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Lunation 1028

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TOPOGRAPHICAL SUB-SECTION

COLIN EBDON

At the time of writing (early February) the sky has presented a solid overcast for some five days and things are not looking good for the current lunation. However, I fared better towards the end of 2005, and during November and December managed about a dozen observations, probably as much as the rest of the year put together.

I would like to think that I was not alone in taking advantage of this run of clear nights, so make no apologies for entering the usual plea for observations at this stage. For as long as I can recall, this column, and the pages of 'The New Moon' have, with a few exceptions, been filled with the work of the same half-dozen or so core observers, myself included. Thankfully their output has been prolific and I am currently ahead with material. It has to be said, however, that, for a variety of reasons, the output is unlikely to continue at such a high rate, and the day will come when I will be scratching around for observations. It is difficult to believe that everyone who reads this is an 'armchair astronomer' so if you do look at the Moon through a telescope please let us hear about your work, in whatever format suits you.

One of the reasons given by amateur observers who disregard the Moon entirely as a suitable subject for observation, is that it is so well known that it is not worth bothering with. This is a false assumption on all levels. Professional Astronomers continue to study the Moon intensively and there is much we do not know. Although amateurs are unlikely to contribute to these studies directly, or to discover anything 'new', the fact that the Moon has now been mapped in so much detail should not hold us back. Whilst we now have a 'snapshot' of the entire lunar surface, this does not mean that every part of it has received equal attention and there is still much that is worth exploring in greater depth. The following two examples are cases in point.

During December, the writer observed the wonderful crater Langrenus, a very popular target for CCD and photographic enthusiasts post full Moon, along with Vendelinus, Petavius etc, often lined up in a grand display along the terminator. However, just to the East of Langrenus, I was drawn to a rather obvious large dome-like feature which I had never noticed before. Not a 'new' discovery as such, but I wonder just how often, if at all, in the history of lunar observing, anyone's attention has been focussed on it. A copy of my drawing, and notes, is included here for anyone who wants to follow this up.

I have also received some very fine CCD images from Ed Crandall in the USA, including a splendid shot of the Montes Rhipaeus, showing the well-known Lansberg domes.

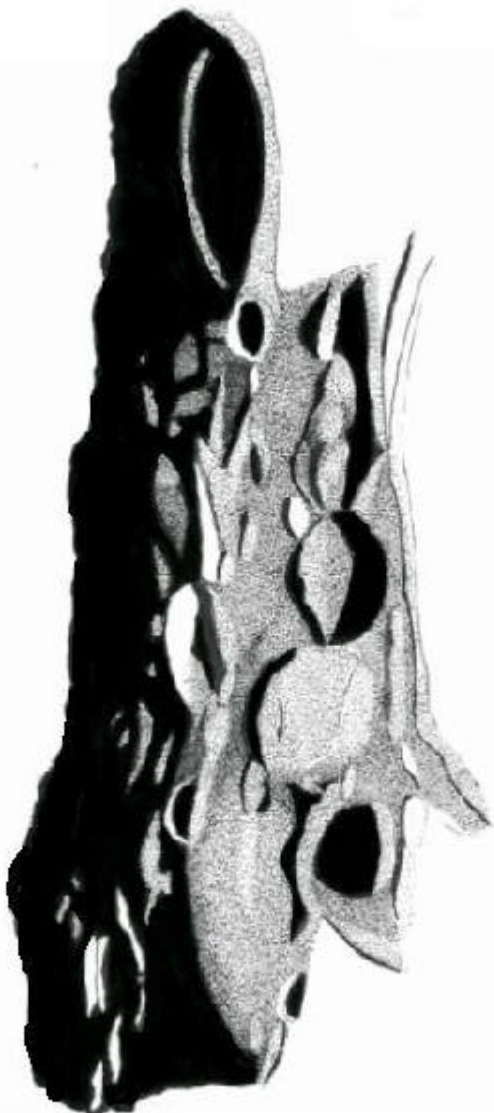
Now despite having enjoyed some fine views of the Montes Rhipaeus over the years, my attention was drawn to an interesting group of features to the South which again had previously escaped my notice. These are shown in Rukl's atlas, but nevertheless seem well-worth following up in greater detail, the best opportunity this month occurring on March 9. Ed's image is reproduced here with an accompanying close up marking the target features. Details: Observer: Ed Crandall, 2006 January 10. 01.25UT. 110mm APO Refractorx3 Barlow and ToUcam. Seeing: good.



