

## The first night out with my 10" dob.

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Actually, it was my first night out with a telescope, period. Location: north Scottsdale. Suburban skies, and clear. The seeing conditions seemed better in the east for some reason, so I kept my observing in the back patio. This dob, a Hardin, came with two eyepieces. The 2" is pretty nice, and I have no complaints yet. The 1.25 9mm is pretty shoddy. There is some black stuff encroaching over the lens. I wonder if I can flick it off with a needle. This e.p. probably isn't worth shipping back for replacement. This dob has the new crayford focuser, which is supposed to be a good thing:-)

I have dreamed of seeing M31. From what I have read, I knew enough to find it. After searching and searching with the 2" in the area to the left of the "Great Square", I finally noticed a smudge of light that was in stark contrast to surrounding collection of stars in my field of view. I put the 9mm in to get a closer look, and the smudge got a bit bigger, but by no means did it give me a detailed view of a galaxy.

I strongly assume this is M31 anyways. How can I make the most of this? 7mm Televue Plossl with a good 3x Barlow? The 9mm gave me a 140x mag. and this doesn't seem optimal for M31. People say that M31 is visible with the naked eye, which could suggest that light pollution in north Scottsdale is worse than I think. I never did find it again later that night.

Later that night (morning), I noticed an interesting cluster with my naked eyes, and set my bino's on it. Pleiades! I had never seen that formation magnified before. I stayed up the whole night to see Saturn and Venus, but by 5 a.m. clouds had set in:-( I did get a brief break in the clouds to see a bright object with the bins, dead east. It was diskly, like a planet, and very bright, but no rings. Venus I assume.

-Tom