest. We didn't make as many QSOs as we wanted, but we put it perspective and realized that it wasn't about how many QSO we made. We were all very happy to have met and made many more friends and appreciated the size and effort to put this event on, and how fortunate to were to be part of it. It was then we relaxed. we did have fun; it was difficult and trying at times, but fun. After our fine meal we headed back down the mountain and headed back to Bled to hear all the other stories that evening.

George and I reviewed the week on the balcony of the hotel. Monday was an almost "off" day; the only thing to attend was the award ceremony in the afternoon. There, we saw our own FCG President K1TO receive the trophy for winning the WRTC along with N5TJ. After the ceremony, we had one last party in the Ice Hall to meet and talk to more long time friends. Many didn't leave the party until 2 and 3am. Just like Dayton! After a great week, we had to say good-bye to many of our friends and vowed to see them again in the "next one".

Tuesday, Dan I headed off for more site seeing, we still had a few more days left in our vacation. We headed off to Austria and spent some time in Vienna. Wednesday we head back into Germany and visited wit Bernd DF3CB and his fine contest QTH. We had dinner with Bernd and Ben DL6RAI Bernd was kind enough to let us stay at his place before heading back to Stuttgart. Just before heading into Stuttgart we spent a while driving in the beautiful Black Forest. We later met back up with Marcus DK5AX and spent the night at his place before we had to catch the plane

It was an amazing trip. So many hams went out of their way to help us and make us feel welcome throughout the trip; I wish we could have visited all those that offered their fine hospitality. The Slovenian's were stellar in putting on a flawless weeklong event. Many thanks To Dan K1TO for an awesome three week 7000KM road trip with a great guy and a super operator! I wish his operating skills had rubbed off! Thank you to the FCG for the WRTC selection! If you get the chance to visit Europe or compete or even be a part in the next WRTC, go for it, it will surely be an experience of a lifetime!



Front: George **W0UA** and Jeff **WC4E** operating **S588S**.
Rear: Kele **YT3T** (Referee) and Ivan **S52IE** (Support Team)



Dan, **K1TO** and Jeff, **N5TJ** operating portable **3A** in Monaco.

FCG Sponsors Contest Forum at the WCF Convention in Tampa

By Fred Perkins, K4LQ

Dan, **K1TO** and Jeff, **WC4E** conducted a Contest Forum at the First West Central Florida Convention in at the Palmetto Center near Tampa. An assembled group of 32 people heard Dan's presentation on Contesting, and Jeff's review of his experiences at WRTC-2000, (covered elsewhere in this newsletter.)

Dan gave a review of the history and mechanics of contesting with an emphasis on the fun part. using his own contesting experiences to illustrate points. A lot of questions were asked by would-be contesters, hopefully we will be hearing some of the audience on the bands in upcoming contests. Jeff gave a very thorough presentation on his visit to WRTC, as well as other experiences he and Dan had as they traveled through Europe. He illustrated his story with a lot of pictures that made it that much more interesting.

While we didn't get quite the attendance of the next presentation by Riley Hollingsworth of the FCC, it was a good start for our first Contest forum in 2000, and leaves us something to build on in 2001.



Forum attendees listen attentively to the presentation by Dan, **K1TO**. Picture quality leaves something to be desired due to the low lighting level in the room.



Dan and Jeff in action during the presentations.

First Florida QSL Party Held

By Dan Street, K1TO

WC4E hosted the first of what might turn into a regular FCG event - an outgoing QSL party. K4XS and K1TO brought boxes of cards, and TO even brought along N2RM to assist. Altogether, the group had 49 lbs of out-going cards, over half of that represented by the high-quality, 2-sided 3A cards that Jeff and I had to send out from our operation there prior to the WRTC. Less than 2 hours later, all cards were sorted into piles by country.

Bill had calculated that 4 oz. was the breakpoint. Any country that had more than 4 oz. of cards would be direct shipped, while the remainder of the cards would be carried by Dan to ARRL.

Amazingly, there were only 38 oz (2.4 lbs.) remaining to pay the ARRL "full price" of \$6/lb. The other 47 lbs. (95%!) were mailed out at varying rates below that, depending on volume. As expected, several countries got their own boxes of cards - DL, JA, I and SP. SP would not normally be thought of as the 4th highest volume QSO producer, but skip from 3A was such that Jeff and I had an abnormally high number of SP QSOs from there. Many other countries received mailing packets of 5 oz and up.

When all was signed, sealed and delivered, the cost to us worked out to be \$4.54/lb, saving us over \$70 in outgoing costs.