Region East of Langrenus

Observer: C.Ebdon. Date 2005, December 17. Time: 20.45 to 21.30UT. Seeing: AIII. Transparency: Very good. 7" f 15 Maksutov- Cassegrain x225. Earth's Sel. Longitude: 3.01 to 2.98. Earth's Sel. Latitude: -6.4 (Ohrs 18th) Sun's Sel. Colongitude: 112.06 to 112.44. Sun's Sel. Latitude: 1.65 (Ohrs 18th). South at top

Notes: Attention was drawn to this area by what appeared to be a very smooth dome-like feature, possibly a mountain block, immediately adjacent to Langrenus S. This feature was topped by a narrow slit or elongated craterlet towards its eastern edge. It may also have been traversed by a thin rille, but unfortunately seeing conditions were not favourable enough to hold fine detail. There is some hint of such a feature in Rukl's atlas, although unclear.



Two grazing occultations are predicted for March, both on 7th.

The first involves a magnitude 7 star and occurs from 02:40 UT. The track crosses the north west coast of **Ireland**, travelling towards the centre. However, the moon's elevation is less than 8°, decreasing, so it will not be an easy observation, even with a clear horizon.

The second is probably the best opportunity for 2006 (track 6 in the January LSC). It occurs from 18:50 UT, in nautical twilight, and travels from **west to east across central Scotland**, 15 miles north of Glasgow and Edinburgh. The moon is well placed at over 60° elevation in the south, the star is magnitude 5.6, and the graze takes place mainly against the dark limb. The graze occurs against the poorly defined 'Cassini Region' of the moon's southern limb. This gives the possibility of a spectacular graze and accurate timings would be extremely valuable. Any Scottish members in this area wanting to organise a graze expedition should contact me for a detailed prediction and limb diagram.

