

Fwd: [ORAS] vdB31 and friends

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Subject:[ORAS] vdB31 and friends
Resent-Date:Tue, 13 Jan 2026 08:55:18 -0800
Resent-From:lsmch@comcast.net
Date:Tue, 13 Jan 2026 11:55:16 -0500
From:Larry Mc via groups.io <lsmch=comcast.net@groups.io>
Reply-To:ORAS@groups.io
To:oras io group <ORAS@groups.io>, KiskiAstronomers@groups.io <KiskiAstronomers@groups.io>

hi all,

Last night was the first clear night of 2026 without the Moon in the sky. Having read the interesting article on van den Berg reflection nebula in the January Sky&Tel, with that great image of vdB31 in Auriga, I was anxious to get outside and try EAA observing both the reflection nebula and associated Barnard dark nebula. But, it was also a Steelers playoff game night. What to do? Should I go outback to my observatory or stay inside and watch the big game? The answer was, "Why not Both".

So after dusk, during the pre-game festivities, I setup my SeeStar S30 on my patio in Equatorial mode and aligned it. I then multi-tasked between watching football on the family room big screen TV, (with popcorn & beer 😊), and monitor the slowly building image of vdB31 and Barnard 26, 27 & 28 on my tablet. After about five minutes, I could see the faint outlines of the dark nebula, and a little while later the blue glow of the reflection nebula around star AB Aurigae. I let the little smart scope soak in photons for two hours, during at each half-hour mark I would do a quick SeeStar app AI processing of the livestacked image, comparing what I was getting with the 30mm scope to the photo in Sky&Tel, tweaking the scope image settings to bring out details. Towards the end of the evening I turned off the TV, (the Steelers having crashed and burned at that point of the game., 😞) and focused on the observation of the dusty object. Here's the final result using my pixel-8 image enhance settings:



(SeeStar S30 f5, 60 second exposures in EQ mode, internal IR filter, livestacked for 2 hrs & 1 minute)

Larry

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