We discussed the feasibility of doing this on a regular basis. A little more research is in order to calculate the probable savings, based on total volume of cards. Clearly, our 49 lbs. produced tremendous savings, but much smaller volumes could still save us some money. Also, the revised postage rates need to be factored in...

We discussed having someone in the club designated as outgoing QSL mgr. and being the collection point for the cards. Members could bring cards to any club meeting with a "deposit", then the actual cost would be calc'd later. (Once we have done this enough, we might even set a specific dollar amount per lb...)

73, Dan, K1TO, 3A/K1TO, 8P9EU, ZF2MM, P40N, PJ7/K1TO, etc

Dxpedition University 2001 Underway

Learn the art and "How To" of DXpedition Planning and Running Pileups!

Envisioned some 10 years ago and after 2 years of writing the material, DX University is now a reality.

DXpedition University ("DXU") is the first of its kind to provide a training ground for energetic radio amateurs wanting to learn the foundational methods and tactics of DXpeditioning.

A group of 6-10 hams will go to a proven site in Jamaica (6Y). Participants become part of a team, just like the World Record 6Y2A Team. Learning begins before the trip with planning procedures and continues through the Jamaica stay. With expert hands-on training, team members will be shown the essential skills needed to feel confident about venturing out on their own DX-oriented vacations and in their ability to run and control pile-ups. There is not only personal instruction, as hard copy manuals covering all aspects are also included. Besides setting up a complete multiple transmitter station and running DX pile-ups during the week, the team will participate in the A.R.R.L. SSB contest, with additional pointers provided real-time.

This is a learning environment and all questions will be answered and fully explained. The Jamaican accommodations are radio-oriented (not a luxury hotel) and include full time staff, transportation (private driver), plus side trips during the week.

To learn more about DXU and how you can join the team in Jamaica, visit the DXU site at: <http://pages.prodigy.net/k2kw/dxu/>

73, and hope to see you in Jamaica!
Kenny K2KW & Tom N6BT

FCG Teams form for NAQP CW

By Ron Wetjen, WD4AHZ

FCG #1 - Al and the Well Hung Chads"

N2NL - Al
K5KG - Chad
N4BP - Chad
K4LQ - Chad
WD4AHZ - Chad

"FCG #2 - Dubya and the Dimpled Chads"

K4OJ - Dubya
N4RP - Chad
N4PK - Chad
K4XS - Chad
W4SAA @ N8PR - Chad

"FCG #3 - Jeb and the Swinging Chads"

NF4A - Jeb
KN4Y - Chad
W0EBA - Chad
KB4N - Chad
N4KW - Chad

"FCG #4 - Katherine and the Lost Chads"

W1YL - Katherine
W4ZW - Chad
N4AO - Chad
W4/YV5DTA - Chad
K4FB - Chad

"FCG #5 - Dick and the Asymmetrical Chads"

W3TMZ - Dick
K9BG/4 - Chad
W4IR - Chad
W4SO - Chad
N4TO - Chad

"FCG #6 - George and the Clinging Chads"

N4OX - Chad
AE4RO (op AE4SW) - Chad
W1CW - Chad

Stay tuned to the FCG Reflector for the post-contest details, which will also be covered in the next newsletter.
Have Fun!

73, Ron

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WCF-NEXT CONTACT

By Paul Toth, NA4AR

While many of you will be busy this weekend disguised as "Chad" in the NAQP-CW, I would like to invite you to take a few moments to help the West Central Florida Section celebrate its First Anniversary. WCF-NEXT CONTACT will be on the air Sunday, January 14, 2001 from 12 Noon to 6 PM ET (1700-2300 UTC).

Help us celebrate our First Anniversary as the ARRL's 71st Section by checking in with K4WCF on the following frequencies:

CW SSB
10M 28.071 28.371
15M 21.071 21.271
17M 18.151
20M 14.050 14.271
40M 7.071 7.271

2M FM 146.73 (Sarasota)
146.97 (Clearwater)
147.375 (Lakeland)

440 FM 444.425 (Holiday)
444.775 (Lakeland)

A Special First Anniversary QSL Card will be award to all stations checking in with K4WCF during the Special Event. To receive your QSL Card, please send a Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope to:

WCF-NEXT CONTACT
P.O. Box 8734
Seminole, FL 33775-8734

For additional information, visit the ARRL West Central Florida's web page at <http://www.wcfarrl.org>.

Special thanks to K4XS and N4TO for helping anchor this Special Event.

73! Paul J. Toth-NA4AR
Asst. Section Manager-ARRL West Central Florida
Section Asst. Director-ARRL Southeastern Division
West Central Florida SKYWARN Group
(WX4TBW)