

Astronomy Picture of the Day

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2003 October 1



An Unusual Event Over South Wales

Credit & Copyright: [Jon Burnett](#)

Explanation: Jon Burnett, a teenager from [South Wales, UK](#), was photographing some friends [skateboarding](#) last week when the sky did something very strange. By diverting his camera, he was able to [document](#) this [rare sky event](#) and capture one of the more spectacular sky images yet recorded. Roughly four minutes later, he took [another picture](#) of the dispersing trail. What is it? Experts disagree. The first guess was a sofa-sized rock that exploded as a daytime [fireball](#), but perhaps a better hypothesis is an unusual airplane contrail reflecting the setting Sun. [Bright fireballs](#) occur over someplace on Earth nearly every day. A separate [bolide](#), likely even more dramatic, [struck India](#) only a few days ago.

Editor's note: The APOD text was updated on Oct. 1.

Tomorrow's picture: [the 1970s](#)

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Authors & editors: [Robert Nemiroff \(MTU\)](#) & [Jerry Bonnell \(USRA\)](#)
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