

State QSO Party Challenge Update

There's a new contest season that has been gaining momentum over the last few years. It's the state QSO party contest season, 47 contests that run the first weekend in February through the third weekend in October.

If you haven't participated in a state QSO party during the last 3 – 4 years, then you are in for a big surprise. The activity in the state QSO party contests has increased more than 200% since 2019. The state QSO party contests have become much more competitive, requiring BIC from start to finish to take home a win!

For those of you who may be new to contesting, the state QSO party is typically a contest in which in-state stations can work everyone, and out-of-state stations can work only in-state stations. Each state QSO

party contest is unique in its rules, awards, and, of course, the location of the target state.

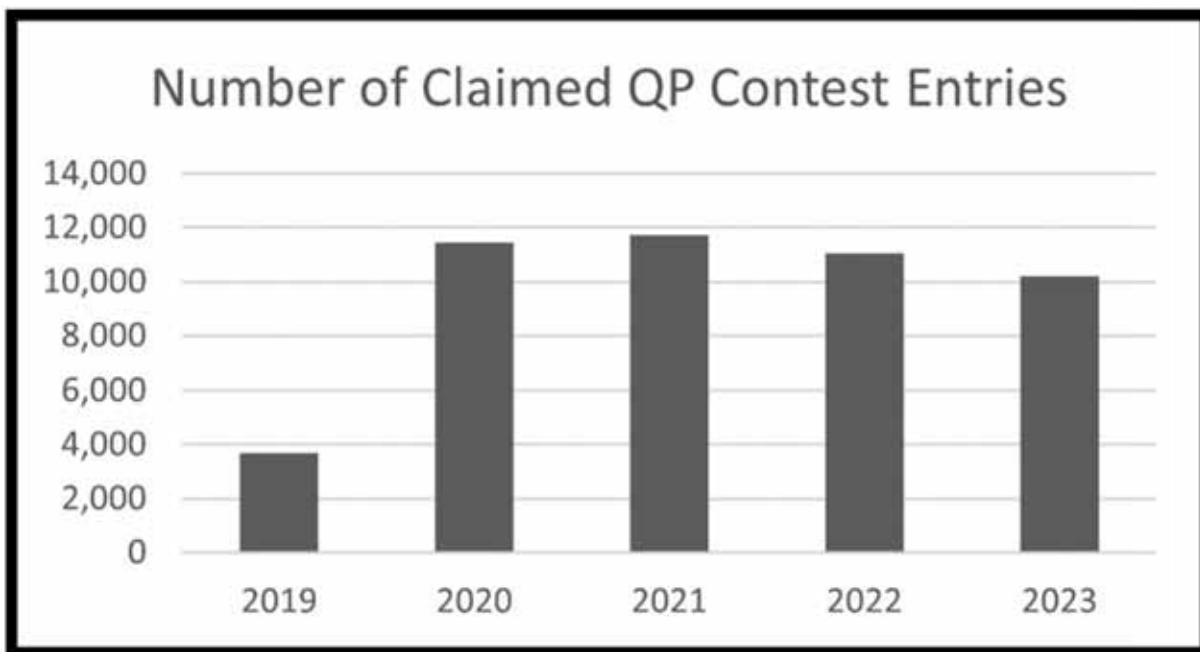
One additional reason for this consistent high level of entries is that more operators are participating in multiple-state QSO party contests during the year instead of just participating in their home-state QSO party contest.

My story: In 2013, after being a mobile-only station for many years, I set up my low-power station (Icom IC-735/low dipoles) and jumped back into contesting. This was the year when I first experienced the thrill of the state QSO contests. After my first year of QP contesting, I finished close to the top, and I finally received a 1st place award in the 2014 North Carolina QSO Party. I quickly progressed from a player to a contender to a winner!



In 2015, I became actively involved with the administration of the South Carolina QSO Party. I led the team through a complete overhaul of the contest with the goal of increasing activity and fun.

In 2019, there were at least 46 active state QSO party contests on the air, and I participated in all of them. In November, I conceived an exciting idea that I thought would help tie all of these individual contests together into a year-long competition, which would encourage ops to participate in all of the state QSO party contests. My idea was based upon the NASCAR Cup Series concept, in which



State QSO Party totals.

drivers race each other at various tracks during the season, and points accumulate based on their performance during each race.

I began sharing my concept with other QSO party contesters, and I ran across Stan, K4SBZ, who developed the Florida Contest Group's club competition. Stan and I started discussing the SQP Cup idea, and he joined me in this mountain-moving endeavor. Thanks to Stan, K4SBZ, the other members of the initial State

have reported record numbers of log submissions, and the trend still continues. The chart below illustrates the increase in activity of three individual SQP Challenge Top Ten competitors over the last five years.

