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Astronomy Bulletin - The 1989-90 Winter Sky

P. Steven Leiker

University of Northern Iowa

Thomas A. Hockey

University of Northern Iowa

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ASTRONOMY BULLETIN

THE 1989-90 WINTER SKY

*P. Steven Leiker
Thomas A. Hockey
Department of Earth Science
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50614-0506*

November 1989-March 1990

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.

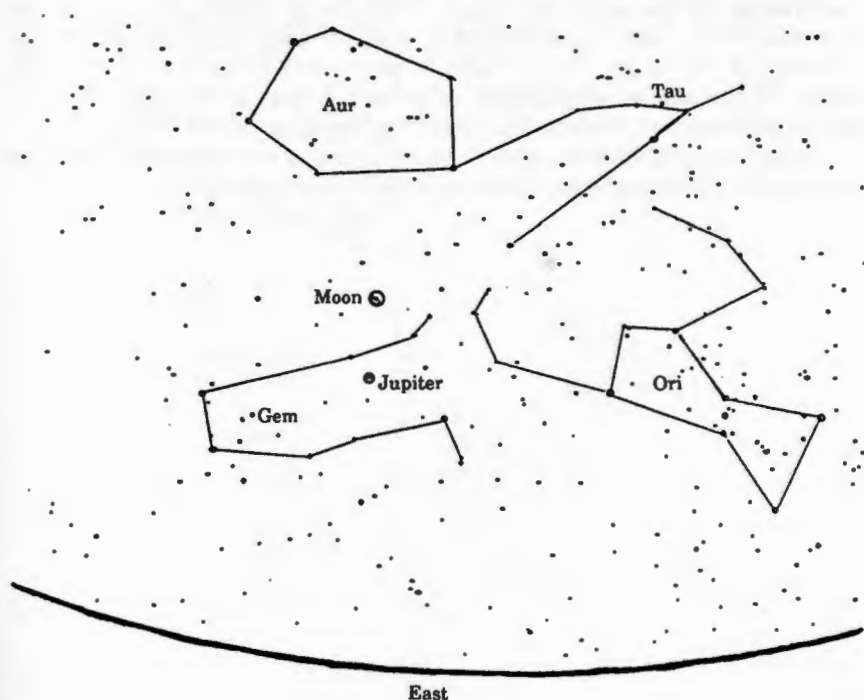


Figure 1

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.

