

Differential Photometry of M39

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(Dated: 27 September 2017)

I. INTRODUCTION

This lab seeks to determine the V and B magnitudes of four of the objects in M39, an open galactic cluster. M39 contains around 30 stars of various brightness and is about 9° from Deneb (α Cyg).

II. DATA ACQUISITION AND SETUP

Observations were made on at the Zaffarano Hall observation deck in Ames, Iowa. The night was mostly clear and the ambient temperature was around 12°C . The moon was full that night which caused higher than usual lunar presence. Observations were made using a Meade 8" reflector telescope with an SBIG ST-402ME CCD camera with internal V, B, and I filters.

Setting up the telescope was the same as previous observations made with the 8" Meade telescope at Zaffarano Hall. An obstacle we faced with alignment and slewing was the misalignment of our sight by a significant amount. To combat this, we shined a laser through the eyepiece to roughly show the target of the main mirror.

We took 15 frames of data at 13s at two locations in the sky. Of those 15, 5 were with photometric V, 5 were with photometric B, and 5 were dark frames. The first target contained two M39 objects (BD+47 3452 and HD 205172), however this data was deleted by accident and was not used for analysis. The second target contained objects BD+47 3447, HD 205085, BD+47 3453, and BD+47 3458, all of which are recorded in Table III. Of these images, another issue we encountered was centering the images as the telescope shifted according to its tracking movements. Because of this, a few of the images do not contain a clear view of M39 BD+47 3458.

III. DATA ANALYSIS

Our data analysis involved preparing our science images and performing differential photometry on them. To prepare our images we created a median dark frame in AstroImageJ for our only exposure time, 13s. We then subtracted this frame from each science image to filter out systematic noise from our CCD. These images were then grouped into two stacks, one for each photometric filter.

We used AstroImageJ to process each stack for the differential photometry. For use in the differential photometry algorithm we use the CCD reported electronic gain of 1.49 e/ADU . AstroImageJ processes the stack of images

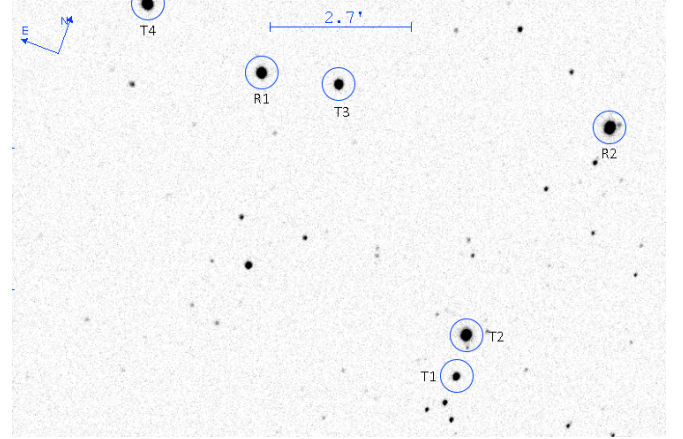


FIG. 1. Map showing the celestial direction, target stars, and reference stars. The names of the objects above are in Table II.

TABLE I. Reference Stars

Object	Name	V Mag	B Mag
R1	BD+47 3454	8.917	9.028
R2	HD 205073	7.845	7.870

in a way that allows for quick calculations. An aperture can be placed on each star of interest in an image and AstroImageJ allows placing target stars and reference stars, where the reference stars have predetermined magnitudes.

After placing the apertures for one image in the stack we move forward in the stack and by choosing the same initial aperture AstroImageJ will place the remaining apertures automatically. The reference magnitudes are shown in Table I. After each aperture has been placed on each image in the stack and the reference star magnitudes have been set, AstroImageJ will do the photometry and creates a measurement table with the results. The full results are shown in section B. This table shows results for target and reference stars shown in Figure 1.

IV. RESULTS

The table of the results from AstroImageJ are in section B and the results calculated using ?? and ?? are in Table II.

TABLE II. Photometry Results

Object	Name	V Mag	B Mag
T1	BD+47 3447	9.9790(35)	10.233(11)
T2	HD 205085	7.7707(39)	7.8078(18)
T3	BD+47 3453	9.3294(45)	9.4730(42)
T4	BD+47 3458	NA	NA

V. CONCLUSIONS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to Dr. Charles Kerton and Brandon Marshall for their guidance and assistance in this work.

Appendix A: Observation Log

TABLE III. Observed 06 September 2017 by Miles Lucas and John Brandon

Time	File	N Frames	Object	Filter	Exposure	Camera Temp.	Notes
21:39	M39_2_V_13s_	5	M39 Objects x1, x4, x7, and x9; stars E, D	V	13 s	5.33 °C	
21:41	M39_2_V_13s_dark_	5	M39 Objects x1, x4, x7, and x9; stars E, D	V	13 s	5.33 °C	Dark frames
21:43	M39_2_B_13s_	5	M39 Objects x1, x4, x7, and x9; stars E, D	B	13 s	5.33 °C	

Appendix B: Photometry Results