Predictions for 52°27'41.4"N 1°44'44.0"W (Birmingham) – April 2006

Day	Time-UT	P	Object	O	Max Sp	%	Elg	Sn	Mn	Mn	CA	PA	Watts	a	b	Star's	apparent		
	H	M	S	D	Reference	V	Mag	Snlt	Alt	Alt	Az	Angle	Min/°	RA	Dec				
1/20	17	27	D	PPM 92667	48	6.7	A0	15+	46	25	276	79S	84	97	-.3-1.5	33718.8	231358		
ABOVE STAR IS A VARIABLE STAR -- MINIMUM MAGNITUDE = 6.8.																			
3/20	25	14	DX	PPM 94504	26	8.1	K2	34+	71	44	259	50S	125	128	-.5-3.0	53501.4	275409		
3/20	19	15	D	PPM 94505	16	8.1	B8	34+	71	45	258	86S	89	92	-.9-1.4	53502.1	280328		
3/21	19	55	D	PPM 94560	15	8.5	B8	34+	71	36	270	61S	115	117	-.3-2.6	53702.8	275506		
4/18	56	36	DV	PPM 96080	16	6.8	A2	43+	82	-2	62	215	75N	77	75	-1.4	-.1	63045.5	281238
4/20	41	31	DX	PPM 96140	26	7.5	K5	44+	82	50	250	36S	147	144	-.4-4.3	63325.3	274924		
4/20	26	33	D	PPM 96143	16	7.6	A2	44+	82	52	246	82N	85	82	-1.1-1.0	63328.3	280447		
4/20	34	34	DV	PPM 96152	15	8.7	A5	44+	82	51	248	79N	82	79	-1.1	-.9	63342.8	280501	
4/20	46	37	D	PPM 96162	16	7.8	K2	44+	83	49	251	81S	102	99	-.9-1.7	63404.9	275841		
4/21	33	27	D	PPM 96215	19	5.0	A0	44+	83	42	262	74N	77	74	-.9-1.1	63535.5	280112		
ABOVE STAR IS A VARIABLE STAR -- MINIMUM MAGNITUDE = 5.3.																			
4/23	17	10	DC	PPM 96301	16	7.4	A2	45+	84	27	281	84N	87	83	-.3-1.7	63917.0	274805		
5/22	53	27	DC	PPM 97667	16	7.8	A2	54+	95	37	265	66S	124	116	-.3-2.6	73335.9	260610		
6/19	27	27	D	PPM 98600	15	8.0	A0	63+	105	-6	61	180	58S	136	124	-1.2-1.8	82023.5	234730	
6/19	35	52	D	PPM 98611	18	5.9	A0	63+	105	-7	62	184	64N	78	66	-1.6	.4	82054.9	240016
6/21	38	14	D	PPM 98654	15	8.3	A2	63+	105	52	232	76S	119	106	-1.0-1.9	82354.0	233058		
6/22	43	31	D	PPM 98687	15	8.2	K0	64+	106	44	250	55N	70	57	-1.3	-.8	82544.1	233152	
6/23	54	18	DP	PPM 98720	15	8.2	A0	64+	106	33	265	85S	111	98	-.4-2.2	82748.3	230800		
8/20	57	57	D	PPM 126978	35	7.6	G5	80+	127	53	180	66S	137	118	-1.1-1.5	95833.0	151130		
9/00	06	30	D	PPM 127055	35	7.9	A0	81+	128	37	242	74S	129	110	-.7-2.3	100250.9	143136		
9/20	35	19	D	PPM 127634	65	7.3	K5	87+	138	46	158	58N	83	62	-1.7	.9	104237.4	101920	
11/03	38	12	D	PPM 157993	76	5.8	F5	94+	152	10	263	68N	93	72	-.3-2.2	113442.3	30125		
(N.B. the gap from 11-30 April is real - occultations occur but at a lower observability than the limit set for these predictions - AJE)																			
30/20	03	54	DC	PPM 94132	66	6.9	F5	11+	39	-5	27	281	62N	51	56	-.6	-.6	51026.3	273358

N.B. Don't forget to add 1 hour to the above times during British Summer Time!

Predictions courtesy of the International Occultation Timing Association – European Section – (IOTA/ES) “OCCMOON” program.

A letter in the "D" column indicates a possible double star.

Capuanus is a heavily ruined crater in Palus Epidemiarum, a small lava plain at the southwestern edge of Mare Nubium. The region is full with interesting tectonic features such as the complex rille systems of Rima Ramsden – a good resolution test for very small telescopes – and Rima Hesiodus, a long graben running SW-NE from the northern wall of Capuanus to crater Hesiodus. The geologic significance of these rille systems is still matter of debate as they don't go parallel to the Nubium basin border. Nevertheless they are of tectonic origin and should have formed in response to some crustal stress, perhaps a broad swelling at the time of the lava flows emplacement during the Imbrian era.

