

October 30, 1973

Phone 489-1798

*** THE PRAIRIE ASTRONOMER ***

Our meeting this month will be held at the regular time and place, Olin Hall of Science on the Nebraska Wesleyan campus at 7:30 p.m. This month Prof. Moore will give a program on comets. And of course there will be a drawing for a door prize and you must be present to win.

--THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT--

I took a look at Mars on the night of Oct. 15, but couldn't see any detail on the surface of the red planet. I left the scope (the club's 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch) out for an hour, hoping that the optics would cool down a bit and stabilize with the temperature of the night air, but it didn't help any. Was there another dust storm on the surface of Mars? I took a look at the Moon and decided that either the seeing that night was poor or that the dust was not on Mars but maybe on the optics of the telescope. Has anyone else taken a look at Mars? Lets have some reports at the meeting.

We need some more "assistant program chairmen". Here is the schedule so far. Oct. Prof. Moore, Nov. Larry Stepp, Dec. Dave Knisley, Jan. ???, Feb. Brian Rugg, March ???, April ???, May Merton Springle, June Norman Frehrichs, July ???, Aug. ???, Sept. ???.

Now lets hear from the rest of you. We need some empty spaces filled in. Here's your chance to have that special program you always wanted. Lets have some more volunteers at the meeting!

Earl Moser
President

--OBSERVING REPORT--

Again this month I will bother the club about Comet Kohoutek, even though I'm beginning to feel we ought to leave it alone since it looks more and more like it wasnt meant to be found.

As of this writing I've gotten up three times in the sub dawn hours only to be thwarted three times by fog, moon light, crud in the atmosphere, and a miserable comet that insists on being where it is not plotted! The thing is now approx. eighth magnitude which makes the hunt even more frustrating. But I shall avail, this thing is not going to get the best of me. Hopefully by the meeting I'll be able to report about this idiotic hunk of nothing. (Oh, I'll also mention that I'm not the only one involved in this endeavor, John Bruce, Steve Roper, and Lee Thomas have also lost their sleep over comet Kohoutek.)

Now to get our minds off this I'll mention a nice deep sky object. NGC 7479 (55 in Norton's list of bright nebulae) is a large yet faint barred spiral in Pegasus. Try for it just two degrees south of Alpha Pegasus.

Brian Rugg
Observing Chairman

--GATEWAY SHOW--

Plans for the show in November will be discussed at the meeting.

--NOTICE--

We need telescopes as I have had five calls from people wishing to buy scopes. If you have a scope for sale call me or see me at the meeting.

Jess Williams

I have a few January 1972 issues of the newsletter left, this is the one with the club history. I will bring them to the meeting so those who want them can get them while they last.

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Earl Moser

Jess has informed me that the new issue of Modern Astronomy has arrived and inflation has hit!!! This mag. cost only two bits (25¢) until now. The new price is 50¢, but I feel that it is worth the price as it is well written and now contains color photos.

J.B.

--MERCURY TRANSITS SUN--

On Nov. 10 Mercury will transit the sun. If you wish to observe this event, which won't happen again until 1986, you will have to get set up before dawn and the best place would be on a hill with an open view of the east horizon. The reason for this is that the sun rises at approx. 6:45 a.m. est and the transit ends at about 7:15 a.m. est so from our position we will not see the entire event but only the final 30 minutes or so. More information will be given at the meeting.

