

Research Committee report for January 2016

January finally opened up the clouds and allowed many people to take images with their own equipment. Meanwhile, thanks to Jim Nordhausen and Tolga Gumusayak the 24" telescope has achieved true GOTO capability, and training has begun. Other new equipment is arriving, such as the 2 inch Baader narrowband filters for Hydrogen alpha, forbidden Sulfur II, and forbidden Oxygen III.

On January 21 Clif Ashcraft imaged Jupiter and Mars in the near infrared and was surprised to see that the Great Red Spot appears brighter and larger in the infrared than it does in visible colors. He was even able to see Jupiter's moon Io as a disk, although pretty blurry. Tony Sharfman saw the occultation of Aldebaran by the moon on 1/19.

Stars were a popular target with Clif imaging Orion's Trapezium, and seven close speckle pairs. The open cluster M37 was imaged by Tolga, while Helder Jacinto imaged star clusters M35 (NGC2168) with tiny NGC2158 in the background, open cluster M38(NGC1912), and NGC1873 (IC410).

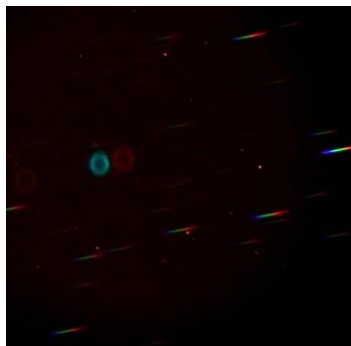
Some interesting emission nebulae in the Milky Way included the red California Nebula which was imaged by Tolga and by Dan Silber. Tolga also imaged and found animal figures in the Rosette Nebula and tested the new Ha filter on it for 2.75 hours with very clear results. Michael Lamonaco produced a stunning view of the Horsehead and Flame Nebulae.

External galaxies were also popular. Tolga's M81 showed graceful spiral arms and his colorful erupting M82 was chosen Astrobin's picture of the day (1/19). Michael shot the edge-on spiral NGC891.

Steve Lowe has processed the spectrum he took of the Ring Nebula M57 with the 14" at JJ last November. It shows the red Hydrogen alpha image and the green Oxygen III image very clearly.

See our webpage: www.asterism.org, Activities, Standing Committees, Research.
Star parties at Sandy Hook are scheduled for 3/19 and 5/14. We could always use help.

Respectfully submitted, Mary Lou West, Research Committee Chair



Horsehead Nebula, Michael Lamonaco

M57 Spectrum, Steve Lowe

M82 galaxy, Tolga Gumusayak