ESO, the European Southern Observatory, was created in 1962 to "... establish and operate an astronomical observatory in the southern hemisphere, equipped with powerful instruments, with the aim of furthering and organising collaboration in astronomy ..." It is supported by eight countries: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland. ESO operates at two sites. It operates the La Silla observatory in the Atacama desert, 600 km north of Santiago de Chile, at 2,400 m altitude, where several optical telescopes with diameters up to 3.6 m and a 15-m submillimetre radio telescope (SEST) are now in operation. In addition, ESO is in the process of building the Very Large Telescope (VLT) on Paranal, a 2,600 m high mountain approximately 130 km south of Antofagasta, in the driest part of the Atacama desert. The VLT consists of four 8.2-metre and three 1.8-metre telescopes. These telescopes can also be used in combination as a giant interferometer (VLTI). In April 1999, the first 8.2-metre telescope (called ANTU) started regular operation, and also the three other ones (KUEYEN, MELIPAL and YEPUN) have already delivered pictures of excel-lent quality. Over 1200 proposals are made each year for the use of the ESO telescopes. The ESO Headquarters are located in Garching, near Munich, Germany. This is the scientific, technical and administrative centre of ESO where technical development programmes are carried out to provide the La Silla and Paranal observatories with the most advanced instruments. There are also extensive astronomical data facilities. In Europe ESO employs about 200 international staff members, Fellows and Associates; in Chile about 70 and, in addition, about 130

The ESO MESSENGER is published four times a year: normally in March, June, September and December. ESO also publishes Conference Proceedings, Preprints, Technical Notes and other material connected to its activities. Press Releases inform the media about particular events. For further information, contact the ESO Education and Public Relations Department at the following address:

local staff members.

EUROPEAN SOUTHERN OBSERVATORY Karl-Schwarzschild-Str. 2 D-85748 Garching bei München Germany Tel. (089) 320 06-0 Telefax (089) 3202362 ips@eso.org (internet) URL: http://www.eso.org http://www.eso.org/gen-fac/pubs/messenger/

The ESO Messenger: Editor: Marie-Hélène Demoulin Technical editor: Kurt Kjär

Printed by J. Gotteswinter GmbH Buch- und Offsetdruck Joseph-Dollinger-Bogen 22 D-80807 München Germany

ISSN 0722-6691

SCIENTIFIC PREPRINTS

(January - March 2001)

1408.	E. Scannapieco and T. Broadhurst:
	Linking the Metallicity Distribution of
	Galactic Halo Stars to the Enrichment
	History of the Universe An I Letters

- 1409. M. Rejkuba: Deep VLT Search for Globular Clusters in NGC 5128: Color-Magnitude Diagrams and Globular Cluster Luminosity Function. A&A.
- 1410. Th. Rivinius, D. Baade, S. Štefl, R.H.D. Townsend, O. Stahl, B. Wolf and A. Kaufer: Stellar and Circum-
- stellar Activity of the Be Star µCentauri. III. Multiline Nonradial Pulsation Modeling. *A&A*.
- 1411. B. Paltrinieri, F.R. Ferraro, F. Paresce and G. De Marchi: VLT Observations of the Peculiar Globular Cluster NGC 6712. III. The Evolved Stellar Population. AJ.
- 1412. B. L. Jensen et al.: The Afterglow of the Short/Intermediate-Duration Gamma-Ray Burst GRB 000301C: A Jet at z = 2.04. A&A.

Contents

TELESCOPES AND INSTRUMENTATION	
A. Gilliotte: La Silla Telescope Status, a Great Achievement on Image Quality Performances A. Gilliotte: Image Quality Improvement of the 2.2-m O. Hainaut and the NTT Team: NEWS from the NTT H. Jones: 2p2 Team News H. Jones, A. Renzini, P. Rosati and W. Seifert: Tunable Filters and Large Telescopes	2 4 7 9
REPORTS FROM OBSERVERS	
J. Alves, C. Lada and E. Lada: Seeing the Light Through the Dark (Continued from page 1)	15
F. Comerón and M. Fernández: Strong Accretion and Mass Loss Near the Substellar Limit J.U. Fynbo, P. Møller, B. Thomsen: Star Formation at <i>z</i> = 2–4:	21
Going Below the Spectroscopic Limit with FORS1	
Nebula Around the Pulsar B0740-28	27
Molecular Cloud	28
by Merging	31
OTHER ASTRONOMICAL NEWS	
EIS Data on the Chandra Deep Field South Released	37
ANNOUNCEMENTS	
ESO Vacancy. Head of the Office for Science	36 38 38
Field of Software, Electronics and/or Mechanics	39 40

J. Alves, C. Lada and E. Lada: Seeing the Light Through the Dark . .