



Southern Sentinel Observing Session Notes

Observing Session - Waharau Dark Sky Weekend 2nd - 4th May

Date: 2 - 4 Apr 2003 (Local)
 Location: Waharau Regional Park.
 60 Minutes From Home.
 Weather: Generally Clear (See Text).
 Seeing: Limiting Magnitude 5.5, transparency 3/5, seeing 2.5/5
 Moon: No Moon
 Equipment: 13.1" F5 Dob with Paracorr, TeleVue Eyepieces, UHC Filter

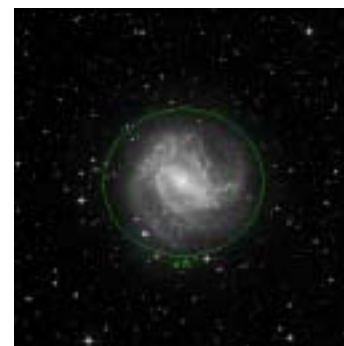
Waharau Dark Sky Weekend has rolled around again and it was a pleasure to meet up with the local Auckland & Hamilton observers once again. People do travel to this event, as even people from Tauranga and Rotorua came up for the weekend. After the full weekend of observing last weekend, this weekend presented itself as a good opportunity to look at the brighter and finer objects of the sky. Seasoned observers tend to get on with their own observing and often newer people to the hobby have not seen much of the sky. So the weekend was geared toward others.

The weather on Friday was atrocious with rain bucketing down. After a slow trip down with trailer in tow, the rain eased at about 7 PM, not long after I arrived. The skies cleared and while the seeing was not too good, the transparency was very good. Many people did not come down as the weather was lousy, but a bit of observing was done by the few who were there, in an approximately two hour window of clear weather.

Objects seen were;

| Object | Type | Altitude | Magnification | Eyepiece |
|----------|------------------|----------|---------------|----------------------------|
| M 104 | Galaxy | 49.4° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| M 3 | Globular Cluster | 15.5° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 3532 | Open Cluster | 68.1° | 72x | TeleVue 27mm Panoptic |
| NGC 3372 | Bright Nebula | 66.4° | 72x | TeleVue 27mm Panoptic |
| M 83 | Galaxy | 60.4° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 6144 | Globular Cluster | 27.0° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 3825 | Galaxy | 42.7° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 3822 | Galaxy | 42.7° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 3817 | Galaxy | 42.7° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |

Not much was seen but M83 was just stunning. The newly coated mirror has shown detail in the outer halo of M83 and spiral nature was clearly seen. A long time was spent in the Eta Carinae Nebulae as people like Richard Moss took in the nebulosity and dark lanes running all through the surrounding region. People enjoyed the views with and without the UHC Filter and the Homunculus was clear and sharp and 72x. Seeing did not coax the 12mm out.



M83 in Hydra

Cloud put paid to the rest of the evening and the rest of the time was employed in meaningless discussion on all sorts of useless topics.

The second evening was a real stunner. More people arrived on Saturday afternoon and as the sun set, the skies cleared and a good evening was on the cards. The seeing was better and the transparency

was good again. The occasional breeze was felt and the evening was much cooler than the previous evening. Dew caused strife with most equipment and hit the bigger Dobs after 11 PM. Warming the secondary mirror made the observing last longer but the dew and then cloud put paid to the observing at just after 1 AM.

Objects seen were;

| Object | Type | Altitude | Magnification | Eyepiece |
|-----------------|------------------|----------|---------------|----------------------------|
| ----- | ---- | ----- | ----- | ----- |
| NGC 3201 | Globular Cluster | 77.1° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 3262 | Galaxy | 77.9° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 3256 | Galaxy | 78.2° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 3628 | Galaxy | 35.9° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| M 66 | Galaxy | 36.4° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| M 65 | Galaxy | 36.4° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| TYC 8659-1394-1 | Star | 55.8° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 4755 | Open Cluster | 54.8° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 3242 | Planetary Nebula | 71.3° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 5844 | Planetary Nebula | 39.7° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| IC 2448 | Planetary Nebula | 55.7° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 5189 | Planetary Nebula | 49.6° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| Coalsack | Dark Nebula | 54.8° | 0x | (None) |
| NGC 2899 | Planetary Nebula | 68.8° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 5139 | Globular Cluster | 55.6° | 161x | TeleVue 12mm Nagler Type 2 |
| NGC 5128 | Galaxy | 55.7° | 161x | TeleVue 12mm Nagler Type 2 |
| NGC 3699 | Planetary Nebula | 65.9° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| IC 2501 | Planetary Nebula | 64.6° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| He2- 67 | Planetary Nebula | 65.7° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| PK 290+ 7.1 | Planetary Nebula | 73.7° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 3918 | Planetary Nebula | 69.1° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| He2-111 | Planetary Nebula | 51.6° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| He2-103 | Planetary Nebula | 53.1° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| alpha Centauri | Star | 50.9° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 3195 | Planetary Nebula | 45.2° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 6026 | Planetary Nebula | 39.2° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 5986 | Globular Cluster | 43.6° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 6072 | Planetary Nebula | 39.0° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 6000 | Galaxy | 42.1° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 2442 | Galaxy | 38.9° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 6302 | Planetary Nebula | 43.5° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 6337 | Planetary Nebula | 42.7° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| B 87 | Dark Nebula | 33.3° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| M 61 | Galaxy | 44.6° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 5333 | Galaxy | 78.3° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| LEDA 166023 | Galaxy | 77.8° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| ESO 221- 9 | Galaxy | 77.8° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| ESO 221- 8 | Galaxy | 78.4° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| ESO 221- 6 | Galaxy | 78.3° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| ESO 221- 5 | Galaxy | 77.8° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| ESO 221- 4 | Galaxy | 78.1° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| ESO 221- 3 | Galaxy | 77.9° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| ESO 221- 21 | Galaxy | 78.4° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| ESO 221- 20 | Galaxy | 78.4° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| ESO 221- 2 | Galaxy | 78.0° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| ESO 221- 18 | Galaxy | 78.4° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| ESO 221- 14 | Galaxy | 78.6° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| ESO 221- 13 | Galaxy | 78.7° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| ESO 221- 12 | Galaxy | 78.6° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| ESO 221- 10 | Galaxy | 77.7° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| Pluto | Planet | 42.8° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| M 22 | Globular Cluster | 38.8° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |

| | | | | |
|----------|------------------|-------|------|----------------------------|
| M 17 | Bright Nebula | 39.8° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| M 11 | Open Cluster | 27.9° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| NGC 5962 | Galaxy | 35.9° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |
| M 5 | Globular Cluster | 50.9° | 114x | TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4 |

I slipped in a few unobserved objects into the program tonight and Guy Thornley and I nabbed a few He planetary nebulae early on and then Dave Brock and I had a go at observing the 'Bow & Arrow'. The 'Bow & Arrow' was featured in the June 2003 Sky & Tel and was a Centaurus group so we attacked that later in the evening as the people thinned out. (They were on a diet!). Other than that it was generally popular objects observed.

A very enjoyable weekend.

Tough objects ; ESO Galaxies in the 'Bow & Arrow' and He Planetaries.

Memorable objects ; M83's Spiral Arms.

Cheers.

Paul Kemp
 13.1" Reflector
 Auckland, New Zealand
 36° 55' 16" South, 174° 43' 30" East

-- The Southern Sentinel --