

Date: 2006 January 09

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Time: ~17.00 -> 22.30

Location: Ömelsbo, Sweden

Temperature: -16°C.

Observation report #12

This morning I woke up pretty late, with the first word from my girlfriend saying “Look out, look at the weather!”. It was completely blue with not a single cloud in the sky. I had really forgotten how a really really blue sky looked like. It was all snowy (as the snow had fallen a couple of days earlier), so the sun reflected on top of the trees. What a great day to wake up for.

Today we went to Malins countryplace (which is called Ömelsbo), and of course I had to take my portable RT480 (3” refractor) with me. This time I thought I would have a chance to get to look at some of the objects from the book “Turn left at orion” that shows 100 of the most popular deep-sky objects. At the way there I noticed that the moon was up, so the objects that required the darkest skies were out of question. But the sky was clear, and if it was stable I might instead have a chance of looking at double stars which in my opinion is very fun.

Now as we got there, I had to spend 1½ hour showing off snow, kind of making a small place from where I could observe. That pretty much made me tired, and after a walk I took out the scope with “Turn left at orion”, a small flashlight, 2 eyepieces and a 2X barlow. I started of with Mars to check whether the sky was stable or not. It didn’t look good, but so I thought it might be hot air trapped inside the scope, so I went inside for a good meal (Malins mother makes great food, this time she made something called Chilisoppa). After eating, I looked at Mars again and the difference was huge. Now Mars was a steady disk of light, though it took some time to notice details on the disk (after all, its only 3 inch) with ~120X magnification. This would be a great night for doubles.

This night i managed to split three double-stars (one of them was a triple-star). They were Beta Monocerotis, Castor and Eta Cassiopeiae. According the book “turn left at orion”, they all needed steady skies and high power, so I was pretty pleased what I managed to do with this small short focal length telescope. After splitting the last of these three, I was so cold (after all, -16C really freezes your nose of) so I packed the scope in and finished the night. I never tought it would be this fun (and hard) to split doubles. When I got in my girlfriend looked at me, and I know she was thinking “what a mad man that goes out into freezing temperatures just for looking at some bright dots” ☺ Can’t wait for the next steady night!