Central Bureau for Astronomical Telegrams
INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMICAL UNION
Mailstop 18, Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, Cambridge, MA 02138, U.S.A.
IAUSUBS@CFA.HARVARD.EDU or FAX 617-495-7231 (subscriptions)
CBAT@CFA.HARVARD.EDU (science)
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COMET C/2006 A1 (POJMANSKI)

Grzegorz Pojmanski, Warsaw University Astronomical Observatory, reports his discovery of a diffuse comet with a coma diameter of 1′ (FWHM) on 3-min CCD frames (pixel size 14″.8) taken on 2006 Jan. 1 and 4 with a 180-mm-focal-length *f*/2.8 telephoto lens (+ *V* filter) in the course of the All Sky Automated Survey at Las Campanas; Pojmanski subsequently identified ASAS images of the comet taken on 2005 Dec. 29. S. Roland (Montevideo, Uruguay) writes that 20-second CCD exposures taken with a 0.46-m prime-focus telescope confirm the cometary nature of the new object, with a coma diameter of $\sim 1'$. More than seven hours after Pojmanski reported his find to the Central Bureau, K. Cernis reported (apparently independently) that he has found an object on ultraviolet SWAN/SOHO website images taken on three nights (back to 2005 Dec. 25) showing a motion consistent with that of C/2006 A1.

2005/6	UT	α_{2000}	δ_{2000}	Mag.	*Observer*
Dec.	25	$22^h09^m.0$	$-71°07'$		SWAN
	29	21 52.6	−69 03		"
	29.03145	21 50 29^s	−69 40.6	13.2	ASAS
Jan.	1	21 42.4	−68 23		SWAN
	1.04388	21 40 28	−68 36.5	12.5	ASAS
	4.03225	21 31 33	−67 31.2	12.0	"
	4.03734	21 31 33	−67 31.1	12.0	"
	4.99875	21 28 51.64	−67 09 39″.9	14.6	Roland
	5.00339	21 28 50.91	−67 09 33.7	14.6	"
	5.01031	21 28 49.73	−67 09 23.9	14.7	"
	5.01681	21 28 48.72	−67 09 15.0	14.6	"
	5.02197	21 28 47.83	−67 09 07.9	14.8	"
	5.03106	21 28 46.33	−67 08 55.5	14.5	"
	5.03985	21 28 44.88	−67 08 43.5	14.7	"
	5.04632	21 28 43.71	−67 08 35.7	14.2	"
	5.05587	21 28 42.25	−67 08 21.4	14.7	"
	5.07266	21 28 39.51	−67 07 58.5	14.5	"

Preliminary parabolic orbital elements from the ASAS and Roland data:

$$T = \text{2006 Feb. 22.671 TT} \qquad \left.\begin{aligned} \omega &= 350^\circ.499 \\ \Omega &= 212.275 \\ i &= 93.230 \end{aligned}\right\} 2000.0$$
$$q = 0.56748 \text{ AU}$$

2006 January 5 *Daniel W. E. Green*