

Welcome to the tenth edition of the Atik Newsletter. It has been a long time since the previous edition, so there's a lot to catch up on.

NEW DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION FACILITY

STEVE CHAMBERS

Atik has been growing fast both inside astronomy and in general scientific imaging. This has led to some growing pains, as production has struggled to keep up with increased order levels. However the situation has improved since the start of 2011, when we opened a second production line in the UK.

The new facility, which is in Norwich, houses our development and accounting along with production of the 383L+ camera. This has allowed our team in Portugal to concentrate on production of the rest of the Atik



The new development and production facility in Norwich

range, including the new electronic filter wheel. We are happy to say that the majority of our products are now available from stock. The situation will improve still further over the coming months, as we work through back-orders of the Atik 383L+ and then build up stocks of this camera. We also plan to develop a number of new products in 2011, including the new Hyperstar camera described in this newsletter.

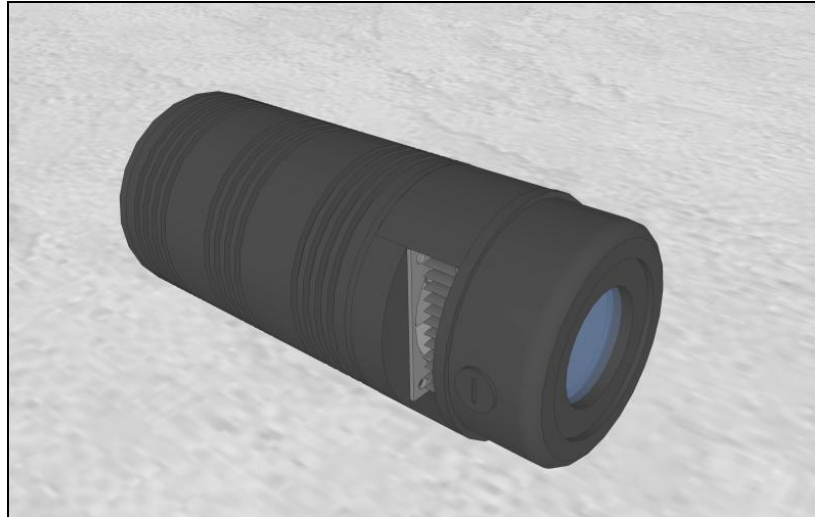
ATIK IMAGING COMPETITION 2011

This year's imaging competition has attracted the largest ever number of entries, and the standard is extremely high as always. All the pictures were displayed at the Astrofest show in London, where many people voted for their favourite images in each category, and all the entries are now available for viewing on our website at <http://www.atik-cameras.com/html/competition.html>. There are some fantastic pictures, so please visit the competition webpage to see what can be achieved with Atik cameras, and vote for your favourite(s) if you haven't done so already. Instructions for voting are given on the webpage. The online votes will be added to those cast at Astrofest in order to determine the winners in each category, and voting is open until 1 June 2011. Thanks to everyone who has participated.

NEW "HYPERSTAR-FRIENDLY" CAMERA

STEVE CHAMBERS

At Astrofest we were pleased to unveil a new camera format which will be excellent for Hyperstar systems, where the central obstruction needs to be kept to a minimum. This new format, which is currently under development, will have a very narrow footprint, making it suitable for use with even the 6" Hyperstar module. The new model will be based on the world-famous "Series 3" electronics which provide very low noise, thermoelectric cooling, exceptional power efficiency, and, of course, the quality you would expect from Atik. The new model is expected to be available in the second half of 2011.