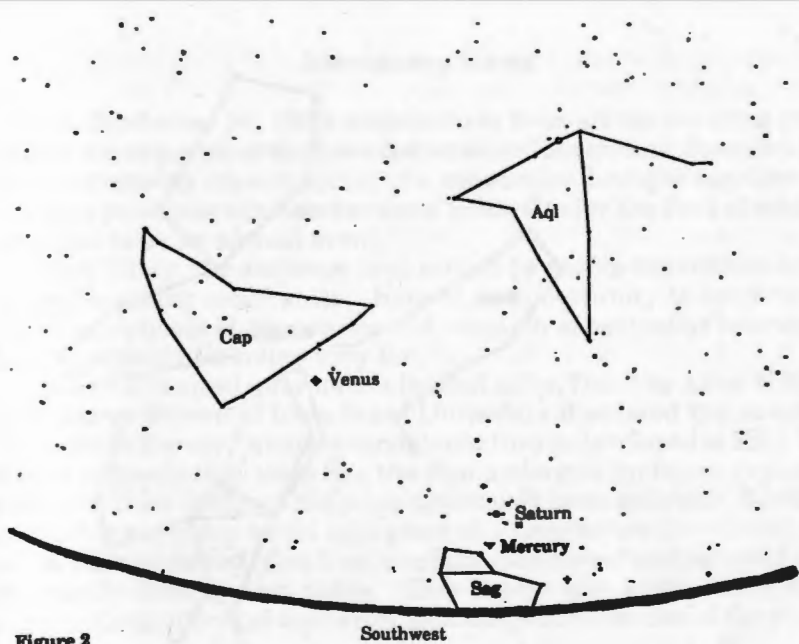


Figure 2

Southwest

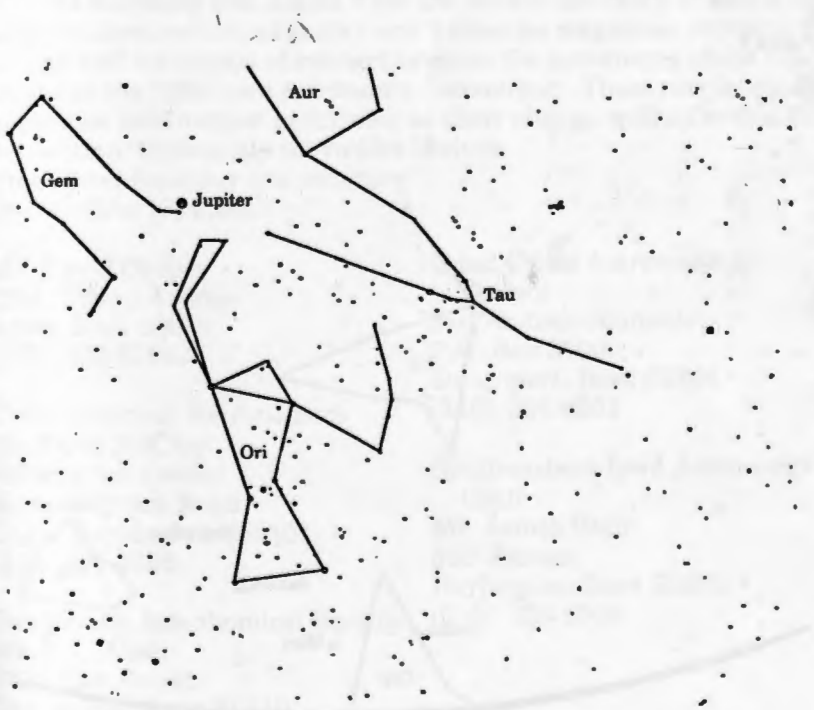


Figure 3

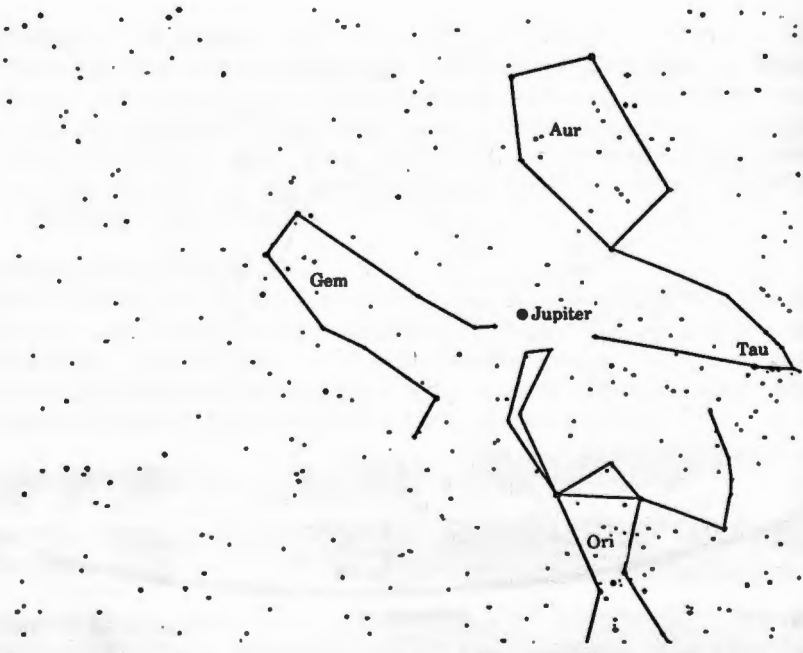


Figure 4

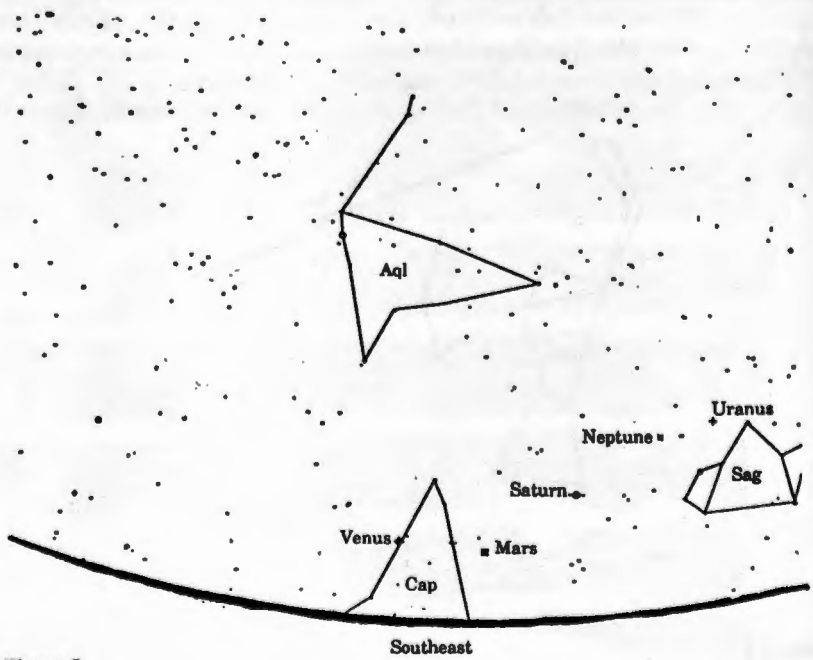


Figure 5