The floor of Capuanus is a lava flooded plain as the surrounding terrains. Lava could have entered the crater through a breach on the east wall, where lavas are more thick, or could have found their way up inside the crater itself as the presence of intracrateric domes seems to suggest. The ALPO dome catalogue reports four of such domes at the coordinates

Long. -26.16 Lat. -34.12

Long. -26.77 Lat. -33.64

Long. -26.60 Lat. -34.26

Long. -27.15 Lat. -34.06

but most images and atlases (see the Rukl plate no. 63 and the LAC 111) show only three. They have been recently photographed by Marco Sellini and Gerardo Sbarufatti (see photos). The domes are indicated by arrows and numbered on the second image. I used several images of Capuanus, including this two, to re-determine the position of the domes:

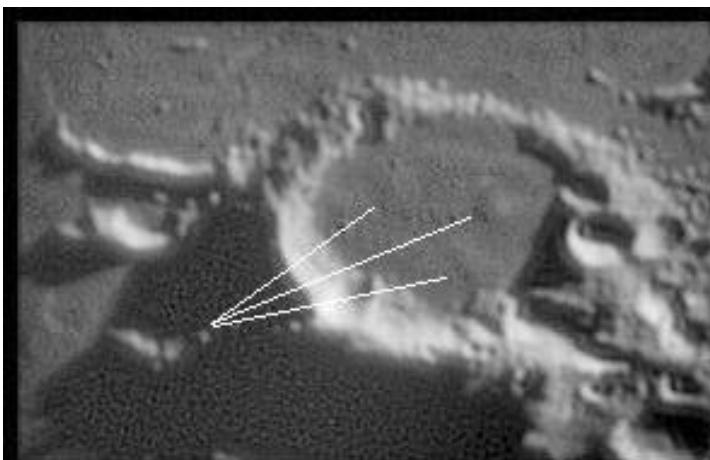
Dome 1: Long. -26.21, Lat. -34.12

Dome 2: Long. -26.76, Lat. -33.67

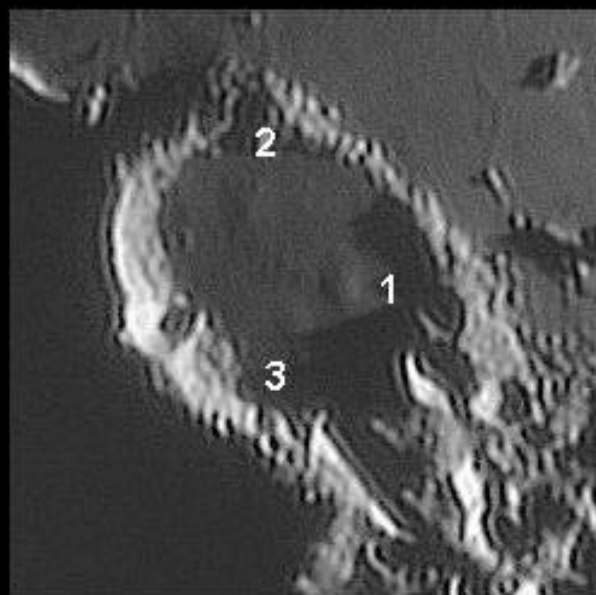
Dome 3: Long. -26.67, Lat. -34.34

The dome no. 1 is the most prominent of the three and very easy to image even with small telescopes. The basal diameter is something less than 8 km. Based on the Sun's altitude above the dome in Gerardo's image the height would be about 150 m and the slope less than 2.5° , like the Icelandic shield volcanoes. Dome 2 is more difficult to see and even lower than dome 1, the mean slope being 1.5° or even less. Its outline is very uncertain thus the calculated position is only approximate. Dome 3 appears to be slightly elongated in the NNW direction, so it could actually be a ridge segment. Finally, the fourth dome in the ALPO list above seems to be a spurious one but this requires confirmation. As far as one can see from the digital images all domes lack apparent surface details as eruptive or collapse vents therefore one can suppose that these domes are actually some type of laccolith. Even the hires Orbiter IV image of this area shows only small impact craterlets although multispectral images show mixed terrains worthy of investigation.

On March 9th, 2006 there will be a good opportunity to see and image the Capuanus domes with the Moon high in the sky in the early evening. Section members are invited to produce images, drawings or written notes that I would like to use for refining the above data for the ALPO-BAA dome catalogue project.



