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**INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL UNION**

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*COMET C/2006 F2 (CHRISTENSEN)*

E. J. Christensen reports the discovery of a comet on unfiltered CCD images taken with the 1.5-m reflector in the course of the Mt. Lemmon Survey (discovery observation tabulated below). The Mar. 23 images show a diffuse, round 8'' coma and no tail in four co-added 30-s images. Four co-added 60-s images in average seeing taken on Mar. 24.3 UT show a 10'' moderately condensed coma, slightly elongated toward p.a. 320°.

2006 UT	$\alpha_{2000}$	$\delta_{2000}$	Mag.
Mar. 23.32673	12 <sup>h</sup> 36 <sup>m</sup> 46 <sup>s</sup> .72	-3°57'46".6	19.7

The available astrometry (including prediscovery Spacewatch observations from Feb. 27), the following preliminary orbital elements, and an ephemeris appear on *MPEC* 2006-F29.

$$\left. \begin{array}{ll}
 T = 2006 \text{ Mar. } 17.736 \text{ TT} & \omega = 179^{\circ}.204 \\
 e = 0.65377 & \Omega = 8.258 \\
 q = 4.28917 \text{ AU} & i = 20.413 \\
 a = 12.38814 \text{ AU} & n^{\circ} = 0.022604 \quad P = 43.60 \text{ years}
 \end{array} \right\} 2000.0$$

*COMET 73P/SCHWASSMANN-WACHMANN*

The components 'H', 'J', and L (mentioned on *IAUC* 8685 on Mar. 8) were observed by P. Birtwhistle (Great Shefford, Berkshire, England) on Mar. 23.1 UT and by E. J. Christensen at Mt. Lemmon on Mar. 23.5. Birtwhistle gave the magnitudes as 18.9, 19.9, and 21.0, adding that component 'H' had a coma of diameter 9'' and a tail 40'' long in p.a. 255°, that component 'J' had a coma of diameter 9'' and a tail 20'' long in p.a. 230°, and that component 'L' had a very diffuse coma of diameter 5'' and a possible tail 15'' long in p.a. 245°. Neither observer recorded component 'K', but both observers independently reported two new components, designated 'M' and 'N', estimated by Birtwhistle at mag 20.8 and 21.4, respectively, the former having a diameter of no more than 4'' and no tail, and the latter having a stellar head and a faint tail 70'' (possibly up to 90'') long in p.a. 255°. The astrometric observations are provided on *MPEC* 2006-F22. The new components 'M' and 'N' are in the vicinity of component 'H' and, using the earlier orbit (*MPEC* 2006-B27) for component 'B' with perihelion time adjusted as before, they correspond to  $T = 2006$  June 8.28 and 8.30 TT, respectively, although component 'N' lies perhaps 40'' north of the line of variation.