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EDITORIAL NOTE

The period of the past few years was characterized by a rapid technical development of both the variable star observational techniques and the publication possibilities. As the readers might notice, the electronic version of the IBVS issues appears only a few days after acceptance of the paper at the IBVS website, though not necessarily in the exact order of issue numbers. This is due to the fact that the manuscripts which are properly prepared by the authors and require little typesetting effort, appear sooner. The printed version then follows in the usual way, a collection of several issues being distributed about 10 times a year. The scope of IBVS has been announced in a previous Editorial Note, published together with the information on the current editorial policy in 1996, and remains unchanged. Here, some new questions, which emerged in recent years, are addressed.

Submitted Papers

As a consequence of introducing the refereeing system, IBVS became more popular among the contributors as a renowned journal in which short research papers are published rapidly (but not with an unprecedented speed). The potential and active contributors to the IBVS should keep in mind that the editors of the IBVS put a tremendous effort to maintain a good scientific level of the Bulletin, and the percentage of the rejected manuscripts is higher than that for major international astronomical journals. Similarly, most of the submitted manuscripts are accepted only after a (major) revision. The experience shows that the authors' willingness to co-operate with the editors results in a minimum delay in producing the final version of the paper. It is also worth mentioning that only two typed manuscripts were received in 1999, which testifies that the conditions for the electronic submission are available in each country where astronomy is pursued.

Given the limited length of individual IBVS issues, we discourage splitting the text into sections (Introduction, Observations, Results etc.). However, when the paper deals with more than one object, the beginning of the discussion on the individual objects can be indicated, e.g. by using boldface letters in the name of the object.

The template form for new observations and discoveries of variable star(s) discussed at the Kyoto GA proved to be very useful. Many good variable-star light curves were published in the past three years this way, giving only the basic information, the availability of the data and a very short discussion.

Recently, professional and amateur astronomers carrying out survey programs aimed at the detection of new variables, or trying to upgrade older existing catalogs to the current technical requirements, started to submit a large number of manuscripts dealing with these topics. While the editors recognize the importance of such studies, they are led to spell out clearly their future publication policy on this type of studies.

To be valuable for others, the reports of new variables should provide some hint on the nature of the light curves of the respective objects. If this condition is not fulfilled, the value of the report on variability is very limited. Considering this, the Editorial Board decided to stop further publishing of long lists of newly discovered variables which contain only the identifications of new variables without giving any further details on the character of the changes.

Efforts aimed at improving coordinates of some existing lists of variables or suspected variables should be directed to an ultimate improvement of the on-line databases, such as SIMBAD (which is very widely used at present). Therefore, each reportedly improved position should be first compared to a good existing catalogue source, such as SIMBAD, to see whether a better position is not known already. Cross-identifications, using modern catalogues like the Tycho-2 catalogue, are also very desirable. The IBVS Editorial Board will only support publishing improved coordinates in cases when the currently available position of the given object(s) in databases like SIMBAD will be demonstrated to be erroneous, ambiguous or inaccurate.

Electronic Edition

The service was moved to new servers. All authors and readers should start using the following electronic addresses:

`http://www.konkoly.hu`,
`ftp://ftp.konkoly.hu`.

The authors are advised to send their manuscripts or other relevant correspondence to the following e-mail address:

`ibvs@konkoly.hu`.

Since the spring of 2000, the electronic edition of the IBVS is also available in HTML format, containing reference, object, e-mail and URL links.

A new LaTeX style file, Version 2.30, is now available and in use. It offers three advantages over the previous version:

It

— facilitates automatic processing;

— offers more useful features in the HTML version; and

— provides "hooks" for automatic extraction of information for databases and bibliographic service providers, like ADS, CDS and ARI.

Authors are strongly encouraged to use these new features — the editors are neither able nor entitled to supply missing abstract, keyword, or object macros. The editors appreciate a clean typesetting. The authors are requested to delete all unused macros from their submitted LaTeX articles, even if only left as commentaries. The use of macros other than the standard LaTeX or IBVS-supplied ones are strongly discouraged.

For detailed instructions how to use the new style file, see

`http://www.konkoly.hu/IBVS/instr.html`

or download a template file from

`ftp://ftp.konkoly.hu/pub/ibvs/templ3.tex`.

The new version of the style file (`ibvs2.sty`) could be downloaded from

`ftp://ftp.konkoly.hu/pub/ibvs/ibvs2.sty`.

