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HD 109962

F. Walter, Stony Brook University; H. E. Bond, Space Telescope Science Institute; and A. Pasten, Cerro Tololo Interamerican Observatory, report that a spectrum of HD 109962 (= NSV 19448), obtained with the SMARTS 1.5-m telescope on Jan. 16.2 UT, shows He II 468.6-nm emission (equivalent width −0.29 nm) and possible weak emission at the 464.0-nm C III/N III feature (equivalent width −0.12 nm) superposed on the star's F2 V spectrum. In a second spectrogram obtained on Jan. 19.3, however, the high-excitation emission is absent. As described by S. Otero (`http://ar.geocities.com/varsao/NSV_19448.htm`), HD 109962 is an eclipsing binary with a period of 0.89 days that additionally shows outbursts of $\sim$ 0.8 mag and duration $\sim$ 40 days occurring about once a year, according to ASAS-3 data, with the latest outburst having begun in late December 2005. The variable He II emission suggests a close compact companion undergoing a transient accretion episode, or one that was eclipsed during the second spectrogram. Observations at all wavelengths, including x-ray and ultraviolet, are encouraged.

COMET C/2006 A2 (CATALINA)

E. Christensen, Lunar and Planetary Laboratory, writes that the discovery and follow-up images from the Catalina Schmidt telescope do not look cometary, though the object's images obtained by E. C. Beshore from the Mt. Lemmon 1.5-m reflector on Jan. 24 display a round $8''$ coma in four 60-s stacked images, with no visible tail.

This comet's designation was inadvertently assigned to the wrong half-month (*IAUC* 8662), but the designation will remain as given.

COMET 73P/SCHWASSMANN-WACHMANN

CCD observations of the secondary component to comet 73P (cf. *IAUC* 8659, 8660) obtained by R. Hill with the Catalina 0.68-m Schmidt telescope (60-s exposures) on Jan. 23.5 UT show a tail $\sim 40''$ long in p.a. 290°. The available astrometry of this component, together with orbital elements (computed assuming identity with component B observed in 1995 and 1996, after Sekanina 2005, *ICQ* **27**, 229) and an ephemeris, were published on *MPEC* 2006-B27.

2006 January 24 *Daniel W. E. Green*