

FOR INFORMATION
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The Astronomer

Founded 1884

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COMET BRADFIELD 1979C

Further to the announcement on Circular No 37 (which should have been dated as 1979 June 27), it has become apparent that the second approx position reported by Tregaskis is probably in error and the motion of the comet in R.A. was increasing at that time.

The following precise positions have been measured by Herald:

1979 June	25.33368UT	8 ^h 37 ^m 43 ^s .55	-00°14'54".2	m1	10
	25.39410	8 37 44.40	-00 10 42.5		10
	28.33583	8 38 45.78	+03 13 56.6		10

Candy has telexed preliminary orbital elements based on 3 or more accurate positions over a 4 day interval where residuals are more than 5":

T = 1979 July 23.405ET.
 w = 51.91)
 A = 164.75) 1950.0
 i = 134.89)
 q = 0.3925AU.

The following ephemeris is by Candy with an extension kindly telephoned by Stan Milbourn:

			Geocentric	Heliocentric
1979 June	26	8 ^h 38 ^m .0 +00°33'	1.180	0.794
July	1	8 39.3 +06 13		
	6	8 39.3 +11 35	1.293	0.602
	11	8 37.2 +16 47		
	16	8 32.5 +21 54	1.370	0.441
	21	8 24.3 +26 52		
	26	8 12.9 +31 24	1.336	0.399
	31	7 59.6 +35 17		
Aug	5	7 45.9 +38 33	1.168	0.517
	10	7 31.8 +41 30		
	15	7 16.5 +44 27	0.938	0.701

This ephemeris must be regarded as rather uncertain as it is based on elements covering only a short arc and reports from observers, either in the form of photographic negatives of the comet or merely carefully estimated approximate positions would be welcomed by TA. The magnitude is also uncertain but may brighten to perhaps 7½ in late July before declining to mag 9 and then remaining unchanged for a while due to the changing distances between comet, Earth and Sun. It is also apparent that the comet will become circumpolar for UK observers in early Aug.

This circular is only being issued to overseas subscribers and we hope to refine predictions in a later bulletin. Reports are urgently required and, with UK postal difficulties, telegram/telephone is preferred.
GUY HURST.