The Editorial office has prepared a CD-ROM which contain complete scanned issues Nos. 1 to 4000 of the IBVS. The GNU zip compressed PostScript pages are accessible from a HTML format Table of Contents file. The price of the CD-ROM is 30 USD or 30 EUR, including postage and handling.

Printed Version (subscription, mailing)

Many requests have recently been addressed to the Editors, asking for the older but also future(!) issues of IBVS. It seems appropriate, then, to repeat here the existing publishing policy of IBVS to avoid future unnecessary claims.

All readers and customers of IBVS should be aware of the fact that IBVS is published semi-regularly, with a frequency of 10–15 issues per month, which makes 120–150 issues per year. The Editorial office DOES NOT DISTRIBUTE INDIVIDUAL ISSUES, but stores them until there is about a dozen of issues and then sends them TOGETHER in one envelope to the subscribers, usually about once a month, or so.

Note also, please, that there is a 1-2 month delay between the beginning of the new calendar year and the appearance of the first IBVS issues from the given year. The cause of this delay is that the Editorial Office receives the first submissions of scientific papers at the beginning of the year, but needs some time for refereeing, printing out, accumulating about a dozen issues and sending them to the subscribers. This takes usually a month or two. Note, however, that the most recent issues WHICH ARE NOT YET AVAILABLE IN PRINTED FORM can be readily seen at the web site of the journal (`http://www.konkoly.hu/IBVS/IBVS.html`).

Since a contract on deliveries with the Mailfast Co. has been signed in 1997 to avoid delivery problems, there were virtually no handling problems. Mailfast always reports back if there is an undelivered package.

The practice shows that there are two main types of claims:

1. Sometimes, subscribers claim missing INDIVIDUAL issues in the parcel. This is a technical fault on the side of the Editorial Office, therefore the standard policy is to send the claimed missing issues to the subscriber, usually enclosed to the next regular mailing to avoid extra costs. Note, please, that the missing issues can also easily be downloaded from the IBVS web site.

2. The second and the most frequent type of claims is that a subscriber of IBVS notices that no new issues are coming to his or her address. The delivery may be discontinued in February or March even if the subscription was renewed and the payment was made in the usual way. This happens in the case WHEN THE SUBSCRIBER DOES NOT SEND A COPY OF THE INVOICE SHEET WITH THE CONFIRMED PAYMENT BACK TO THE EDITORIAL OFFICE. Among about two hundred current subscribers of IBVS it is practically impossible TO IDENTIFY A PARTICULAR SUBSCRIBER on the basis of a single cheque only, with its limited information content or on a basis of a short note from the bank that a transfer to the IBVS account was made by another bank. To avoid such inconveniences, all subscribers of IBVS are requested to SEND BACK A COPY OF THE INVOICE SHEET (or at least to notify the Editorial Office, giving necessary references and name and address) WHEN THE PAYMENT IS DONE.

Finally, here we announce, that from January 2001, 20 offprints of the IBVS issues will be sent free of charge only to the first author. For an extra charge of 20 USD or EUR, 30 more copies can be ordered. Order forms will be provided to each of the interested authors. However, we recommend that extra copies be printed using the electronic version of the given issue, which is much faster, cheaper and more convenient.

Other Matters

After IBVS issue No. 5000 will be published, L. Szabados will retire from his post of the Scientific Editor. He will be replaced by J. Jurcsik, who is well-known for her observations and interpretation of FG Sge, and who is an expert in the field of RR Lyrae stars, globular clusters etc.

At the XXIII General Assembly of the IAU we presented out triennial report on IBVS on Business Meetings of Commissions 27 and 42. The material of the presentation can be found at `www.konkoly.hu/IBVS/history.html`.

From the Editorial Board, serving two terms, four members retire: Edwin Budding, Edward Guinan, Petr Harmanec (Chair) and Kam-Ching Leung. The Editors express their sincere thanks for their valuable work and kind help during the past six years.

After discussions within the Board the Editors set up the following new Editorial Board:

Hilmar Duerbeck,
Gerald Handler,
Don Kurtz,
Carla Maceroni,
Steven S. Saar,
Dimitar Sasselov,
Brian Skiff.

Ex-officio members: Jorgen Christensen-Dalsgaard, Commission 27, Edward Guinan, Division V, Paula Szkody, Commission 42.

External Advisors: Petr Harmanec, Nikolai Samus, Chris Sterken, László Szabados.

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P. Harmanec, on behalf of the Editorial Board