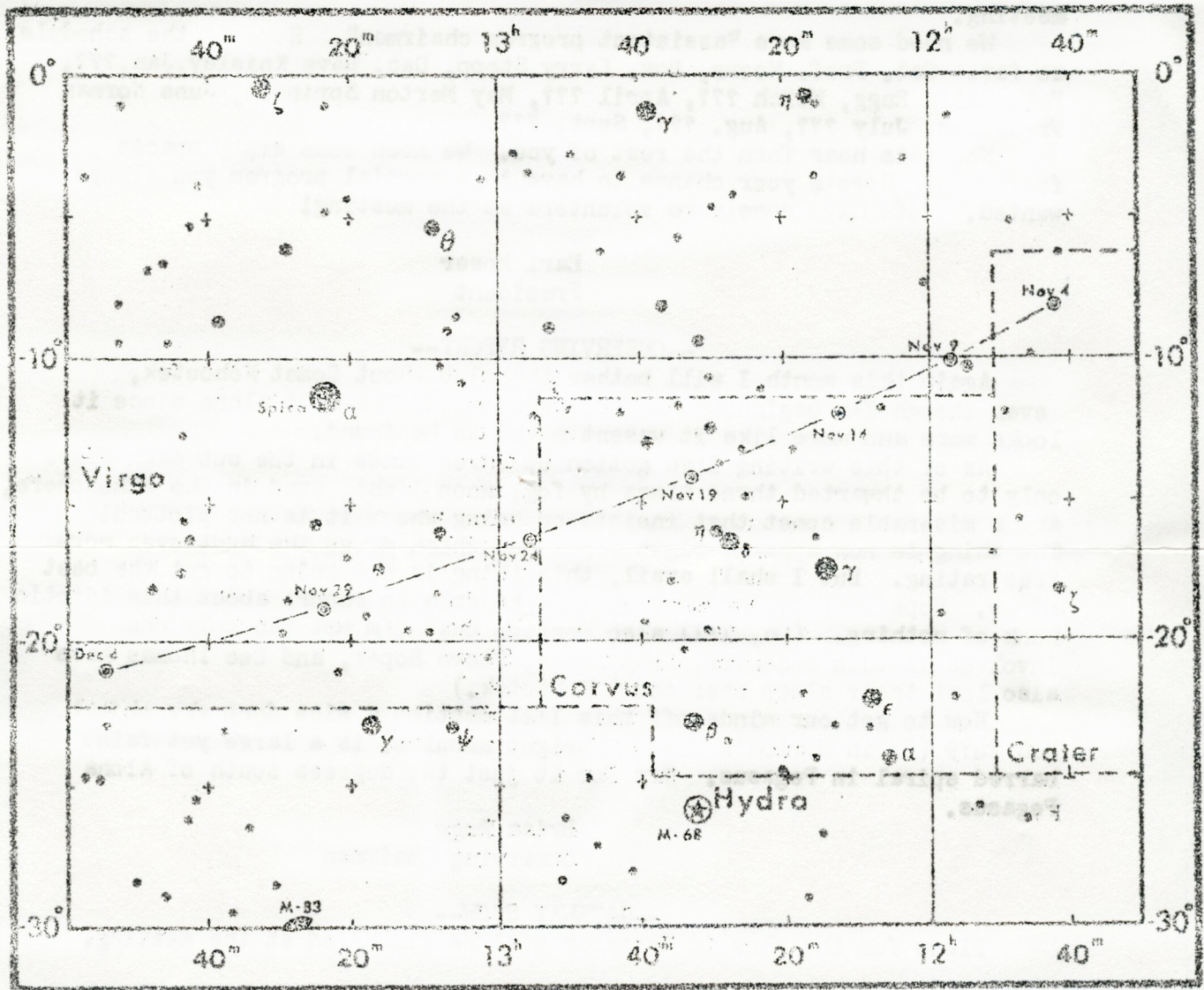
J. B.

Here are some maps and a guide for observing Comet Kohoutek. I will make some suggestions at the meeting for organising this comet.

