

Re: RTMC report

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.astro.amateur/2004-06/0132.html>

From: Matthew Ota (matthewota_at_bigvalley.net)

Date: 06/02/04

Date: Wed, 02 Jun 2004 02:10:46 GMT

I was at RTMC from Friday Morning.

I was also greatly disappointed at the great vendor vanishings on Sunday. I decided to leave right after the Sunday evening raffle drawing.

I wanted to buy a few more items, but that was impossible after everybody packed up.

If the program is the same next year as this one, I will do the same. I used to stay through Monday morning.

On a positive note, it was nice of Meade Instruments to provide free wireless internet access at their tent, and I have to give kudos to the Bisque brothers, who spent over an hour of their time to help me with a horizon file problem in TheSky Pro 6.

Also noted is that Software Bisque was the only major software vendor who showed up this year. What happened to everybody else?

The food quality at the cafeteria showed a marked decrease in quality this year. For some reason they pre-dressed the salads at the salad bar, which resulted in wilted lettuce. There was no lettuce or tomatoes for the Sunday lunch hamburgers, and the Saturday morning pancakes were too small.

Next year should be better with no Moon in the way. I'll still go, but I may elect to lodge and eat in Big Bear.

Matthew Ota

Del Johnson wrote:

> *I attended the RTMC gathering near Big Bear, California over the weekend.*

>

> *Highlights:*

>

> *1. Tom Osypowski's (Equatorial Platforms) 24-inch Dobsonian on his aluminum platform drive is once again the best telescope at the conference. I was*

sci.astro.amateur: Re: RTMC report

- > *able to see the central star of the Ring Nebula, even under a gibbous moon.*
- > *One fantastic and surprisingly portable telescope.*
- >
- > *2. I had a chance to view through Celestron's new 20-inch corrected*
- > *Dall-Kirkham cassegrain. It seems to work well as I was unable to visually*
- > *detect any coma at the edge of a wide field eyepiece. Could this surpass*
- > *the mighty Ritchey-Chretien? Stay tuned! A very good engineering effort by*
- > *Celestron, however, the \$40k price tag puts it out of the reach of most*
- > *amateurs. Didn't quite see the central star of the Ring Nebula with this*
- > *one.*
- >
- > *3. Good talk by Phil Plait of the Bad Astronomy web page, except that the*
- > *audio/video techs almost ruined his PowerPoint presentation with a*
- > *malfunctioning (or just out of range) wireless keyboard. Instead, they kept*
- > *on blaming Microsoft for the malfunction.*
- >
- >
- > *Lowlights:*
- >
- > *1. Sky & Telescope decided to treat all of their major advertises to an*
- > *offsite dinner and drinking party which meant that the vendors were not at*
- > *the conference Saturday evening (prime time) to demo their products.*
- >
- > *2. The conference was a ghost town on Sunday. Anybody giving a talk on*
- > *Sunday was just wasting their time. The RTMC organizers could fix this by*
- > *simply moving the big Saturday door prize to Sunday, the I guess that that*
- > *there are too many "I want in now!" whiners to allow for that. The RTMC*
- > *conference is for all practical purposes a one-day Saturday event.*
- >
- > *3. I was somewhat disappointed with the version 6 upgrade to TheSky. Some*
- > *very nice improvements in visualizations, but only a few new astronomical*
- > *functions. Most of the menu functions are the same. There was a partial*
- > *fix with regard to the screen update problem in alt-az mode, but I wish that*
- > *they would implement full tracking in alt-az mode. I don't know too many*
- > *people who sit and watch the stars drift by in a fixed alt-az position, on*
- > *the other hand, more and more Dobsonians are now fully driven. I would also*
- > *like to see support for more of the natural satellites in the solar system.*
- >
- > *Del Johnson*
- >
- >
- >
- >