

OPTICAL SPECTROSCOPY OF V4334 SGR IN 1996

Igor Savanov, Simon Jeffery

Armagh Observatory

Sakurai's object (V4334 Sgr) was discovered as a rapidly brightening blue star in February 1996. As it brightened, it became increasingly red, until after two years it was enshrouded by an opaque dust shell. This event has been identified with a very late thermal pulse (the re-ignition of shell helium burning) in a white dwarf.

We are compiling a library of optical spectra obtained during 1996 with (a) ensure that the observed record of this extremely rare phenomenon remains accessible to future researchers and (b) to re-visit the question of its early evolution. This is particularly important for understanding the precise timing and magnitude of the dredge-up of material to the surface of the star following a late thermal pulse. We will present preliminary results of a new analysis of some of these data. These include possibly the first direct evidence of dynamical behaviour in the expanding stellar envelope.