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PERIOD OF SV CENTAURI STOPPED DECREASING

Up to 1978 the period of SV Cen was decreasing very rapidly, representing the highest rate of change of the period so far known. Our recent observations between Jan. 1978 and July 1979 show that the period became constant giving new ephemeris

$$T_{\min} = \text{HJD } 2444061.0600 + 1.658500 \cdot E.$$

The pattern of period changes shows a cycle of about 32 years but there is no strict periodicity and light-time interpretation is not feasible. Changes of both minima are simultaneous and apsidal motion is also excluded.

Observers using photoelectric photometers in the Southern hemisphere are urged to pay attention to this very interesting star. All photoelectric timing of minima has been done so far in the UBV system and thus filters close to B and V should be preferred for new measurements of minima.

Modern photoelectric photometers allow the accuracy of the determination of the time of minima up to 0.0001 day and a detailed study of period changes of SV Cen would require at least 3 observations of both minima per observing season (January to August). Observers are reminded that the depth of minima shows changes, too, and some observation during both maxima or a careful tie-in to the system of standard stars would greatly increase the information content of the measurements during minima.

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