To qualify for the State QSO Party awards program, participants must make a minimum of two contacts in two SQP Challenge approved contests and submit their activity data to **3830scores.com**. Participants can then view their activity via our live

6). In 2024, the SQP Club Challenge was launched to stimulate QSO party contesting at the club level.

The mobile/portable state QSO party contesting is the lifeblood of the contests. During the last few years, we've noticed more and more POTA operators on the air during the QP season. In 2023, Jim, AD4EB/M, and his XYL as the driver made 12,137 QSOs operating in five state QSO party contests (FL, GA, IL, TN, and TX). In the Florida QSO Party, Jim made 3,404 QSOs from 49 counties in 20 hours!

If you are a POTA or HF mobile operator, please consider getting involved in operating mobile/portable in state QSO party contests in your state and area. The state QSO party contests would love to have all of their state counties activated during the contest.

Our current SQP Group consists of WN4AFP, K4SBZ, N8II, WB9CIF, and K8ZT. Our primary focus during the last four years has been on keeping the challenge fresh and exciting. We are always interested in new ideas, suggestions, etc. Please visit our website at **stateqsoparty.com** to contact us.

“The purpose of the State QSO party Challenge is to be the catalyst to take state QSO party contesting to the next level.”
<https://stateqsoparty.com/state-qso-party-challenge-rules>

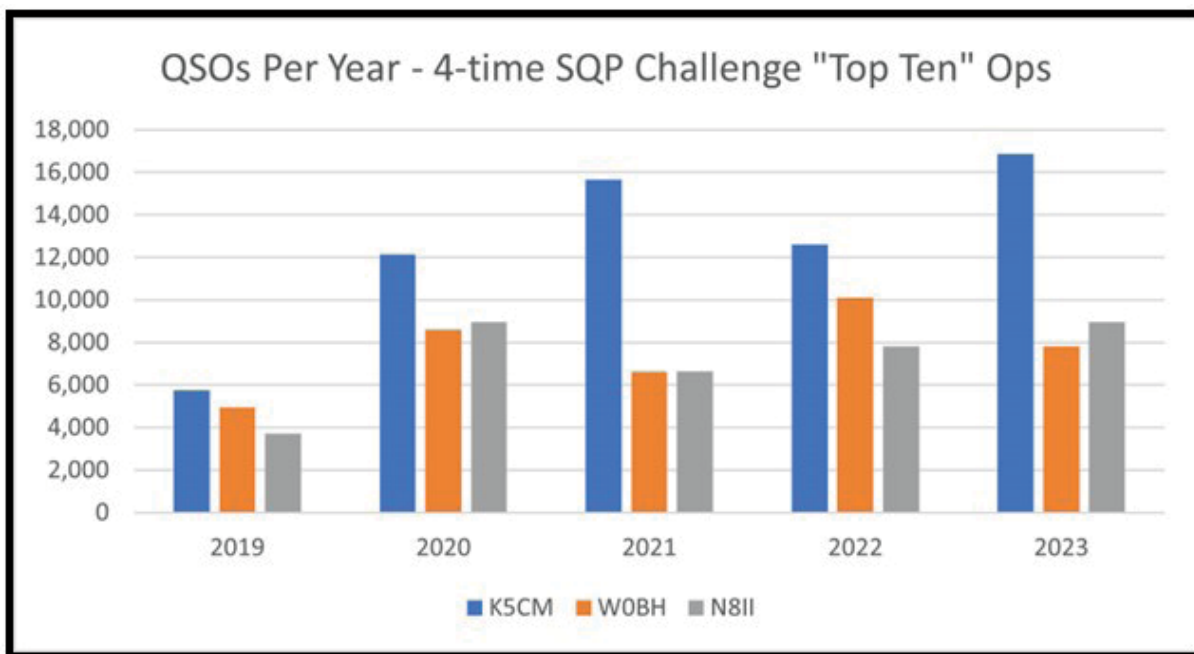
QSO Party Group (WB9CIF, N2CU, N8II, and K3MAW), Bruce, WA7BNM, and the sponsorship by Icom America, the State QSO Party Challenge year-long competition was now more than an idea — it was a reality!

We just completed the fourth year of the State QSO Party Challenge, and there have been more than 4 million claimed QSOs reported in state QSO party contests, and the activity has been off the charts. State QSO Party administrators

leaderboard located at **stateqsoparty.com**.

In 2021, we unveiled the Worked All QSO Parties awards program to encourage amateurs to strive to participate in each of the SQP Challenge approved contests.

In 2022, the number of State QSO Party Challenge contests grew from 45 to 47 with the addition of two Canadian contests, the Quebec QSO Party (VE2) and the Canadian Prairies QSO Party (VE/VA 4, 5, and



SQP top three ops comparison over time.