

Sunday August 17, 2014

Went to the Pawnee Grasslands, south of Keota, CO. Boy has this place changed since I was last here. There are oil pumping complexes and oil drilling everywhere on the Grasslands. There is an oil well complex to the NW about 1 mile. There is an active oil drilling rig to the south on US14. Didn't setup in usual spot but closer to CR 103 and used a hill to block the oil rig lights. New 2 headed pump well to NE with flame.

Partly Cloudy overhead when I arrived about an hour before sunset.

Heavy oil industry trucks using CR 103 a lot. Kicking up dust that drifts towards me. The draw to block oil rig lights where I setup is $\frac{1}{4}$ mile east of CR 103 on 2 rut lane.

It's Sunday night. Maybe they will quit after sunset (it was after 11 PM when they quit and could see trucks using CR 105 to east).

Sunset at 7:45 PM. Standing water in ponds on prairie and along ditch of CR 103 but bugs not too bad.

8:25 PM. Getting Dark. Clouds clearing from W to E.

Mars small red disk. Saturn nice. Cassini's Division stands out.

8:55. Sky Commander aligned and found M4. This is nice. Using my 8" f/6 Newtonian tonight.

Seeing Good. Transparency Good.

LBN 1091 9:00 PM 15mm – With Deep Sky Filter (DSF). Very low in south. Around a bright star in area of where nebulae is, there is a hint of a large, dim halo glow. Not best position in sky to see it but it's there. Lynd Brightness 6.

IC 4604 9:03 PM 15mm – Around 3 brighter stars is a circular halo glow. Small around stars. Brightest star in center has biggest glow. 2nd brightest star above and has bit smaller halo glow. Bottom star dimmest and has tiny halo glow. Lynd Brightness 3. DSF shows halo glow nicely also.

Sky Good. Transparency Good this low in the south.

IC 4628 9:08 PM 15mm – With DSF. Under 3 dim stars and then the 2 above is this noticeable glow. Very subtle. Barely there w/o filter but DSF shows it better. Very low above horizon. Lynd Brightness 6. It is brightest under the 3 stars and just above it towards the 2 stars.

Siv 10	9:13 PM	15mm – the upper bright star of Scorpio has a large halo glow around a double star. Seen with DSF also. Looked at other stars below and a brighter star a FOV away had a tiny halo glow around it.
NGC 6256	9:20 PM	10mm – A very small, roundish glow.
NGC 6280	9:25 PM	10mm – A tiny round glow. Has brighter core and dim around it. Looks like out of focus star.
Ton 2	9:26 PM	10mm – To lower right of a bright star in tail of Scorpio is a loose association of 8-10 dim stars, roughly circular in shape. About ¼ FOV in diameter.
PK 352-7.1	9:33 PM	10mm – A very small, bright oval with central star seen easily in center. Looked at first like out of focus star. With OIII, see it is round and central star in center of dim circular glow. Has pale white color w/o filter and fatter than field stars in FOV. It stood out.
NGC 6533	9:38 PM	10mm – 20-25 blue white stars of 3 magnitudes makeup this tight oval shaped OC. Sits on top of a nice nebulae glow of NGC 6523 with Lynd Brightness 3. To left is 2 bright stars with a vertical, easy to see nebulae glow of NGC 6526. Then below and to lower left is IC 1271, another dim glow with Lynd Brightness 4 with 6-8 field stars on glow of NGC 6530. Whole complex nice. Fills FOV nicely.
NGC 6526		
NGC 6523		
IC 1271		
NGC 6530		
Pal 8	9:45 PM	10mm – A small, fat oval glow. W/AV, and waiting, I can see 5-8 tiny stars on glow once in a while.
LBN 683	9:51 PM	15mm – w/o DSF only see hint of halo glow around a bright field star to lower left of area where nebulae should be. With DSF, see a glow around this star of Lynd Brightness 4 and in area above and to right. Seems brightest when several stars in FOV are close to each other. There was this group of 5 where I could see it. Lynd Brightness 4. Maybe 2 FOVs wide.

Seeing in North OK. Transparency OK.

Clouded up about 10 PM. Broken, partly cloudy clouds. Warm wind from NW kicked up.

Could split the double-double in Epsilon Lyra with 6mm nicely.

NGC 5452	10:23 PM	6mm – A very faint, thin, uniformly lit, long small oval glow.
NGC 6434	10:30 PM	6mm – Above a bright field star and to left and near is this very faint, small, long oval with hint of a tiny, hare brighter core.

12 light domes from NW to S along horizon of drilling rig lights. Smell of oil in the air in light breeze from NW where new oil complex is. Some motor is running all the time there.

Flame from double pumbers in SE not bright at all.

NGC 7538	10:39 PM	15mm – Around a brighter field star and a dim one next to it see a small, Lynd Brightness 3 halo glow. With DSF, see a 3 rd stars a bit away and to upper right has a hint of halo around it also.
NGC 7748	10:44 PM	15mm – Around a brighter field star is this small halo glow. Best seen with DSF and AV. Very subtle but nice.
NGC 7822 Ced 214	10:53 PM	15mm – With DSF. This complex is only seen with DSF. Around a brighter field star is this tiny halo glow. Best seen with AV. Then below this (Ced 214) and around several stars in a clump is a dim glow underneath them. This whole area seems to be a subtle glow with DSF and panning around. About 1 FOV wide.

Seeing Good. Transparency Good.

NGC 7429	10:55 PM	15mm – A small grouping of 10 very dim stars in the shape of a bullet. 3 stars on upper left flat and 4 stars on lower right are rounded to form bullet. Rest stars in between. Bullet goes from 10-4 o'clock.
King 10	11:01 PM	15mm – A small, boxy shaped, compact OC with 10 or so very faint stars seen with AV.

11:05 a short bright meteor in NW lit up the ground. Left a several second bright smoke trail.

King 19	11:12 PM	15mm – A small grouping of dim, blue white stars in 2 maybe 3 lines. 3 stars in left line, 4 stars in middle and 2 in right that all point at a hare brighter apex star.
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Mrk 50 11:15 PM 15mm – 4 dim blue white stars form an arc in a tight grouping with a glow underneath these. 5 or so stars around this area of same blue white color and magnitude. So maybe these are part of it also.

Sky is soft now. Clouds along southern horizon.

M13 Nice. M31, 110, 32 nice. Saw M31 in 8x50 binocs. M33 neat. Saw it also in Binocs.

12:03 AM. Sky OK but still soft. Clouds moving in again. Going to bed. I had a great time on the prairie. Spent the night and drove home the next morning.