



Southern Sentinel Observing Session Notes

Observing Session - Monday 7th July 2003

Date: 07 July 2003 (Local)
Time: 0445-0530 NZDT (UT +12)
Location: Cornwallis Beach Regional Park.
25 Minutes From Home.
Weather: Very Cold and Calm conditions. Showers about.
Seeing: Limiting Magnitude 5.5, transparency 4.0/5, seeing 3/5
Moon: No Moon (Waxing Moon, Set)
Equipment: 13.1" F5 Dob, TeleVue Eyepieces, UHC & OIII Filters

The forecast for overnight sounded good and I decided to load the car and go observing early. There was no cloud at 3:30 AM so I decided to go.

Cornwallis Beach is the closest relatively dark site from home and mornings are harder to get motivated for. A short drive to good skies is the best for mornings, especially a work day.

Unfortunately when I arrived at Cornwallis Beach, the sky looked threatening. I waited and sure enough down came the rain. I drove out further to see if the sky would clear but it did not look promising. A serious problem with my car which put out my headlights looked to put to bed my observing session. I decided to drive as best I could the 210 minutes back to Cornwallis and wait for a bit more light so I could safely drive home.

When I arrived back at Cornwallis at about 4:30 AM, the sky had cleared so I quickly unpacked and I was away observing by 4:40 AM. The morning was very cold with snow falling in the Central North Island down to 200 Meters. The skies were good but the seeing again was not to great. Anyway I could not complain as I was going to get some observing in.

I had planned to have a go at observing the SMC, and the weather obliged with a dark southern aspect and virtually cloud free for the next 50 minutes.

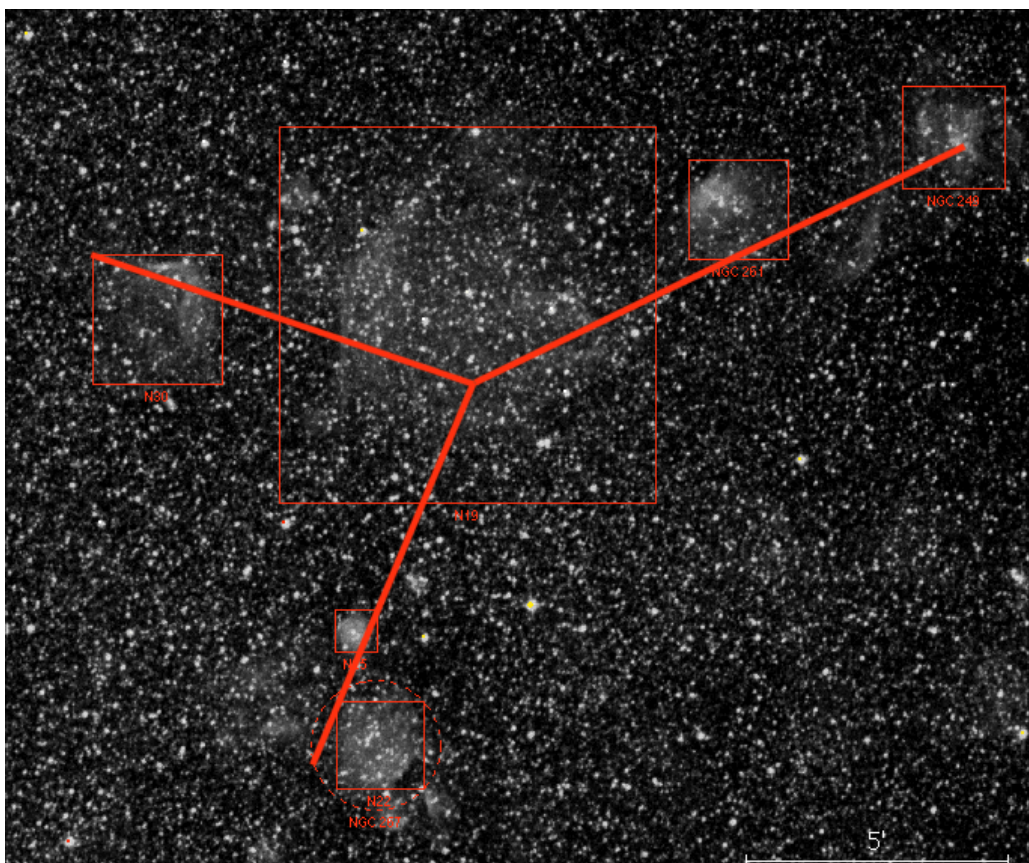
Objects seen were;

Object	Type	Altitude	Magnification	Eyepiece
-----	----	-----	-----	-----
NGC 104	Globular Cluster	54.1°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
K3	Globular Cluster	53.4°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
NGC 176	Open Cluster	52.8°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
NGC 231	Open Cluster	53.0°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
NGC 222	Open Cluster	52.9°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
NGC 220	Open Cluster	52.9°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
NGC 265	Open Cluster	52.8°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
NGC 256	Open Cluster	52.8°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
NGC 249	Bright Nebula	53.2°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
NGC 248	Bright Nebula	52.9°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
NGC 242	Open Cluster	52.9°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
N30	Bright Nebula	53.0°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
N16	Bright Nebula	52.9°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
NGC 261	Bright Nebula	53.1°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
N19	Bright Nebula	53.1°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
N30	Bright Nebula	53.0°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
NGC 267	Open Cluster	52.9°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
N25	Bright Nebula	53.0°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4
N22	Bright Nebula	52.9°	98x	TeleVue 17mm Nagler Type 4

It was good to have a good go with the new OIII and run it in the Astrocrumb Filterslide. Both performed well, but I had to observe without the Paracorr as the in-focus of the Paracorr put the focuser in contact with the slide. I knew this would happen and was not surprised to find this the case. Also debuting tonight was the Siebert illuminated reticle eyepiece. It worked excellent.

The nebulosity in the region observed was outstanding.

The rain looked to be back at about 5:30 so I packed up and headed home. A small observing session but very eventful. I do not think I will forget this morning for a long time.



Nebulosity and clusters surrounding NGC249, NGC261 & NGC267.

The Objects that were worth mentioning were the nebulosity and clusters surrounding NGC249, NGC261 & NGC267.

Outstanding contrast especially with the two filters and swapping between them with the Filterslide was superb. The patches of Nebulosity made a 'Y' shape and even the fainter Henize Nebulosity (N Objects) were easy with the filters. I will be back in this region again to study further the little nuances of this fantastic southwestern end of the Small Magellanic Cloud.

Cheers.

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