

June 4, 2002

End of night report

Dear All:

This is certainly one of the most pleasant reporting tasks I've had as PI of the DEIMOS spectrograph...if not THE most pleasant. We had a wonderful first night that far surpassed anyone's expectations. Literally, nothing broke. We were well organized and zipped through many of the CARA housekeeping tasks (coordinate systems, alignments, pointing origins, etc.) faster than expected. We took a ton of calibration data on spectroscopic throughput, dome flats, sky flats, photometry, and astrometry. We took some sample DEEP survey sky spectra and did an "effortless" slitmask alignment on an astrometric field in Draco. Toward morning we took images of the Veil Nebula with a view to putting together a large montage showing off our large field of view. In a couple of days we'll have that and other images on the web for you to look at.

Performance was excellent. The throughput exceeded estimates in both photometric and spectroscopic modes. The best images were about 0.6 arc sec FWHM for much of the night. Flexure compensation is not yet working, so we did not take many long spectroscopic exposures. However, we may have a partial test of that system ready for Wednesday night.

I'd like especially to single out the performance of the PA drive. Both it and the TV camera were the indispensable stars of first-light, and the rotator performed flawlessly from our side (there were a few software glitches on CARA's side, but they were not serious). It may be that we discover some small issues in the drive that need correction, but for a first-night effort it was great. We tracked a globular cluster very close to the "keyhole" and it appeared to be rock-solid in position on the TV guider.

I'm off the bed after 18 hours on the summit. More news later. For now, thanks to the huge effort and concerted teamwork that made June 3rd a rousing success.

Best regards, Sandy