J. B.

COMET KOHOUTEK FOR NOVEMBER

MAP A



Map by Raymond G. Cutchin

Magnitudes

Objects

☉ Zero

★ Open Clusters

⊙ First

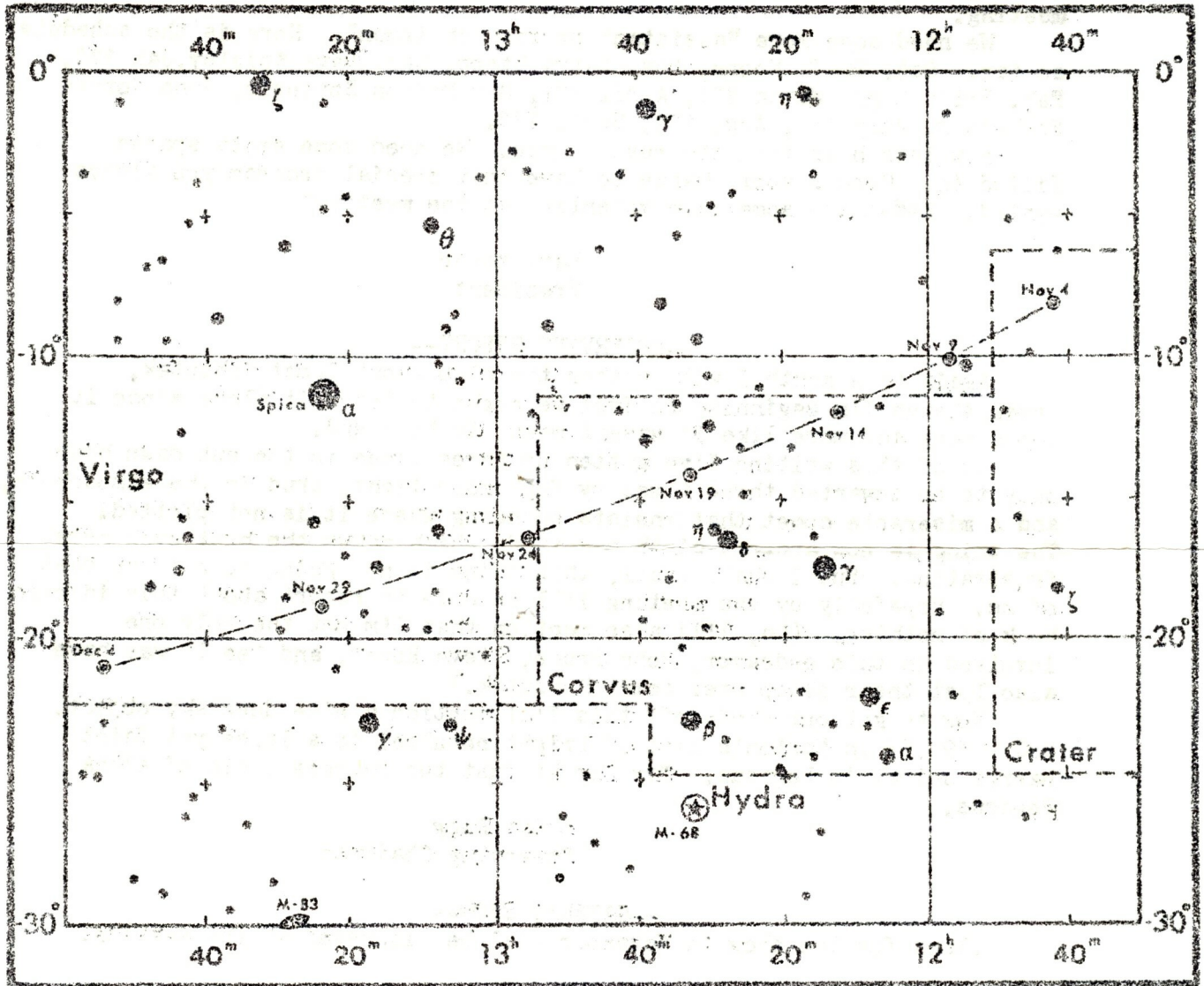
⊙ Globular Clusters

● Second

○ Diffuse Nebulae

COMET KOHOOTEK FOR NOVEMBER

MAP A



Map by Raymond G. Couthie

Magnitudes

- ☀ Zero
- First
- Second
- Third
- Fourth
- Fifth

Objects

- ★ Open Clusters
- ⊙ Globular Clusters
- Diffuse Nebulae
- ☾ Galaxies
- ♁ Double Stars
- ⊙ Variable Stars

