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Astronomy Bulletin - The 1989-90 Winter Sky

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November 15 (Figure 1):
This is the east-facing view of the sky on November 15 at about 11 pm. The horizon is depicted as the curved black line. Four bright constellations are drawn in: Aur=Auriga, Gem=Gemini, Ori=Orion and Tau=Taurus. The Moon on this date is in a gibbous phase and is about 88 percent illuminated. The bright object below the Moon (in the constellation Gemini) is Jupiter, the largest planet of the solar system. Jupiter will remain close to the constellation Gemini for the next several months.
December 15 (Figure 2):
This is the southwest-facing view of the sky on December 15 shortly after sunset. A number of constellations are shown. The brighter ones are Cap = Capricornus, Aql = Aquila, and Sag = Sagittarius (lying just below the planets Saturn and Mercury). The bright object below Capricornus is Venus. If you are lucky, you will be able to see Mercury a little lower in the sky than Saturn.

January 15 (Figure 3):
This is the south-facing view of the sky on January 15, 1990, at about 10 p.m., but looking a little higher in the sky than in the previous diagrams. The horizon is off the bottom of this diagram. It is easy to orient this diagram by aligning it with the bright constellation Orion. Jupiter is above Orion and to the right of Gemini.

February 15 (Figure 4):
This view is facing south on February 15, 1990, at about 9 p.m. It is nearly identical to Figure 3. Jupiter has moved a little to the right of Gemini.

March 15 (Figure 5):
Perhaps the most interesting of all the diagrams, this view faces southeast for the early morning of March 15, 1990. Shortly before sunrise, Venus, Mars, and Saturn should be visible with the naked eye. Through a pair of good binoculars, Neptune and Uranus should also be seen. Venus will be very bright. Mars will be just to the right of Venus but much dimmer. Saturn is a little brighter than Mars. Uranus is just at naked-eye brightness, and Neptune is about six times too dim to be seen with the naked-eye, but visible with binoculars.