M. Sellini 2005-07-16 18:29



G. Sbarufatti 2005-02-18 19:32

Observations for January were received from: Tony Buick (Orpington, UK), Fabio Carvalho (Lunar Section of REA, Brazil), Clive Brook (Plymouth, UK), Marie Cook (Mundesley, UK), Gerald North (UK), and myself.

The teaching load at University this semester is beginning to bite, so once again sorry for the shortness of this monthly report and also for not keeping the observations received web site up to date.. During the Easter vacation, or after the students finish their exams in May, I will catch up and post all reports received. In the mean time, please keep on sending your observations in and observing at the times given on the predictions. Here are a few highlights from reports received during January 2006:

TLP Report : 2005 Nov 13 – Wayne Bailey has sent me a colour image taken (04:47UT) just a few minutes before Glen Ward reported a green cloud near Mersenius (04:50-04:57UT). I checked Wayne's image, and although it has the Mt peak in question, the CCD image is a bit saturated here and it is not obvious that there is any green colour – though I can be sure that at the non-saturated base of the Mt it is definitely not green. Anyway I am very grateful that Wayne responded to my request for a confirmation image, this has been helpful. One of these days I am sure that we will get a positive confirmation of a TLP like has been done with meteorite impact flashes. I would love to show this image here, but time and space do not permit. However I have put his image and Glen's diagram showing the location of the TLP on-line at: <http://cs.nott.ac.uk/~acc/Lunar/Nov2005/mersenius.jpg>

Suspect TLP Report : 2006 Jan 4 – Tony Buick (UK) was taking some digital still images through his Celestron C8. Upon viewing the images afterwards he was interested to find that in one of them Gutenberg C was very bright and had a blue green cast. I have included the sequence of images for others to view on: <http://cs.nott.ac.uk/~acc/Lunar/Jan2006/gutenberg.jpg> . The duration of the event (if that is what it was) was very short, and so if anybody else was observing around 18:32 UT on this day, please get in contact as your image may be the proof that we need. Conversely I think we should be careful here as there are other causes of bright blobs appearing on CCD images in the past e.g. cosmic rays, scintillation, RGB colour filter layout over CCD pixels when dealing with small feature scales. Now there is a hint of blue on the last image in the sequence, which might indicate a TLP decay in process, however there is also a hint of blue on another similar sized crater to the right as well – so one should not read too much into faint blue colourations on digital still camera images as this could be noise.

TLP Report: 2006 Jan 23 UT 06:34-06:36, Fabio Carvalho (Lunar Section of REA, Brazil) was observing visually with a 254mm f/6 Newtonian + Nagler 9mm eyepiece when he noticed some green colouration on the east rim of Tycho. The coloration was a green leaf darkness, like a fog, but gradually faded. The location of the TLP was fixed at that location on the Moon. There was some cirrus but atmospheric stability was good. CCD cameras were brought into action, firstly a high resolution monochrome camera image and then a colour image at 06:46 UT. I have examined the latter and even after colour normalization and enhancement, no colour can be seen here, so the original event was very short in duration and left no discolouration. The images can be found on: <http://cs.nott.ac.uk/~acc/Lunar/Jan2005/tycho.jpg>

Finally if you want to see a thermal IR image of the Moon taken at Newtonian focus on January then please take a look at <http://cs.nott.ac.uk/~acc/Lunar/Jan2006/2345.jpg> . Remember dark is cold and white is hot. You can see heat from the telescope tube. Resolution is not great, but one can make out some of the seas – these are light and the highlands are dark – a reverse of what we see on visual light images of the Moon.