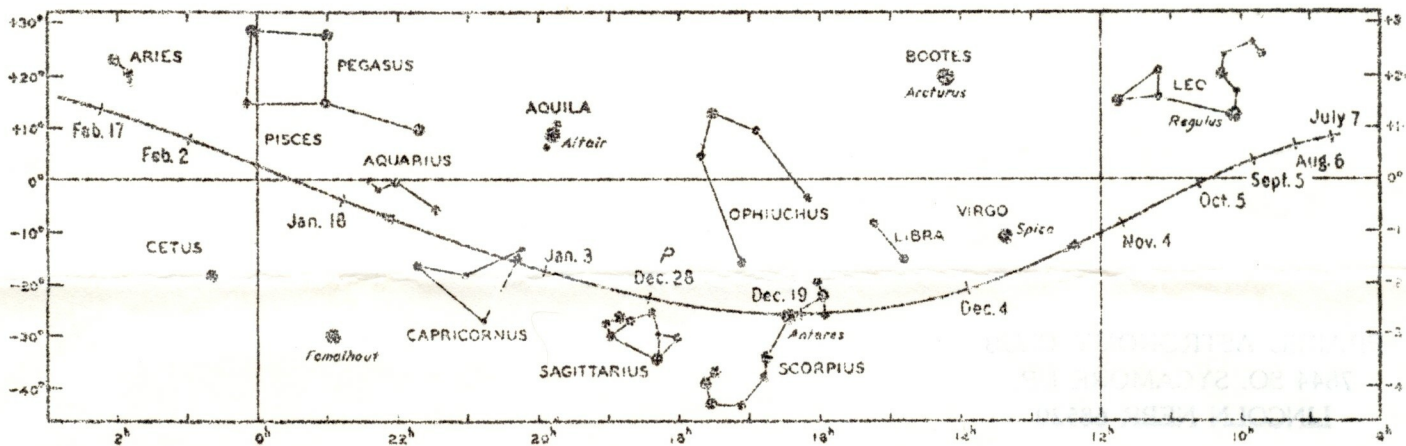
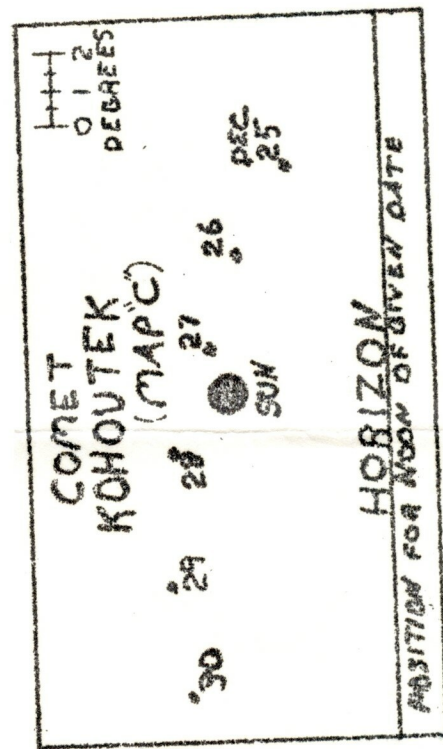
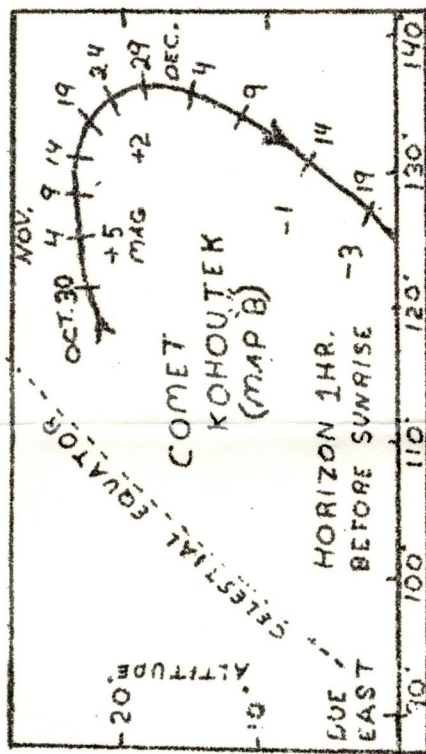
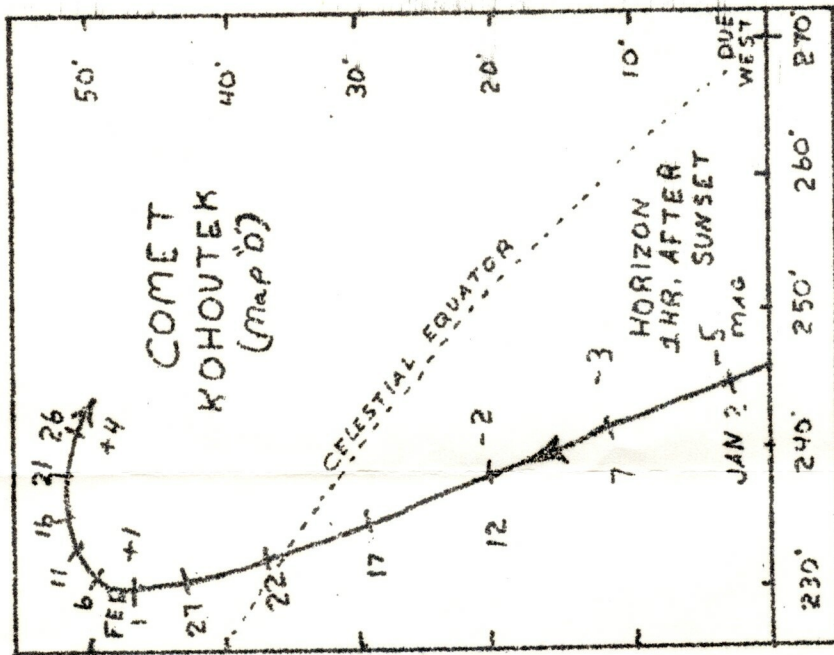
As Comet Kohoutek approaches the sun it should reach naked eye visibility in early November. Spica and Corvus will be useful guides in identifying the comet as it moves

