

FIRST LIGHT

KIT TO ADD

1. Celestron PowerTank Lithium
2. Celestron StarSense Auto Align
3. SkyPortal Wi-Fi Module

► handle. The scope-to-mount coupling is via a long Vixen dovetail on the optical tube. Once mounted, however, balancing the tube felt a little imprecise owing to the stiffness of the mount's bearings.

Alignment

The AVX mount's electronics provide many tweaking options to improve tracking performance. This includes functions to calibrate the RA drive and store permanent periodic error correction. There are also numerous ways to align the mount for Go-To and tracking operations. Performing a rough polar align followed by a two-star alignment routine was very quick. Our Go-To experience after this was adequate with the scope pointing close to where it was supposed to be most of the time. After adding a further calibration star then running a simple 'all-star polar alignment' routine, we found our targets centred in the field-of-view each time. We slewed the scope around the sky a number of times to try and catch it out, but each time the target appeared properly centred. This was impressive given how quick the initial alignment routines were to complete.

The handset provides an interface to the AVX's 40,000 object Go-To database. 200 entries here have enhanced information and there's provision for up to 100 user-defined objects. The handset also provides for more basic operations, such as manual slewing. Nine slew speeds are provided, the peak rate moving the scope at 4° per second.

This latest version of the AVX mount has a number of improvements over previous versions, including new motors with increased torque. These give improved tracking and provide more power to overcome slightly unbalanced setups. The mount also has larger base castings which provide greater stability when using heavier loads.

Suitable for novice and experienced astronomers, the system's portability and ease of setup are great if you're in a hurry to get going, while the excellent optics of the C9.25 don't disappoint. Look after it well and it will provide a lifetime of astronomical enjoyment. 🌌

VERDICT

Build and design	★★★★★
Ease of use	★★★★★
Features	★★★★★
Go-To/tracking accuracy	★★★★★
Optics	★★★★★
OVERALL	★★★★★



NexStar+ handset

The NexStar+ handset provides an interface to the AVX mount's computer. It's simple to use and displays information via a four-line, 18-character illuminated LCD display. Elegant design gives easy access to the 40,000 objects in the AVX's Go-To database as well as providing a simple-to-use directional control cluster.

