

## Re: Deep Sky – Automatic or Manual ?

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- *From:* "Stephen Paul" <[spaul219@xxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:spaul219@xxxxxxxxxxxx)>
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"Ernie Dunbar" <[wallace.n.grommet@xxxxxxxx](mailto:wallace.n.grommet@xxxxxxxx)> wrote in message  
[news:1141678228.965899.180880@xx](mailto:news:1141678228.965899.180880@xx)

AM said:

With a good polar alignment, and well made setting circles, they are just as good as DSC's, for visual use.

So the DSC just automates the task of looking up the RA and Dec really, yes? Computers are really good at that... storing data in an organized manner and making it available quickly. And if it can make the process more precise along the way, then it's a bonus. The bottom line is that it saves time, for newbies or professionals.

Frankly, I don't think it really saves time for newbies, and professionals aren't interested in the issue since they are not as involved in visually observing with amateur equipment. Rather it's the experienced amateur, with lots of observing experience and a huge repertoire of objects listed by designation that benefits the most from an automated system.

With or without GoTo, I think newbies spend most of their time trying to figure out what's up there to look at (they don't have a big list), and how much aperture is needed to see it well, what magnification to use, and how atmosphere affects views. (All of which consumes many, many sessions, over weeks, months, and even years.)

As a newbie not so long ago, I found I was either spending a lot of time with the GoTo system jumping from one DSO to another to get an idea of what each object looked like, or I was spending a lot of time observing just one object. It was the time I spent observing just one object that made me a better observer.

The problem then was that I had to go through the entire alignment process, just to look at one or two objects.

If I had learned to aim the scope myself early on, I could have just done a quick polar alignment, and swung the OTA where it needed to go, or used an altazimuth mounted scope and nudged it along, much as I do today, whether I'm observing planets with the GEM and the long focus scope, or observing a number of well known targets with the altazimuth mounted scope (M42, M1, M25, 36, 37, 38, M8, M13, ...etc.) no need to fire up the DSCs or GoTo for that.

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For my quick look sessions or my all nighters, I now prefer to use a Telrad and charts. There's no wires and no batteries (except for the 9V red flashlight and Telrad), and no hassles with getting the mount in the right place, or the correct orientation. Just plop down the scope, pull the covers, pop in an eyepiece, turn on the Telrad, select a finder chart, and point the scope. It's that easy.

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