

UZ SERPENTIS: A SECOND STILLSTAND

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Abstract

Two years of the author's observations of UZ Ser are presented to document a second stillstand of this star previously classified as a U Gem-type variable.

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Two years ago I presented a short paper (Dyck 1987) in which the 1987 stillstand of the previously-classified U Gem star UZ Serpentis was documented. Now I offer a two-year update showing two seasons (March-September) of starkly different behavior.

In the 1988 apparition the light curve of UZ Ser shows cyclical behavior as seen in 1985 and 1986 (Figure 1). However, in 1989 a second stillstand occurred, as seen in 1987 (Figure 2). This stillstand behavior is corroborated by other AAVSO observers (Bortle 1989).

Common to both years showing anomalies (1987 and 1989) is a significant brightening of the system towards the end of the stillstand. This phenomenon was confirmed by another AAVSO observer (Bortle 1989).

Two years ago I suggested that UZ Ser might be a Z Cam-type star with all previous infrequent stillstands undetected because of the seasonal nature of the data and the limiting magnitude of smaller telescopes in former decades. This second stillstand only two years later is very surprising and continues to keep UZ Ser high on my list of priority targets. I urge other observers to keep a watchful eye on this interesting and rewarding variable.

REFERENCES

- Bortle, J. E. 1989, *AAVSO Circular*, Nos. 224-227.
Dyck, G. P. 1987, *Journ. Amer. Assoc. Var. Star Obs.* 16, 91.

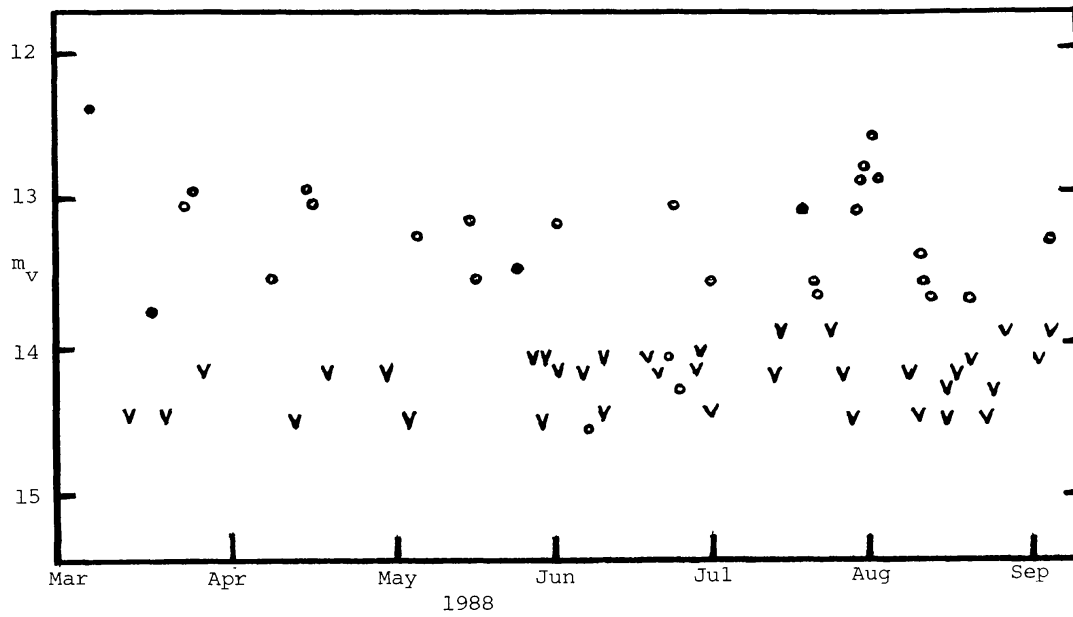


Figure 1. 1988 UZ Serpentis data by G. P. Dyck, JD 2447225 - 2447447. Circles are positive observations; check marks are magnitudes at which the variable was not seen.

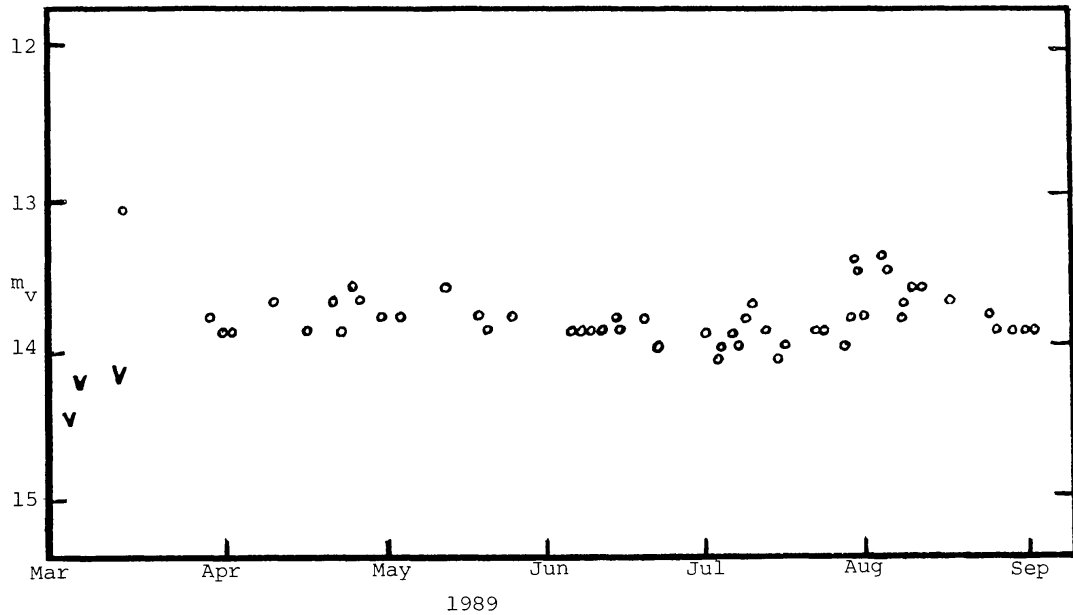


Figure 2. 1989 UZ Serpentis data by G. P. Dyck, JD 2447595 - 2447801. Circles are positive observations; check marks are magnitudes at which the variable was not seen.