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2nd light WO ZenithStar 80



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Author	Message
<p>dmoody</p> <p>Joined: 31 Aug 2003 Posts: 260</p>	<p> Posted: Sun Feb 13, 2005 10:07 pm Post subject: 2nd light WO ZenithStar 80 quote </p> <hr/> <p>There was the waxing crescent moon in 32% of its phase tonight and so I pulled my ZenithStar out again to test its CA on the moon. As a sidebar activity, I also played around with how it handled off axis lights. This scope has 15 baffles in its tube, and some reports I have read indicate that they do their job well.</p> <p>I mostly looked at the limb of the moon and focused its edge with progressively higher magnifications. However, I also looked at the sharp features on the lunar surface and focused against the shadow terminations at higher magnifications. I also looked at the sky with the moon just off the edge of the field or with the dark side only in the field of view.</p> <p>The first and most remarkable thing I noticed was how many stars I saw around the fairly bright moon (a front had just come through, so the sky was very crisp... transparent with very good seeing). I compared what I saw to a couple of my computer atlases and determined I was seeing stars right by the moon at magnitudes ranging from 7.3 to 8+. The mag 7 and 8 stars were very easy to see. This was with the moon in view. When I took the moon just out beyond the edge of the field of view, several more stars ranging up to mag 9-9.5 popped in with a very nice contrast.</p> <p>With respect to the chromatic aberration, the story was the same as the last time I was out with the scope. Not much at all. The CA was most apparent under 3 conditions: 1) when I was out of focus, 2) the object in question was towards the edge of the field of view (the CA was yellow), and 3) Using a 7.5mm eyepiece or higher (I took it up to a 3.5mm), you could see a very very faint purple edge. It was a deep purple, so it wasn't distracting. I could only see it on the limb, but not against the surface details.</p> <p>I was using several different eyepieces and I know that in at least one case, most of the CA I saw was being introduced by the eyepiece, not the scope. This was because using another eyepiece of the same focal length, the color fringing would virtually disappear.</p> <p>I also racked my focus in and out several times on different areas of the moon with each</p>

eyepiece. Additionally, I did the viewing (with focus racks) using different placements in the eyepieces' FOV (in the center and towards the edge).

This scope is quite a pleasure to use. After I satisfied my spirit of evaluation, I just simply looked at the moon and enjoyed the aesthetics of the view. The images were very sharp and easy to view in the eyepiece from a 32mm to 3.5mm eyepiece. The most pleasant thing I did tonight was to put only the dark side of the moon on the edge of the field of view and enjoy an earthshine just barely bright enough for me to make out the major maria. It put a great cap on an enjoyable, albeit short in my frame of reference, observing session.

Bic

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kjcphoto

Joined: 26 Apr 2004
Posts: 64

Posted: Mon Feb 14, 2005 4:56 pm Post subject: Megrez Scopes



David,

I have the Megrez 80. Except for the paint color, it looks like the same scope. What is your opinion? I bought the Megrez 80 for a guide scope because the focuser is as solid as a rock. I also purchased the WO 2 inch 45 deg erecting prism to make drift alignment with the scope a little more intuitive, but the Megrez 80's tube is a tad too long to focus at infinity with a reticle eyepiece. I wonder if WO shortened the tube a little on the Phoenix. If you bring the Phoenix to TSP, we can measure and compare. I wouldn't be surprised if mine is longer than yours. I think the 80's were about \$600 when I bought mine. It included the WO standard 2" diagonal and was a bargain at the time. It looks like WO has made it an even better deal.

Kirk Carbo

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dmoody

Joined: 31 Aug 2003
Posts: 260

Posted: Mon Feb 14, 2005 8:45 pm Post subject:



Kirk,

I think the focuser is more or less the same focuser (as you said, solid as a rock), but there are some slight design differences in the OTA overall. More continuous lines. For instance, the focuser goes into the body in an almost seamless line and then the body curves outwards to the main portion of the tube.

As a practical matter, it is the same scope, but WO has really taken the effort to machine the overall body and focuser into a single integrated pattern. That combined with the optics and the price point (\$400) makes it, by far, one of the better deals to be had.

I suspect you are correct on the length of the tube compared to your Megrez. The overall length of the tube, if I remember, works out to 381mm while the focal length of the scope is 480mm. you have a focuser with 70mm of travel, so you have plenty of back focus for a diagonal and a

wide variety of eyepieces, which I think was one of their design objectives.

I was planning to bring it to TSP. I thought you might want to take a look at it. Looking at and through yours and Frank C.'s Megrez's, plus the quality of my diagonal, sold me on the notion that this would probably be an excellent scope.

