

Sky at Night  
MAGAZINE

# Reviews

Bringing you the best in equipment and accessories each month, as reviewed by our team of astro experts

## HOW WE RATE

Each category is given a mark out of five stars according to how well it performs. The ratings are:

- ★★★★★ Outstanding
- ★★★★☆ Very good
- ★★★☆☆ Good
- ★★★☆☆ Average
- ★★★☆☆ Poor/Avoid



SEE INTERACTIVE 360° MODELS OF ALL OUR FIRST LIGHT REVIEWS AT [WWW.SKYATNIGHTMAGAZINE.COM](http://WWW.SKYATNIGHTMAGAZINE.COM)

## This month's reviews

### FIRST LIGHT



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Find out more about how we review equipment at [www.skyatnightmagazine.com/scoring-categories](http://www.skyatnightmagazine.com/scoring-categories)



# 90

Find out why this Dobsonian would be a smart choice for anyone starting in astronomy

## FIRST LIGHT

See an interactive 360° model of this telescope at [www.skyatnightmagazine.com/OmegonN](http://www.skyatnightmagazine.com/OmegonN)



## Omegon N 203/1200 Dobsonian telescope

A solid scope suitable for anyone looking for a starter instrument

WORDS: PAUL MONEY

### VITAL STATS

- **Price** €379
- **Optics** Parabolic mirror
- **Aperture** 203mm (8 inches)
- **Focal length** 1,200mm (f/5.9)
- **Focuser** Single speed 2-inch Crayford with 1.25-inch adaptor
- **Mount** Dobsonian altaz rocker box
- **Extras** Red-dot finder, 25mm and 10mm 1.25-inch eyepieces, accessory rack
- **Weight** 19.4kg
- **Supplier** Omegon
- **www.omegon.eu**
- **Tel** +49 8191 940 490

If there is one telescope design that is considered ideal for beginners, it surely has to be the Dobsonian. Its simplicity lends itself to anyone just starting out in this adventure called astronomy.

Omegon's N 203/1200 Dobsonian is an 8-inch, f/5.9 instrument. It arrived in three boxes so some construction is required, mainly of the rocker box base. Although it took us 30 minutes to fully assemble the whole system for the first time, you shouldn't need to disassemble it aside from removing the tube from the base for transport. The rocker box is also equipped with a four-slot eyepiece holder that takes two 1.25-inch eyepieces and two 2-inch eyepieces. A clutch system allows you to tension the altitude bearing if your eyepieces are on the heavy side.

The telescope tube itself also requires some minor first time assembly, as the Crayford focuser is packaged separately. A small pack of tools is supplied, but we had to use our own Allen key to

attach the focuser to the scope. As you shouldn't have to remove the focuser once installed it was a minor issue. Also supplied are two 1.25-inch eyepieces (25mm and 10mm), an extension tube for the focuser and a zero magnification red-dot finder.

Once set up, we turned to the summer sky. We examined the bright star Altair in Aquila through the 25mm eyepiece and found the view sharp to around 80 per cent of the field of view, with a little distortion towards the field edges. Swapping to our own 32mm 2-inch eyepiece gave a wider field of view with crisper stars closer to the field edge, showing that the eyepieces are this system's weak point. That said, the supplied 25mm eyepiece gives perfectly adequate views.

With the same 25mm eyepiece we had reasonably detailed views of the Dumbbell Nebula, M27. We also had a view of globular cluster M13 in Hercules, with its two adjacent stars also in the view. Swapping to the supplied 10mm eyepiece, M13 became a swarm of stars with the dark 'propeller' feature visible using averted vision. The Ring Nebula, M57, appeared clearly hollow with a faint star just off to one side in the same eyepiece.

### Duck hunting

In terms of open clusters, we were able to see the Wild Duck Cluster, M11, well in both eyepieces, but the 25mm ocular could only frame the centre of Brocchi's Cluster and the Pleiades. After swapping to our 32mm 2-inch eyepiece we managed to frame the whole of the Pleiades for a lovely view full ▶

### SKY SAYS...

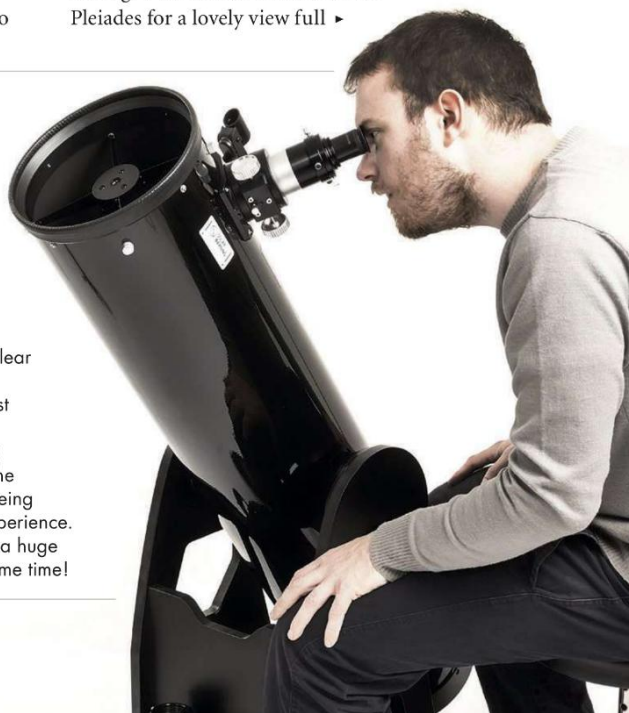
Altair was sharp to around 80 per cent of the field of view, with a little distortion towards the edges

