



HIGH RESOLUTION SPECTROSCOPY OF THE NA EXOSPHERE OF MERCURY WITH THE 3.5M TNG

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Several spectra of the exosphere of Mercury in the Na-D lines were taken with the high-resolution spectrograph (SARG) of the 3.5m Telescopio Nazionale Galileo (Roque de los Muchachos, Canaries) on the evenings of August 23, 24 and 26, 2002. All spectra were taken at a resolution of 115.000, with a slit length of 26" centred on the disk of Mercury. The apparent magnitude of the planet was +0.1, the apparent diameter 6".3, the phase 0.60. The spectra were taken at several position angles, and they all show the expected emission lines across the disk and outside it. The paper will present a detailed analysis of the results.