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X-RAY FLASH IN M51

S. Immler, Goddard Space Flight Center, NASA, and USRA; and A. Kong and W. H. G. Lewin, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, on behalf of a larger collaboration, report the detection of an x-ray flash in a 2136-s SWIFT XRT observation of M51 from July 6.231 UT (sequence 00030083011): "The significance of the detection is 6σ. Given an offset of the source from the tentative identification of the SN 2005cs progenitor (Richmond, *IAUC* 8555) of $8''$, and an XRT point-spread function of $18''$ (half-power diameter at 1.5 keV), this new source is probably unrelated to the supernova; however, based on the position alone, we cannot exclude the possibility that the emission is from SN 2005cs. The (background-subtracted) count rate of the source is $(7.4 \pm 1.5) \times 10^{-3}$ count/s, which corresponds to an unabsorbed 0.3–10-keV-band flux (averaged over the observation) of $(3.3 \pm 0.7) \times 10^{-14}$ erg cm^{-2} s^{-1} and an average luminosity of $(2.8 \pm 0.6) \times 10^{39}$ ergs/s, assuming a 10-keV thermal bremsstrahlung spectrum, an absorbing column density of 1.57×10^{20} cm^{-2} (Dickey and Lockman 1990, *ARAA* **28**, 215), and a distance of 8.4 Mpc (Feldmeier *et al.* 1997, *Ap.J.* **479**, 231). No x-ray source was detected 96 min later (sequence 00030083012, exposure 2031 s), as well as in all other SWIFT XRT observations of M51 on June 30, July 3, 5, 6, and 7, and in a previous 4800-s Chandra observation on 2003 Aug. 7. We encourage observations at other wavelengths."

SUPERNOVA 2005ct IN NGC 207

A. V. Filippenko, F. J. D. Serduke, and S. Park, University of California, Berkeley; and D. C. Leonard, California Institute of Technology, report that inspection of CCD spectra (range 330–1000 nm), obtained on July 10 UT with the Shane 3-m telescope at Lick Observatory, shows that SN 2005ct (*IAUC* 8557) is a supernova, probably of type Ic (although type Ib cannot be ruled out at this time).

COMET P/2005 N3 (LARSON)

As suspected on *IAUC* 8560, this comet is indeed of short period (P = 6.7 yr); additional astrometry, elliptical orbital elements (T = 2005 Dec. 8.6 TT, e = 0.383, q = 2.199 AU, $\omega = 57^{\circ}.9$, $\Omega = 298^{\circ}.5$, $i = 6^{\circ}.3$, equinox 2000.0), and an ephemeris appear on *MPEC* 2005-N46.

2005 July 11 *Daniel W. E. Green*