

**Date:** 2004 December 19

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**Time:** ~22.00 → 01.00 Local time

**Location:** Ekerö  
Stockholm

**Temperature:** About -3°C.

## Observation report #9

So the weather forecast was telling a high pressure would come over Sweden, resulting in clear blue skies. I had finished school for this year two days ago, so what would be better than going out with the telescope? So, a few hours later around ten 'o'clock both my LX-50 and Leif's LX-200 was up and running. What I immediately noticed was the cold weather, which I thought I was prepared for. Amateur astronomy is not so athletic, and therefore it is important to cloth well.

This time I thought for myself that I would spend some good time aligning, which I also did. I wanted to do this so I could check how good my drive followed the sky. I could not be more satisfied. The only alignments I had to do were some minor ones in the DEC axis, with 5 minutes separation! I know that if I did even more precise aligning, adjustment would not be necessary at all! Leaving the scope and to let it do all the work by itself is just fantastic. So, with this opportunity I took about 15 exposures ranging from 30 seconds to 30 minutes with a 135mm lens piggybacked on the telescope. My first object was the Orion Nebula, and then the Pleiades (as the Orion Nebula went behind a tree). As the whole film is exposed, I hope at least one of the 36 pictures comes out well.

Other than that, Leif and I tried out the Meade LPI which he borrowed from his work. This is a Lunar Planetary Imager, pretty plastic actually. But we aimed the scope at Saturn and decided to try to get some shots. First we had problems focusing, because every time you touched the focuser the whole image wobbled, making it very hard to focus. After a while we managed to get a good picture of Saturn, showing the Cassini division and some minor detail on the surface. We got some nice pictures too.

Rest of the time I had trouble keeping myself warm. 3½ hour in -3 degrees without moving is really trying on the body. In the end I could not move my toes, they were completely stiff. Still, if one picture comes out good, I think it is worth some pain ☺

Other than this, I got a chance to look at various objects thru Leif's telescope, as the bright and nice galaxy M81 (which is my favourite galaxy in the sky, hope I'll get a good chance to try to photograph it).