The following repeat illumination and libration events for UK observers occur for March:

Event: Piton (Moore, 1958 Sep 23) can be seen on/from (UT): 2006 Mar 09 (17:56-19:54) - *[Any sign of an obscuration?]*

Event: Gassendi (Cook, 1977 Sep 04) can be seen on/from (UT): 2006 Mar 10/11 (20:47-00:24) - *[What colour is the central peak?]*

Event: Aristarchus (Thomas, 1970 Feb 22) can be seen on/from (UT): 2006 Mar 15/16 (21:12-01:08) - *[Please take colour images of the crater and the surrounds over time]*

Event: Mare Crisium (Widley, 1962 Jul 18) can be seen on/from (UT): 2006 Mar 16 (00:49-04:43) - *[Image floor brightness at intervals]*

LIBRATION April 2006

Date	Libration amount \emptyset	PA \emptyset	Feature presented
1.0	6.5	234	Abel
2.0	7.7	230	Gum
3.0	8.5	228	Marinus
4.0	8.7	226	Hamilton
5.0	8.5	224	Oken
6.0	7.8	221	Peirescius
7.0	6.7	218	Lyot
8.0	5.4	214	Brisbane
9.0	3.8	207	Pontecoulant
10.0	2.2	192	Demonax
11.0	1.2	136	Catalan*
12.0	2.1	74	Vasco da Gama*
13.0	3.7	57	Aston*
14.0	5.2	49	Lavoisier
15.0	6.6	45	Gerard
16.0	7.8	42	Harding
17.0	8.7	39	Galvani
18.0	9.1	37	Repsold
19.0	9.2	36	Volta
20.0	8.9	34	Volta
21.0	8.2	33	Xenophanes
22.0	7.0	31	Xenophanes
23.0	5.5	29	Cleostratus
24.0	3.7	24	Pythagoras
25.0	1.7	8	Philolaus*
26.0	1.1	271	Peek*
27.0	2.9	235	Abel*
28.0	4.7	229	Gum*
29.0	6.3	226	Hamilton
30.0	7.4	225	Oken

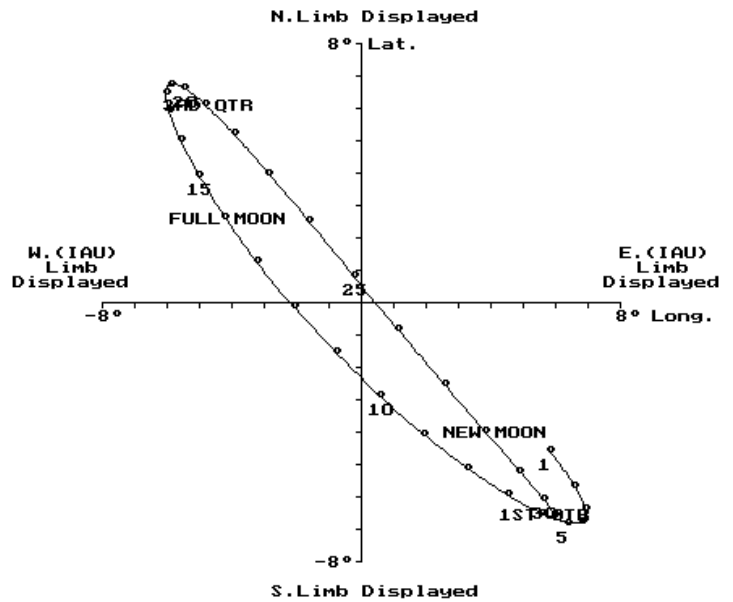
Program by Bob Roberts.

Observer at: Lat. 51.0 \emptyset N, Long. 1.0 \emptyset W

* indicates that the feature is not illuminated.