PRELIMINARY SPECIFICATIONS

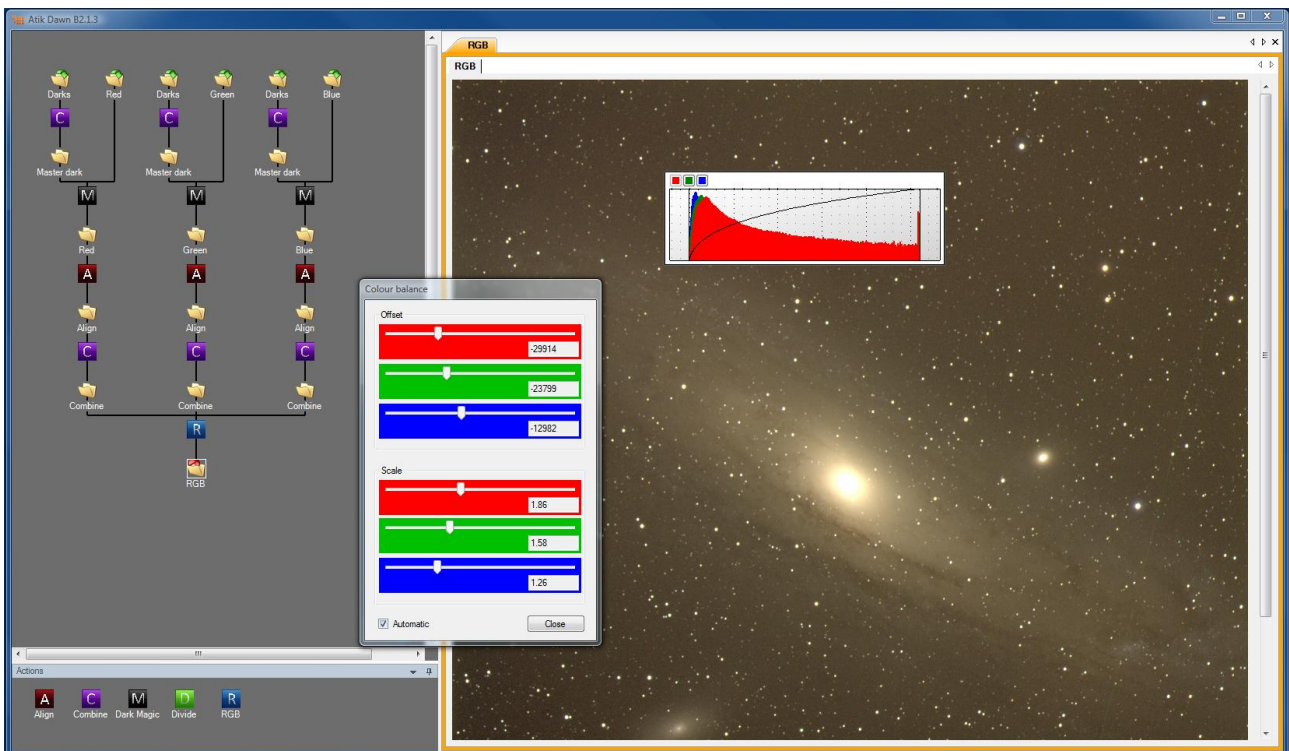
Resolution	2MP	5MP
Pixel size	4.4 μ m	3.45 μ m
Size	Approx. 60x135mm	Approx. 60x135mm
Weight	TBA	TBA
Voltage requirements	12V DC	12V DC
PC interface	USB2	USB2

	2MP Angular	2MP FOV	5MP Angular	5MP FOV
Hyperstar 6	3.13 arcsec/pix	63x84 arcmin	2.45 arcsec/pix	83x100 arcmin
Hyperstar 8	2.13 arcsec/pix	43x57 arcmin	1.68 arcsec/pix	57x68 arcmin
Hyperstar 11	1.62 arcsec/pix	32x43 arcmin	1.27 arcsec/pix	43x51 arcmin
Hyperstar 14	1.34 arcsec/pix	27x36 arcmin	1.05 arcsec/pix	36x43 arcmin

DAWN

Dawn now supports colour images through the RGB action, which allows individual images in each of the three colour bands to be combined into a single colour image. A brief demo video which introduces this new feature is now available for download from the Dawn webpage at <http://www.atik-cameras.com/html/dawn.html>.

A problem which was causing Dawn to fail to recognize Atik images on some systems with certain language settings has now been fixed, and an installer for this latest version is available for download from the Dawn webpage.



Many thanks to everyone who stopped by at Astrofest to talk about Dawn: it was great to see such interest in it, and all your comments and suggestions were gratefully received. Next up for Dawn I'm planning to add a debayer action to support one-shot-colour images, and to extend the Align and Combine actions to accommodate images with different bin-levels.

Do please drop me an email at jonathan@atik-cameras.com if you have any comments or suggestions.

UPDATE ON DELIVERY OF NEW PRODUCTS

RUI TRIPA

As you may know, production of the Atik 383L+ was halted a few months ago. We're very pleased to inform you that the 383L+ is now back in full production. In fact, we now have significant capacity dedicated to this camera at the new facility in Norwich, and we are in a position to fulfill the enormous backorder and to make sure that we will be able to supply new orders in a timely manner. We're extremely happy to say that all this has been achieved, and we're making every effort to place this fine camera in your hands with the minimal delay possible.

We're also pleased to say that the off-axis guider is now in production, and we'll be able to deliver the first units some time in March. We had to make sure that the OAG worked as intended with many different camera/telescope combinations and, as you may understand, this was not a simple or fast task. It has been a long wait, but it will be a worthwhile one.



WARREN KELLER

As of 12 March Warren Keller is no longer Atik's official US representative. All of us at Atik are extremely grateful to Warren for his efforts in establishing the Atik brand in the USA: he has worked tirelessly to promote Atik cameras and to support US customers, and thanks to him we now have some great dealers in the States who can provide excellent sales and support services. Warren also knows a thing or two about imaging: check out his webpage at



<http://www.billionsandbillions.com> for some fantastic images, inspiring articles and useful learning resources. We hope and expect that we will continue to have strong links with Warren and we look forward to working with him in the future.

TRADE SHOWS

RUI TRIPA

Over the past few months Atik has attended several trade shows both in Europe and in the USA. Here are a few brief reports of some of the shows that we have been to.

