Book Review: Neptune: The Planet, Rings and Satellites

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Neptune: the planet, rings and satellites

Miner, Ellis D. by Ellis D. Miner and Randii R. Wessen Springer/Praxis, 2002
297p, 1-85233-216-6 $44.95
LC Call Number: QB691

Written by two scientists involved in the Voyage II mission, this concise and engaging examination of the planet Neptune intentionally strikes a compromise between a popular-level account and a rigorous book on the subject. Miner and Wessen (both, NASA, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, California) offer an especially good discussion of the discovery and early history of ground-based studies of Neptune that is hard to find in other references. The Voyager II flybys of Jupiter and Saturn set the stage for a fairly detailed comparative planetological study of Neptune. Careful attention has been paid to references. Some may find the extensive descriptions of mission operations and scientific instrumentation a bit tedious; specialists will find numerous gaps in the scientific explanations unsatisfying. However, all readers will agree that the account of the Voyager II discoveries in the outer solar system is both comprehensive and interesting. Readers should not expect a portfolio of pretty pictures, though. The book cover touts "four pages of spectacular color photographs ... of this amazing planet," yet only one color image of Neptune and one of Triton are provided. Recommended. General readers; lower-division undergraduates through graduate students; two-year technical program students.

Summing Up:

Reviewer: T. D. Oswalt, Florida Institute of Technology
Recommendation:
Readership Level: General Readers, Lower-division Undergraduates, Upper-division Undergraduates, Graduate Students, Two-Year Technical Program Students
Interdisciplinary Subjects:
Subject: Science & Technology - Astronautics & Astronomy
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