LUNAR LIBRATIONS - April 2006

Geocentric:  The markers show 0:00H UT



Event: Proclus (Green, 1938 Nov 8) can be seen on/from (UT): 2006 Mar 16 (00:54-04:08) - [Image or sketch the floor closely]

Event: Aristarchus (Bartlett, 1965 Nov 10) can be seen on/from (UT): 2006 Mar 16 (01:06-04:11) - [Look for colour]

Event: Macrobius (McLeod, 1938 Nov 08) can be seen on/from (UT): 2006 Mar 16 (02:15-06:05) - [Look for changes in the dark areas]

Event: Aristarchus (Bartlett, 1965 Nov 10) can be seen on/from (UT): 2006 Mar 16 (04:40-06:05) - [Look for colour]

Event: Plato (Gruithuisen, 1824 Dec 8) can be seen on/from (UT): 2006 Mar 16 (20:52-20:56) - [Please image/sketch the SE part of the crater]

Event: Aristarchus (Thomas, 1970 Feb 23) can be seen on/from (UT): 2006 Mar 16/17 (21:11-01:07) - [Check for changes to the natural blueness of the crater]

Event: Aristarchus (Thomas, 1970 Feb 24) can be seen on/from (UT): 2006 Mar 17/18 (22:09-01:05) - [Check for changes to the natural blueness of the crater]

Event: Aristarchus (Bartlett, 1976 Nov 13) can be seen on/from (UT): 2006 Mar 21 (02:32-04:05) - [Check for colour]

Event: Alphonsus (Kozyrev, 1958 Nov 3) can be seen on/from (UT): 2006 Mar 21 (03:36-06:13) - [Check for central peak for colour]

Event: Aristarchus (Bartlett, 1976 Nov 14) can be seen on/from (UT): 2006 Mar 22 (03:57-04:48) - [Check for colour and examine floor texture]

Further predictions, including the more numerous illumination only events can be found on the following web site: <http://www.lpl.arizona.edu/~rhill/alpo/lunarstuff/ltp.html>. For members who do not have access to the internet, please drop me a line and I will post predictions to you. If you would like to join the TLP telephone alert team, please let me know your phone No. and how late you wish to be contacted. If in the unlikely event you see a TLP, please give me a call on my cell phone: +44 (0)798 505 5681 and I will alert other observers. Note when telephoning from outside the UK you must not use the (0). When phoning from within the UK please do not use the +44!

