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COMET P/2008 R6 (GIACOBINI)

S. Nakano, Sumoto, Japan, reports the discovery of a comet by Koichi Itagaki (Teppo-cho, Yamagata) and Hiroshi Kaneda (Minami-ku, Sapporo) on unfiltered CCD patrol frames taken on Sept. 10.56 UT using a 0.21-m *f*/3 reflector; the position tabulated below was measured from a confirming unfiltered CCD image taken subsequently with a 0.60-m *f*/5.7 reflector at Yamagata, noting that the comet is diffuse with strong condensation, with a coma diameter of $\sim 25''$ and a $2'$ tail toward the east-southeast.

2008 UT	α_{2000}	δ_{2000}	Mag.
Sept.10.56854	$20^h39^m18^s.70$	$-1^\circ17'39''.9$	13.5

Following posting on the Minor Planet Center's 'NEOCP' webpage, numerous other CCD astrometrists have noted the cometary appearance of this object (some of the reports being sent by Nakano), with the coma diameter generally givens as $20''$-$50''$ and the tail length given as $20''$-$66''$ in p.a. $\sim 106^\circ$–124° (such reports have been received from Y. Ikari, Moriyama, Shiga-ken, Japan; K. Kadota, Ageo, Saitama-ken, Japan; V. Gonano and E. Guido, Remanzacco, Italy; R. Ligustri, Talmassons, Udine, Italy; J. J. Gómez, Gandia, Spain; J. A. Henríquez, Tenerife, Spain; P. Camilleri and G. Sostero, remotely using a 0.30-m reflector at Catania, Italy; and F. Castellani, Monte Baldo, Italy).

M. Meyer, Limburg, Germany, suggests that this comet is identical to comet D/1896 R2 (Giacobini), which has not been seen since Jan. 1897 and for which a prediction by Nakano (2005, *Nakano Note* 1211, based on an orbit by Belyaev *et al.* 1974, *QJRAS* **15**, 450) gives T = 2008 Sept. 9.89 TT. The identity has been confirmed by Nakano, who notes that the comet has made 17 revolutions and passed only 0.51 AU from the earth on 1962 Sept. 9 and 0.81 AU from Jupiter on 1992 Jan. 14. The following linked orbital elements by B. G. Marsden are from 93 observations, 1896–2008 (including newly reduced astrometry by G. V. Williams from 1896–1897); these elements, together with the 1896 elements and an ephemeris, appear on *MPEC* 2008-R60.

$$\text{Epoch} = \text{2008 Sept. 11.0 TT}$$

$$\begin{array}{ll} T = \text{2008 Sept.10.2063 TT} & \left.\begin{array}{l} \omega = 154^\circ.3051 \\ \Omega = 179.6275 \\ i = 15.3177 \end{array}\right\} 2000.0 \\ e = 0.568403 & \\ q = 1.527870 \text{ AU} & \end{array}$$

$$a = 3.540037 \text{ AU} \qquad n^\circ = 0.1479764 \qquad P = 6.66 \text{ years}$$

2008 September 10 *Daniel W. E. Green*