

Field Day, Monitor Pass, 8,314 ft



View of Leviathan Peak to the north from campsite.



Lousey photo of me at my typical Field Day setup.

The club did not sponsor a Field Day this year so I thought I would share my personal experience this weekend with you. (Please send in your reports to share with the club)

Weekend began Friday morning with the 2.5 hr drive up through Markleeville to the campsite at Monitor Pass off highway 89, just south of Leviathan peak. Full blown aspen forest. I've wanted to camp here for 19 years. Sent my wife to visit a friend in Lemoore, Ca. with the dog, and I took off.

Arrived Fri at 11:30am, set up camp, tent, antenna(cf zepp), radio station, etc. A few casual qsos were made on cw fri pm to check equipment. Wow, really high qrn on 40m.. must be band condx.

Next morning 27degF... burr. FD start time 1800z. Wow, really high qrn, S7- S9. Fiddled with my Ft 857 for an hour, checking generator, antenna, equipment, etc. No go!. Pulled out my trusty 25yo. Ts570 and problem solved. Great band conditions.

Weird. (Either the ft857 is not good for crowded bands or I am not fully adept at working that machine). Worked as 1B SV on 15, 20, and 40m casually hunting and pouncing all day into early evening. Nice. Made my 100 contacts.

Sunday morning, 30F, but warmed to 73F later. During 6:30 am breakfast I heard strange noise to my southeast. With coffee cup in hand went to investigate. BIG black bear raised it's head over the brush looking at ME. Having read bear protocol I shouted and waved my arms. After the second time the bear did a 180, crashing through the forest and did not return :). Ate breakfast and FD continued. Made another 25 qsos and packed it up by 12pm. Home in one piece at 2pm. Overall, best FD ever!!.

Yes, lots of work and planning but this year I did not cook in Calaveras county. (Alas, missed Fred, WB6QVI, my FD partner for many, many years who did not accompany me this time)

Will submit my score to ARRL. Hope not alot of dupes.

73

Mark, N6IV