2006 APR.	Age d	Phase	Earth's Selenographic		Sun's Selenographic		R.A.		Dec. ø	Rises		Sets		Transit		Alt ø
			Longø	Latø	Colongø	Latø	h	m		h	m	h	m	h	m	
1.0	2.6	0.092	5.8	-4.6	299.3	0.20	02	50	20.1	06	29	23	26	14	46	60
2.0	3.6	0.167	6.6	-5.7	311.5	0.23	03	48	24.4	06	54	00	48	15	42	64
3.0	4.6	0.256	6.9	-6.4	323.7	0.25	04	46	27.3	07	29	00	48	16	39	66
4.0	5.6	0.352	6.8	-6.8	335.9	0.28	05	45	28.6	08	18	01	57	17	35	66
5.0	6.6	0.451	6.4	-6.8	348.1	0.30	06	42	28.4	09	21	02	48	18	29	65
6.0	7.6	0.550	5.6	-6.5	0.3	0.32	07	37	26.7	10	32	03	24	19	19	62
7.0	8.6	0.645	4.5	-5.9	12.5	0.34	08	29	23.8	11	47	03	48	20	06	58
8.0	9.6	0.733	3.3	-5.1	24.6	0.37	09	18	19.9	13	02	04	06	20	49	53
9.0	10.6	0.812	1.9	-4.1	36.8	0.39	10	03	15.3	14	15	04	18	21	30	48
10.0	11.6	0.880	0.5	-2.9	49.0	0.42	10	47	10.1	15	26	04	29	22	10	43
11.0	12.6	0.934	-0.8	-1.6	61.2	0.44	11	29	4.6	16	37	04	38	22	49	37
12.0	13.6	0.973	-2.1	-0.2	73.3	0.47	12	12	-1.1	17	48	04	47	23	29	31
13.0	14.6	0.995	-3.3	1.3	85.5	0.50	12	54	-6.9	19	02	04	56	..	..	..
14.0	15.6	0.999	-4.3	2.7	97.7	0.52	13	39	-12.5	20	19	05	06	00	10	25
15.0	16.6	0.983	-5.1	3.9	109.8	0.55	14	25	-17.6	21	38	05	20	00	53	20
16.0	17.6	0.947	-5.6	5.1	122.0	0.58	15	15	-22.1	22	59	05	38	01	42	15
17.0	18.6	0.891	-6.0	5.9	134.2	0.60	16	09	-25.7	..	..	06	04	02	35	12
18.0	19.6	0.818	-6.1	6.5	146.4	0.63	17	07	-27.9	..	..	06	43	03	31	9
19.0	20.6	0.729	-5.9	6.8	158.6	0.66	18	07	-28.7	01	21	07	40	04	29	9
20.0	21.6	0.628	-5.5	6.6	170.7	0.68	19	08	-27.7	02	10	08	54	05	29	10
21.0	22.6	0.518	-4.9	6.1	182.9	0.71	20	08	-25.0	02	44	10	20	06	27	13
22.0	23.6	0.405	-4.0	5.2	195.1	0.73	21	06	-20.9	03	07	11	51	07	22	18
23.0	24.6	0.294	-2.9	4.0	207.4	0.76	22	02	-15.4	03	24	13	22	08	15	24
24.0	25.6	0.194	-1.7	2.6	219.6	0.78	22	55	-9.1	03	38	14	52	09	05	31
25.0	26.6	0.109	-0.3	0.9	231.8	0.81	23	47	-2.2	03	50	16	21	09	55	38
26.0	27.6	0.046	1.2	-0.8	244.0	0.83	00	39	4.9	04	02	17	50	10	45	45
27.0	28.6	0.010	2.6	-2.5	256.3	0.86	01	32	11.6	04	15	19	21	11	36	52
28.0	0.2	0.001	3.8	-4.0	268.5	0.88	02	26	17.7	04	31	20	53	12	30	58
29.0	1.2	0.020	4.9	-5.2	280.7	0.91	03	23	22.7	04	52	22	21	13	26	62
30.0	2.2	0.063	5.6	-6.1	293.0	0.93	04	22	26.3	05	23	..	..	14	24	65

MAY 2006

1.0	3.2	0.125	6.0	-6.6	305.2	0.95	05	22	28.2	06	07	..	..	15	22	66
2.0	4.2	0.203	6.0	-6.7	317.4	0.97	06	21	28.5	07	05	00	39	16	18	65
3.0	5.2	0.291	5.6	-6.5	329.6	0.99	07	19	27.3	08	15	01	22	17	11	63
4.0	6.2	0.384	4.8	-6.0	341.9	1.01	08	12	24.7	09	30	01	51	18	00	60
5.0	7.2	0.480	3.8	-5.3	354.1	1.03	09	03	21.1	10	46	02	11	18	45	55
6.0	8.2	0.576	2.5	-4.3	6.3	1.05	09	49	16.7	12	00	02	25	19	27	50
7.0	9.2	0.667	1.2	-3.1	18.5	1.07	10	34	11.7	13	12	02	37	20	07	45
8.0	10.2	0.753	-0.2	-1.8	30.7	1.09	11	16	6.2	14	22	02	46	20	46	39
9.0	11.2	0.830	-1.6	-0.5	42.9	1.10	11	58	0.6	15	33	02	55	21	26	33
10.0	12.2	0.896	-2.8	0.9	55.1	1.12	12	41	-5.2	16	46	03	04	22	06	27
11.0	13.2	0.947	-3.8	2.3	67.2	1.14	13	25	-10.8	18	02	03	14	22	50	22
12.0	14.2	0.982	-4.6	3.6	79.4	1.16	14	11	-16.1	19	21	03	27	23	37	17

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Contributions related to a specific sub-section should be sent to the appropriate co-ordinator, but send any material of a more general nature to the Editor at:

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Items for the April 2006 circular should reach the Editor by the 10th March 2006