November 12th - 14th 2010 Les Rencontres du Ciel & de l'Espece: Both Jennifer and Rui attended this excellent show in Paris, where we were taken care of by one of our French dealers, Optique Unterlinden, who were fantastic hosts: a very big thank you for their hospitality and friendship. The show was a great success and highly enjoyable too.



February 4th - 5th 2011 Astrofest: Once more, we attended the biggest astronomy show in the UK - and one of the biggest in Europe. We had a very substantial attendance, and as always, we had another imaging competition. It just keeps getting better and better, with high quality entries rivaling the best astrophotos seen anywhere. Most of the Atik team was there, and we greatly enjoyed speaking with our customers and advising on how to achieve the best results. We announced the new, yet-to-be-named, Hyperstar-friendly camera line, and for the cherry on the top of the cake, we had our fantastic looking Gold Edition 314L+ cameras, which sold like hot cakes. Unfortunately, there were only ten cakes, as this camera was limited edition, but word is that there's still one out there looking for an owner. We'll have news on this shortly, so stay tuned...



February 28th - March 4th 2011

Winter Star Party: This was a great chance for us to get out in the field with astronomers and display our products. Rui and Warren attended this excellent Florida keys event. The weather didn't cooperate much this year, but it's always good to meet our customers face-to-face and get the opportunity to talk astronomy.



FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AND SHOWS

March 31st - April 4th 2011 Kelling Heath Spring Star Party: As usual, Atik will be attending the Kelling Heath Star Party, where we'll be hoping for the clear skies that this event usually manages to pull out of the hat.

April 14th - 17th 2011 NEAIC/NEAF: Atik will be in the US again for NEAIC/NEAF, represented by Jennifer and Steve. As always, we'll have the opportunity to display our products and have a chat with existing and, who knows, future customers.

May 7th 2011 ATT: Atik will be in Germany for the ATT show in Essen, where we hope to follow up on last year's show by having more excellent conversations with many customers willing to share their views and ideas.

NICK HOWES

VINCE BYGRAVE

One of our happy users is Nick Howes, who bought an Atik 4000 as an upgrade for his Atik 314L some months ago. Nick is somewhat of a comet expert as well as writing regularly for Astronomy Now magazine. We were delighted when he emailed in to tell us that his first week's images from the Atik 4000 were being used by some of the large organisations such as NASA, National Geographic and Space Weather, to mention just a few. The images were of comet 103P and were taken with Nick's trusty Atik 314L and the new Atik 4000. Some websites have mistakenly said that he was using the Faulkes telescope but this must only go to show the quality of the equipment that Nick has used! Here's a link to the NASA site showing Nick's image.

http://science.nasa.gov/science-news/science-at-nasa/2010/15oct_epoxi/

Keep up the good work Nick!

THE ATIK 16IC

AS YOU MAY KNOW, THE ATIK 16IC IS NO LONGER IN PRODUCTION AND HAS BEEN REPLACED BY THE TITAN. THE 16IC HAS BEEN A REAL WORKHORSE CAMERA AND HERE OUR CHIEF ENGINEER, PEDRO MOTA, PAYS TRIBUTE TO A VENERABLE CAMERA WHICH HAS GIVEN GREAT SERVICE AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.

Hello all, I would like to say a few words about our latest "retired" product: the extraordinary 16IC. Since the very beginning of Atik we used to wonder how it would be to have a 16-bit ADC with a cooled 424 CCD sensor. Well basically that's what our 16IC was: such a simple idea and what an amazing result - quite a simple camera, lightweight, low power consumption, very easy to use and great value for money.

I myself took lots of images using one (my first images of all 110 Messier objects, for example) and, although the chip size was limited, it was a very good camera for imaging. But the most important part is that after an upgrade to the Atik 314 camera I never left my "old" reliable friend the 16IC. In fact it's still working in my remote observatory, and let me tell you it is a perfect guider camera, and the chip size is entirely adequate for the job. It enables me to guide from half second exposures to 5 or more seconds, and allows me to guide even in the "worst" areas of the sky with no problem. But most of all, every time I ask the camera to guide, it guides, in one the hardest environments for electronics: a wood shelter, opened at night, in a remote location filled with spiders and dust.



Having participated in the development of this product, I am very happy with the result, and I feel I contributed to the astronomical community with this good quality, affordable camera. In fact I am very proud to have built, nearly by myself, almost 1200 units, and even more proud to know that most of them are still working hard, helping astronomers in the field.

I thank everybody who trusted Atik, and wish all great astronomy pictures in the company of our products.

IN CLOSING...

It seems appropriate to finish with an image from Pedro's 16IC. This is of M76 and was taken five or six years ago in the early days of the camera, using a Losmandy GM8 mount and a 105mm TMB scope, with LRGB Astronomik filters.



I hope you have enjoyed this edition of the newsletter. If you have any comments, or if you would like to be added to the distribution list, please send me an email.

Thank you for reading!

Jonathan

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