Bic

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kjcphoto

Joined: 26 Apr 2004
Posts: 64

Posted: Mon Feb 14, 2005 10:01 pm Post subject: Megrez Tube Length



David,

My scope with the focuser racked out all the way is about 450mm which is the same as the Zenith Star. My focuser travel is only 50mm however so the Megrez tube is 20mm longer. It seems that I was not the only customer that filed a complaint with Williams Optics about being unable to come to focus with a diagonal specifically marketed as an accessory for the Megrez 80. I have read that the Japanese tend to design scopes for use without diagonals. They have obviously refined the design to accomodate the American market.

The scope works well for me with the longer tube since I am mainly using it without a diagonal as a guide scope. It also works well with most eyepieces and a standard 2 inch diagonal. Reticule eyepieces are peculiar in that they require more infocus. The scope will come to focus with a reticle and the shorter light path of a 1.25 inch diagonal. I just prefer a scope set up with the larger diagonal. I have thought about selling it a couple of times in the last year because I also have a 4" Stellarvue, but I just couldn't part with the Megrez. It's such a handy size and so rugged.

Kirk Carbo

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Bill Drelling

Joined: 22 Sep 2003
Posts: 329

Posted: Tue Feb 15, 2005 1:13 pm Post subject:



David/Kirk:

Those both sound like very nice scopes. I own a Meade 60mm refractor that cost \$50 new. That little scope has shown me the fun of observing with a small refractor. At TSP I intend to use it to finish my Messier list and earn the AL pin. The more it gets used, though, the more I think about buying a nice refractor--either an Apo or a semi-Apo (whatever "semi" means). Hopefully you both will bring them to TSP, i would love to look through them for a little while.

Bill

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kjcphoto

Posted: Tue Feb 15, 2005 1:56 pm Post subject: Scopes at TSP



Joined: 26 Apr 2004
Posts: 64

Bill,

I will also have a Stellarvue 102 EDT mounted on my 25" Dob as a wide field finder scope. It's a triplet with one element made from ED glass. It is considered a semi-apo.

Kirk

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dmoody

Posted: Tue Feb 15, 2005 10:46 pm Post subject:



Joined: 31 Aug 2003
Posts: 260

Bill,

I finally picked up one of those 60mm f/5.5 Meade's like yours at Wolf Camera, a few days ago. They are now on clearance for \$35. With their included case, they make a terrific little scope you can stuff in the suitcase.

You may be able to finish off your Messier list (except for M74) at TSP. I noticed, while looking at the Moon, that it has quite the "glowing" effect with off axis light (which should be of no surprise, since I don't even think it is baffled... I need to look). So I am sure that even the smallest skyglow in the other places I know you have observed with it, has probably affected your ability to get some of those Messiers.

Under the dark skies at the Prude, however, you should get a much better contrast and be able to pick up those dimmer fuzzies more easily.

I am still pondering getting the WO Zenithstar 66mm (4 element, not the 4 element Apochromatic) when it comes out. It has 7 baffles, I believe, and should be an excellent performer. For \$295, if it is machined like its big brothers (and I understand it is), it should be an excellent buy. You would probably appreciate it even more after all of the Messiers you have bagged so far with the Meade (almost 70 so far? Or have you long surpassed that mark?).

I am still impressed with this little Meade. With a decent eyepiece and diagonal, you can really get some decent performance on the showcase objects and widefield views. It is truly a "grab and go" scope.

Bic

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Bill Drelling

Joined: 22 Sep 2003
Posts: 329

Posted: Wed Feb 16, 2005 8:55 pm Post subject:



Kirk:

It sounds funny to hear that you have such a nice refractor as a finder scope. Of course it is fitting when mounted on that beautiful 25" reflector. Looking forward to see it.

David:

Glad to hear you picked up one of those Meade scopes. They are far from the best and it won't hold a candle to your WO 80mm, but for the \$50 it cost I have had one heck of a good time with it. You may remember when I was working that big case in New Orleans that it was the 60mm scope that I brought up to the site that weekend--so it has been great for stress relief as well. The moon does overwhelm the optics, but deep sky objects come through just fine.

As for the Messier list, I am at about 75 objects so far. Will have to check my list at home, but I think I bagged M74 while at 10,023 feet at the top of Haleakala Volcano during the November new moon. I still have to draft an observing report about that night--it was awesome. It was M76 that gave me problems at the summit. Despite my best efforts I couldn't see it. Hopefully I will get lucky at TSP.

The clouds are still ruling the skies out here in the Bay Area, so none of my scopes have seen much light at all. Each time I have gone out the clouds have rolled in by 10pm at the latest. The weather is unpredictable here.

So I am looking forward to TSP. See you both there.

Bill

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