

Sans titre

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POSSIBLE NOVA IN AQUILA

G. M. Hurst, "The Astronomer", Basingstoke, England, communicates:
"M. Collins, Everton, Bedfordshire, has reported his detection of a
variable

object in Aquila during photography with a 135-mm telephoto lens on Kodak
2415 film for the U.K. Nova/Supernova Patrol. The object was recorded on
May 11.988 UT at mag 10.9. An image by Collins from 2000 Nov. 26.8 failed
to show the object (limiting mag 12.8), which was also absent from a
master

patrol image obtained on 1997 Aug. 25.9 (limiting mag 13). A patrol image
from 2001 Apr. 25.1 may show the object near mag 12.1, but as the Milky
Way
field is crowded this is rather uncertain. In response to an appeal, N.
D.

James, Chelmsford (0.30-m reflector), obtained a 30-s CCD frame of the
field

on May 16.966 UT and found the object at $V = 12.6$ (GSC system) in the
measured position R. A. = 19h07m28s.41, Decl. = +11d44'45".8 (equinox
2000.0;

15 GSC stars, mean error 0".24 in R. A., 0".15 in Decl). The nearest star
(R = 16.2) in the USNO A2.0 catalogue has position end figures 28s.34,
52".1."

COMET C/2001 A2 (LINEAR)

E. Jehin, A. Jaunsen, H. Boehnhardt, M. Kiekebusch, H. Nunez, R.
Amestica,

C. Herrera, J. Navarete, F. Delgado and R. M. West, European Southern
Observatory, report: "Images of comet C/2001 A2 have been obtained using
the

8.2-m Very Large Telescopes Melipal and Yepun with the Nasmyth and
Cassegrain

test cameras, respectively. On May 14.98 UT two components were seen in
R-band

images, the eastern, tailward one (component A) about 1 mag fainter than
component B (within an aperture of 1".3) at a separation of 12".6 in
p.a. 105 deg. Both components had individual comae elongated
approximately

in the antisolar direction. Component B showed sunward-extended isophotes
in

the very inner part of the coma. On May 16.98 UT the distance between the
components had increased to 14".6 (in the same position angle). In

addition, the sunward fragment appeared to have split into two components
with

a separation of 1" in p.a. 135-315 deg; these components were of about the
same brightness (in R) and surrounded by a joint coma. V-band images
revealed

very extended isophotes perpendicular to the separation direction of this
new

pair. This could indicate the presence of a large amount of gas in the
coma

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in addition to the dust."

J. Broughton, Reedy Creek, Queensland (0.25-m Schmidt-Cassegrain), reports further CCD astrometry on May 14.4 and 16.3 UT, noting that on the latter occasion component A was at least two magnitudes fainter than and was separated from component B by about 14" in p. a. 102 deg.

2001 May 17

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Brian G. Marsden