

The Astronomical League Has It All

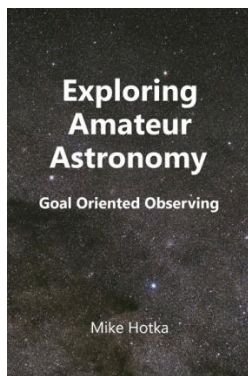
By Mike Hotka

Over the past few months, I have shared my observing process with you. This process is what I use today to plan, execute and record my observing outings.

A simple way to get started observing is to find a pre-made list of objects to observe and then, one by one, check the objects you observe off this list. A wonderful place to find list after list of astronomical objects to observe is from the Astronomical League's [Observing Programs website](#). Another resource from their website is this [PDF File](#) that has these Observing Programs ranked in various ways.

If you have not completed the Messier Observing Program, I would suggest you start with this one first. Also consider the Constellation Hunter Observing Program because this will teach you the constellations and their extent across the sky.

I had planned on several more articles, devoting each month to an Astronomical League Observing Program. These monthly articles are already explained in greater detail in my book, [Exploring Amateur Astronomy : Goal Oriented Observing](#), published by Amazon Publishing, than I could have written in the monthly article.



The beginning of this book gives more details of the information I shared with you these past few months in the articles. This is followed by a chapter devoted to each Astronomical League Observing Program I completed at the time this book was published in August, 2018. These chapters illustrate the tips and tricks I learned to overcome some of these Observing Programs' steep learning curve before you could record an observation. By reading each chapter of an Observing Program you are interested in starting, you will benefit from what I found worked and will allow you to record observations on your first outing.

Another great resource are all my observations, for each Observing Program I finished, that is on my [website](#) for your reference. By clicking the links in the Observations columns for an Observing Program, you can see the words and format I used to record the observations for each Observing Program. I would then submit this Observations URL to the Observing Program's coordinator for their review.

Finally, you can always reach out to me via my email address (mhotka@yahoo.com) to discuss anything astronomical with me, especially these Astronomical League Observing Programs. I can help you pick an Observing Program to start based on your interests. I can help you with techniques I have found successful if you get stuck on a particular Observing Program. Please never hesitate to contact me with questions. I will help to the best of my ability.

My goal with writing these articles for you to enjoy, is to get you out, observing with your equipment, enjoying the night sky and seeing all the wonders of the universe with your own eyes.