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### THE VALUE OF SIMPLICITY

Once assembled we found using the Omegon N 203/1200 Dobsonian to be straightforward. Any telescope that is easy to set up and operate will get used frequently, and we found we could lift up the 19.4kg system via the cut-outs in the rocker box and have it ready for viewing within moments, allowing us to take advantage of brief patches of clear weather. The overall balance of the telescope tube with the supplied eyepieces allowed us to view most of the sky without tensioning the altitude knob.

The telescope is best used in conjunction with an adjustable observing chair allowing you to reach the eyepiece even when it was pointed vertically up. Being seated also allows you to relax into the viewing experience. The light grasp of the optics is capable of showing a huge range of targets – so you will be sitting for quite some time!



**FOCUSER**

The focuser is a Crayford design with single speed operation, which proved smooth to use. It can take either 1.25-inch eyepieces, or 2-inch eyepieces when used in conjunction with the supplied extension, although this did make it quite long.



**MOUNT**

The altaz rocker box base was reasonably easy to construct and quite lightweight whilst being robust enough to take the telescope tube. It was smooth in operation with a tension knob on the altitude bearing. An accessory rack is also included and this can hold two 1.25-inch eyepieces and two 2-inch eyepieces.



**FINDER**

The zero-magnification finder is made of plastic and projects a small, variable intensity red dot onto its front screen. It was easy to adjust and worked quite well although it could dew up over time.



**REAR MIRROR CELL**

The base of the tube holds the rear mirror cell support and is inset well into the tube. This allows you to stand the tube on its rear end without affecting the collimation knobs. The collimation knobs are reasonably chunky, enabling quick adjustments if required.

# FIRST LIGHT

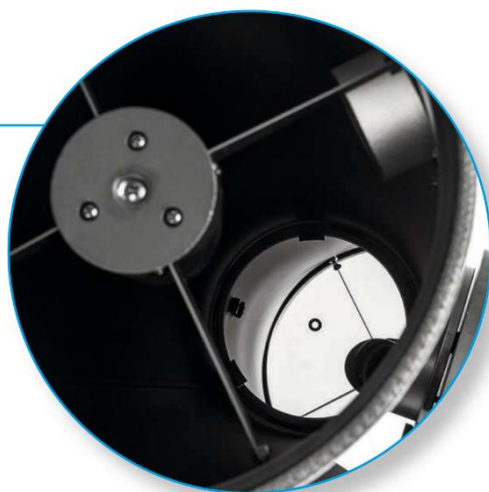
► of bright stars and a hint of nebulosity from Merope. We aimed the same setup towards the Andromeda Galaxy, M31, and could fit almost the whole galaxy in the view, whereas the 25mm showed roughly half as much. It was whilst using our own 32mm 2-inch eyepiece that we needed to use the tensioning knob on the altitude axis to compensate for the extra weight of the eyepiece, and this worked to great effect.

With the 25mm and then the 10mm eyepieces we also spotted NGC 6207, the mag. +11.6 galaxy near to M13 and, over in Pegasus, we tracked down NGC 7331, a nice smudge of a galaxy well worth looking for. We also hunted down stunning double star Albireo in Cygnus with its gold and blue components, well split in the 25mm eyepiece, and we were able to separate the three components of triple star of Iota Cassiopeia in the 10mm eyepiece.

Our only available planetary targets were distant Uranus and Neptune, as the brighter planets were poorly placed, but we were able to pick out their small but clearly identifiable discs. Not to be outdone, the slim crescent Moon revealed a wealth of detail for a rewarding view. All in all, the Omegon N gave a solid performance. **S**

## OPTICS

The 8-inch, f/5.9 parabolic primary mirror was clean and defect free with a central spot to aid collimation. It produced bright views of a variety of objects, from distant planets to deep-sky objects, and handled high magnification well to split tight double and multiple stars.



## VERDICT

ASSEMBLY	★★★★★
BUILD & DESIGN	★★★★★
EASE OF USE	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
OPTICS	★★★★★
OVERALL	★★★★★

## SKY SAYS...

Now add these:

1. Omegon Super Plössl 32mm eyepiece
2. Omegon 2x Barlow lens
3. Omegon Moon filter



◀ The lunar crescent captured in a 1/125th of a second exposure at ISO 400 using this scope and a Canon 50D DSLR