

Space—The Final Frontier: The 2004 ARRL EME Competition

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Space: the final frontier! So goes the phrase from the popular *Star Trek* TV series. This declaration is not only true for space exploration, but for radio amateurs as well. Today, EME (Earth-Moon-Earth, otherwise known as “moonbounce”) communication is commonplace on 24 GHz and experiments on 47 GHz are occurring now. EME activity is alive and well!

The 2004 contest saw a slight drop in log submissions from 2003, down 14% to 131, but the number of different stations active and worked during the competition remained high. This was the first year to officially sanction a three weekend concept for the EME competition, incorporating 50 MHz through 1296 MHz on the two original traditional weekends, and adding a third weekend for microwave activity on 2304 MHz and above.

Six-meter EME has found a resurgence and Dennis, K7BV/1, took top honors on that band.

Two-meters had a fierce shoot out for the single-op top slot between Dave, W5UN, Gary, KB8RQ and Alex, RU1AA. Alex finished with the most QSOs at 170, but Dave and Gary managed to edge slightly ahead, respectively, with multipliers. IK3MAC and I2FAK took the top two slots in the multi-op category.

The top four single-op shoot out on 432 MHz was just as close with Mark, N2IQ; Jan, DL9KR; Andy, N9AB and Uwe, DJ6MB. Mark took the top slot with 84 QSOs. In the multi-op category, OH2PO garnered first place with a valiant effort after being hampered in the second leg with -15°C temperatures and heavy snow.

The temperature was hot on 1296 MHz, though, with a six-way bout for the top slot between HB9BBD, G4CCH, K9SLQ, OK1CA, DL0SHF (by DF9CY) and F6CGJ. HB9BBD nailed down first place, but second place was decided by the difference of only one additional QSO by G4CCH! In the multi-op category, the gang at SK0UX edged out OH2AXH and W2DRZ.

On 2304 MHz, Viljo, ES5PC, operated single band from Estonia for the first time. ES5PC, OZ4MM and F2TU each individually garnering as many QSOs as had ever been made on that band in past competitions, bringing a smile we're sure to the spirit of W4HHK!

Al, W5LUA took the top spot on 3.4 GHz while Tommy, WD5AGO made his first 5.7 GHz EME contact to take single band first place.

On 10 GHz, OK1UWA took the top single op slot. In multiop, WA7CJO, F6KSX, IQ4DF and DL0EF were the rally leaders with Jim, WA7CJO's 15 Qs

just shy of the 18Q mark of F6KSX set in 2001. Nice job!

In the single-op, multi-band arena, Jimmie, SV1BTR, solidly won the 50-1296 MHz category with his effort, racking up 95 Qs on 2 meters and 33 Qs on 70 cm.

In the single-op 2304 MHz and up category, F2TU took command with his 2.3/5.7/10 GHz approach.

Stig, OZ4MM, finished with an impressive single-op, all band category first place finish with G3LTF and WA6PY close behind.

HB9Q had an impressive finish with a whopping 2,605,100 points in the multi-op, 50-1296 MHz category with S53J and YO4FRJ capturing the second and third spots.

A number of stations tried EME for the first time in this year's event, including VK4CDI, and digital activity continued to increase.

Soapbox comments ranged from the effects of weather, bad conditions at some locations, and the need to consider an “Assisted” category. These will all be reviewed and discussed for the 2005 competition, but one thing is a solid bet: the excitement and intensity will continue. Be sure to check the ARRLWeb for expanded coverage, line scores and dates for the 2005 ARRL International EME Competition!



The 2-meter array (16x6 cross-polarized, 1.1 wavelength, 22 dBd) of Jimmie, SV1BTR.



The Ohio Big Gun array of Gary, KB8RQ, who finished second in the 144 MHz Single Operator category. **QST**