between them. About 1-1/2 to 2 hours before sunrise is the time to use this chart. Binoculars will be helpful if the comet is faint or the sky hazy. For positions for October see Table A.

COMET KOHOUTEK OBSERVER'S GUIDE

*The magnitudes given here are estimates of the brightness of the entire comet, not just the coma. Estimates available from other sources may be much higher than these but such values are based on optimum factors and seldom prove accurate.

Date	Magnitude	Remarks
Oct. 10 - 25	+9 to +7	Visible in telescopes 60mm and larger as a hazy patch like an unresolved globular cluster. See table A.
Oct. 25-Nov. 10	+7 to +5	Binoculars should be enough to identify the still "fuzz-ball" shaped comet. See table A.
Nov. 10 - 30	+5 to +3	Comet should now be a naked eye object and show evidence of a tail. If tail is well developed by November 30 then a real spectacle is due in December and January. See map A.
Dec. 1 - 5	+3	Rapid motion toward the sun begins here. See map A.
Dec. 5 - 10	+2	Comet should now be an easy naked eye object with tail streaming up and to the right. See map B.
Dec. 11 - 15	+1	Moon interferes here as comet brightens but still several degrees above horizon in dark sky. See map B.
Dec. 16 - 20	-1	Although predicted magnitude is bright, twilight begins to seriously interfere with viewing. If tail is long it may show above horizon haze or lights. See map B.
Dec. 21 - 27	??	Comet's head lost in twilight, but tail may be on southeast horizon extending upward and to the right at a 45 degree angle.
Dec. 25 - 31	??	If magnitude -7 or greater is reached, the comet will be a naked eye object. See map C.
Dec. 29-Jan. 1	??	Tail is expected to be maximum brightness now. Head of comet in twilight but tail may remain as darkness falls. Tail will reach upward and to the left at a 60 degree angle above the west-southwest horizon.
Jan. 2 - 16	-2 to +1	This is the prime period for observation. See text and map D.
Jan. 17-Feb. 1	+1 to +4	Comet should be an easy object in the dark evening skies with tail still visible. See map D.
After Feb. 1	below +4	Visible in binoculars and telescopes for several months. See future issues for details.



The motion of Comet Kohoutek among the constellations from July until next February is mainly eastward. December 28th is the date of perihelion, P, when the comet will be within a degree of the sun.