

Backup Star Party Report

Saturday, 28 Jan 2012

The backup star party was a success. Haven't been able to say that in a while with all the bad weather we've had. Several club members were able to come out to a very good sky. The weather started off partly cloudy and windy. Temps in the late afternoon into the evening started in the low 50s and gradually crept lower to 27 degrees by early dawn. After midnight the wind subsided and seeing improved.

Attending was myself as host, Ranny Heflin, Rob Friedel, Leigh Gettier, Bart and Linda Billard, Our Presidente, Jerry Hubbell, and a new member which I can't remember his name. Sorry, but I'm terrible with names.

The sky was awesome after the clouds cleared and Ranny and myself did some astrophotography. Ranny was perfecting his techniques on some deep sky stuff, including the Horse head nebula. I got some Mars shots in. I also cruised around the many open clusters in the southern sky with the new member and we were able to bring in the E and F components of the Trapezium in the heart of the Orion Nebula. Venus, the Moon, Jupiter were visible early and Mars and Saturn rose in the early morning. The planets offered themselves as very good targets. Leigh and Jerry showed up with binos and Rob brought his C6 refractor, Ranny busied himself with his 8' SCT and Bart exercised his 10" Dobsonian. I had the TOA130 out for a last spin before I put it up for sale. Rings for the TOA150 were a week away so first light is yet to come. Oh and I forgot to mention that Linda Billard wimped out inside the warm house with my wife Debbie.

All in all a good night of viewing and photography. It's 5AM just now and I'm going to bed. Ranny is still here and will bed down in the tent he brought.

/r

Scott Busby