CP6CW 2004 CQWW DX CW —Results and Reflections

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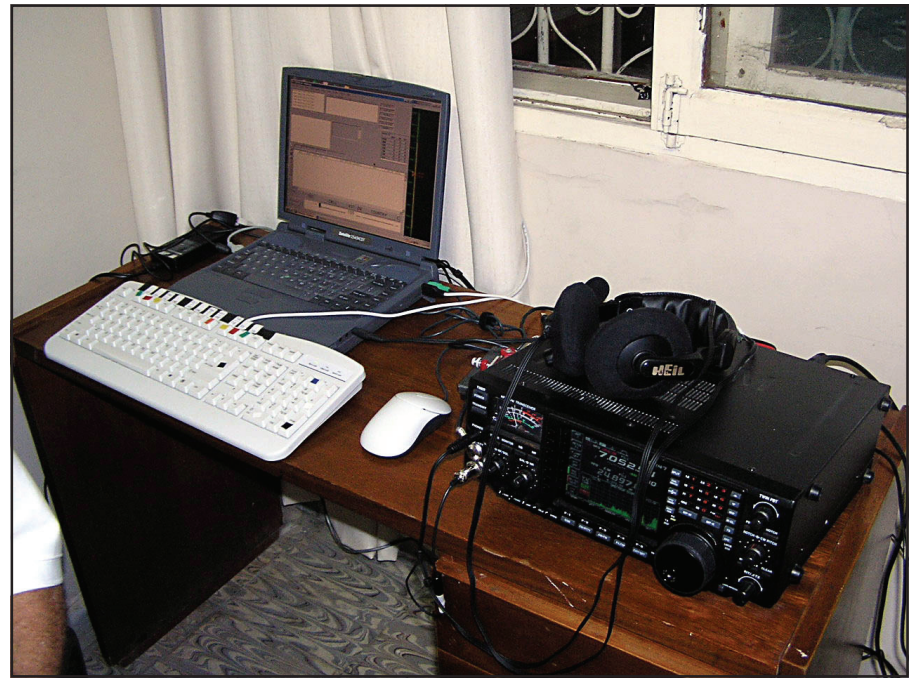
The contest strategy that we employed was more straightforward than last year at TGØAA. Since almost all QSOs are 3 pointers, we didn't have to avoid US stations in order to maximize our score. Carl, K9LA, again provided our pre-contest propagation analysis. For the most part, we tried to be on the band that was open to Europe. The stateside stations would always show up, and we would put them in the log. But keeping focused on Europe maximized multipliers on the run station. At sunrise, this strategy worked well for us. Since the southern hemisphere is in summer, the days are longer. We had two hours of Europe before sunrise in the states. Ten meters was wide open to Europe Sunday, and the 2-hour window really helped.

We operated Multi-Single. As you know, Multi-Single allows a second transmitter to be used to work multipliers. This year, we had the ACØX Internet PacketCluster node to help us find multipliers. And, this year, we tried to work the multiplier station harder. We knew from past experience that the final score would depend on how well we dug out the multipliers. Some pileups were easy to break. It seemed as though any path over the south was easy, but, although northern paths were there, we had difficulty with the pileups. We missed zone 2 on 20 meters, because we couldn't break the US pile up.



One of the multiplier stations at CP6CW.

Bolivian Propagation

Conditions from Bolivia were certainly different than in Minnesota. I liked the over-the-South Pole 10 meter opening at 1:30 AM local time. There was a Europe opening to the southwest in the early morning that we didn't take advantage of.

And 40 meters was a strange band. As I said previously, it's summer in Bolivia, so I wasn't expecting much out of 40 meters. The first day was a wash because we didn't discover that the beam was pointing backwards until Sunday morning (more about this in a moment). Boy, the LUs were easy to work when we thought we were pointed at Europe! Sunday afternoon, about 3PM local, Vlad was on the multiplier station. He asked if we thought it was a good idea to check 40 meters. Well, the Sun was still almost directly overhead and the locals were just returning from their siestas. Vlad checked 40 meters and in a few minutes he put HSØ into the log!

Of course, 80 and 160 meters were disappointing. But you have to remember it was summer down there. And, we were operating from a club station, at a very noisy location. Eighty meters turned into a multiplier band and 160 meters was a bust. We did manage to work K3LR on topband. The only other 160-meter contest QSO was with a local ham.

We never got a chance to learn the propagation anomalies from CP6. QSOs outside of the contest were very limited. The bulk of our gear didn't arrive until Thursday, and we didn't have access to the facility at night, except during the contest (plus the night that Bill and I got locked in).

Language and Technical Challenges

And then there was the 40-meter beam built backwards. After it fell down a few years ago, the locals rebuilt it, but they had only an English instruction manual. What's the Spanish word for "front?" What's the Spanish word for "back?" The 40-meter rotor, with 300 degrees of rotation, is now south-centered with the dead zone right into the States.

Also, during the first day, the rotor boxes for the tribanders were mislabeled. When the mult station turned the beam to work someone in Asia, the run station would lose propagation to Europe. The second day went much smoother.

The pileups were difficult to manage at times. It's helpful if the stations spread out a bit. We should have tried split more often. QSO rates were generally at 120, with a few hours of low rates the first night. Maximum QSO rates were just shy of 300/hour. Modesto, CP6UH, the club president, operated for about 3 hours. He got the hang of it right away. It was nice to see him so very interested in CW contesting.

Summary— CP6CW 2004 CQWW CW

Band	*QSOs*	*Points*	*Zones*	*Countries*
160	2	3	2	2
80	36	88	16	34
40	826	2417	32	99
20	857	2456	34	116
15	1867	5466	33	127
10	1136	3315	31	100
Totals	4724	13,745	148	478

Claimed score: 8,604,370