

The Largest Astronomy Outreach Event in History? Viewing the May 20, 2012 Eclipse in the University of Colorado Football Stadium

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Abstract

CU's Fiske Planetarium used the university football stadium to present the May 20, 2012 solar eclipse to approximately 10,000 people. Around 50,000 pairs of safe eclipse-watching glasses were distributed free to K-12 students beforehand or sold to adults. The huge stadium TVs were linked to CU's Sommers Bausch Observatory and used to show eclipse images and educational video clips, as well as to acknowledge sponsors. Support came from local businesses, non-profit organizations, and the Boulder Colorado-based NASA Lunar Science teams led by Drs. Mihaly Horanyi and Jack Burns. Media coverage was extensive including national TV on ABC World News Tonight, Good Morning America, and over 100 domestic and foreign media outlets. [We also provided commentary in Spanish on the Univision network.](#)



All the seats with a view of the eclipse were used.



The eclipse took place as the sun set over the Rocky Mountains.



Fiske Planetarium's Gwen Eccles held up a knitted blanket, making hundreds of crescent solar images..



CU's Sommers Bausch Observatory used their heliostat and telescopes and sent H-alpha and visible light images to the www and stadium.



Eclipse Images by Jen Yu. Stadium images by Casey Cass.



Clayton Sandel of ABC broadcast for "World News Tonight" and "Good Morning America." More than 100 media outlets covered the event.