

## Hidden Hollow Star Party 2012

Here's my report of Hidden Hollow 2012.

### Friday 08/17/2012:

Finished packing up the camper on Friday morning, and headed over to Mansfield Ohio for the 2012 Hidden Hollow Convention.

<http://www.wro.org/hiddenhollowinfo.html>

I arrived early afternoon and setup in our usual spot down on the lower field, in-between Bob K and Fred K.

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-01.jpg>

(Bob K & Bob N, along with Fred)

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-02.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-03.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-04.jpg>

After setting up camp, late in the afternoon, we took a stroll up the hill to the observatory to see the new mirror. (Classical large reflector)

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-05.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-06.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-07.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-08.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-09.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-10.jpg>

If you recall from last year's report, the club members were in the process of adjusting the secondary, when it came loose and went crashing down on the primary mirror, shattering the secondary and splitting the 4" thick 31" primary mirror in half. What a disaster!!!

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2011-10.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2011-11.jpg>

Fortunately, they were able to replace the mirror and had just installed the new larger 36" mirror and its new cell the week before.

Here's Bob & bob admiring the new hardware:

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-11.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-12.jpg>

(There's enough fans on the new cell to fly it like a hover craft!)

They now have a new problem in that the new mirror cell will hit the concrete floor near the center of the room, depending on how they slew the telescope. Looking forward to next year's convention to see how they work out that issue.

Afterwards, we walked around the club member observing area and checked out a few telescopes setup for the night:

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-13.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-14.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-15.jpg>

Friday evening started out very good!!! All the puffy clouds from the afternoon dissipated, and it became a very clear, cool evening. The Milky-Way was the best that we could recall from prior conventions. For this trip, I tried something completely different - I did not bring a telescope! Instead, I mounted my deep-sky video cameras, armed with wide-field CCTV lens. On one tripod was my Samsung SDC435 camera with a 4mm lens, pointed all night at the observatory dome and hillside. I set the laptop to record a frame from it every 30 seconds over a period of 5 hours. Here's the youtube results from my Stellar Journeys channel:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hAZa13Ibhas&feature=plcp>

On another tripod, I mounted my Stellacam-3 with the Canon 5.5mm - 55mm lens. I used it to go after several wide-field Milky-Way shots, along with some of Barnard's Dark Nebula. I was able to image B78, the 'Pipe nebula', a very small B72 'the Snake', along with the crescent shaped B138 featured in the Aug "Sky& Tel", and B143, Barnard's "E" nebula. I plan on creating a new webpage for Barnard's Dark Nebula later this fall to display the images.

While I was busy having video fun, Bob K spent the evening doing wide-field CCD imaging using his 80mm Orion Shortube Refractor with his S-Big camera, and guiding with a little 50mm guidescope. (see photo#3). Bob had some pretty amazing images of the North American Nebula!!

As for Bob N and Fred K, Mr Murphy paid them both a visit. After overcoming some software issues, Bob N was finally able to get his big Celestron SCT to image. Fred continued to have cable and computer issues and was unsuccessful for the evening.

Around 11:00pm, we started getting waves of cloud bands blowing thru from the North. After an extended period of cloudiness at midnight, Bob K packed it in, while Bob N and I walked up to the observatory. We hoped to catch a look with the new mirror thru one of the big sucker holes going over, but the club had closed the scope for the night to the general public for an extended photo shoot where they slowly rotate the dome to create an 'X-ray' effect'. After walking back to camp, I put away the Stellacam-3 and finally shutdown the Samsung around 1:30 am and went to bed.

### **Saturday 08/18/2012:**

After waking up to a sunny, but cool morning, I spent time processing the video from the Samsung camera made the night before. I was pleasantly surprised at the outcome. Everyone else also thought it was pretty cool! We took in the 1:00pm talk on the new Mars Rover - Curiosity. It was an excellent presentation put together from NASA animation and live video clips by one of the Mansfield Club members. Very informative. I skipped the talk on UFO's and opted for a nap instead.

At 6:30pm we all assembled over at the lodge for the raffle prize drawing. The Kiski Club got our luck back, as Bob N won a pair of binocs, and I walked away with the grand prize - a Celestron Sky Scout:

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-16.jpg>

<http://home.comcast.net/~kiskiastronomers/images/conventions/HH2012-17.jpg>

During the afternoon, clouds had built up, but with sunset, they mostly evaporated, leaving behind hazy conditions that gradually thickened as the night progressed. This time, I setup the Stellacam-3 with a 3mm wide-field lens point due south. I had hoped to capture a time-lapse of the Sagittarius regions arcing over the meridian, but with the haze, the real 'star' of the video was Bob K packing up his telescope after he had successfully imaged M31 with the 80mm refractor. Here's the youtube vid of that:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-eW6Xd8HWRs&feature=player\\_detailpage](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-eW6Xd8HWRs&feature=player_detailpage)

With the horrible sky conditions, we all packed in our equipment early, and the Bob's and Fred headed for bed. I decided to walk up to the observatory as they were still open and observing deep-sky objects straight overhead in a sucker hole. After a wait in line, I rode the lift up 20 ft to the eyepiece where I was treated to a view of M57, with its central star just shimmering to visibility using averted-vision. The scope then went to M27, with the dumbbell filling the 20mm eyepiece with faintly visible extensions of the main hourglass shape, giving it an appearance of a football.

We wrapped up the hazy views with the globular cluster M15; it's tightly condensed core shinning thru the haze, resolved in a 12mm eyepiece.

I can only image the views this telescope would give on a clear night!!

After that I turned off the Stellacam and happily went to bed.

**Sunday 08/19/2012:**

Slept in a bit and missed Bob K pulling out. Fred K left for home while I was having breakfast and slowly taking my time packing.

I was off for home by 10:30am while Bob N finishing up his final packing.

Was home and unpacked by early afternoon.

This wraps up another year's convention at Hidden Hollow.

Larry McHenry

Astronomical Webportal:

<http://home.comcast.net/~lsmch/>