

# TEC APO180FL



OWNER'S MANUAL

2006

# **IMPORTANT - PLEASE READ THIS MANUAL BEFORE USING YOUR TELESCOPE**

## **SAFETY WARNINGS**

### **Do not look at the sun through the telescope!**

Viewing the sun through the telescope without special equipment (Solar Filters) will cause permanent visual impairment and telescope parts damage.

### **Do not disassemble!**

Disassembly of telescope could result in personal injury and telescope malfunction.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have any questions or need assistance - please contact us:

Phone: 303 273 9322 • Fax: 303 273 0204

E-mail: [tec@telescopingengineering.com](mailto:tec@telescopingengineering.com) • Web site: [www.telescopingengineering.com](http://www.telescopingengineering.com)

User's group site: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/tec-scopes>

Address: Telescope Engineering Company • 15730 West 6-th Ave. Golden CO, 80401. USA

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## **TEC APO 180 TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS**

Clear aperture	7" / 180 mm
Focal ratio	7.0
Focal length	1260 mm
Image scale	2.7 arc min/mm
Field curvature	450mm
Resolution (theoretical)	0.66 arc sec
Focuser	Feather Touch 3545
Eyepiece holder	2" Collet type
Focusing range	4.5" / 114 mm
One turn focus travel	Coarse 21.5 mm / Fine 2.3 mm
Back focus distance	7" / 180 mm
Focuser load capacity	10 lb
Tube assembly diameter	8" / 201 mm
Dew shield dia.	9.2" / 234 mm ?
TA length (shortest)	45" / 1140 mm
Balance point position	20" from focuser's flange
OTA weight	36.5 lb / 16.5 kg *
Lens coatings:	Broad band 5 layer antireflection coating (BBAR)
Price (2006)	\$18,000
Price includes :	Optical tube assembly, front cover, plug, tube rings and case.

\*for tube rings and TEC 12" dovetail plate - add 3.5 lb.

## **OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT** (see [www.telescopingengineering.com](http://www.telescopingengineering.com) for the current prices)

Tube rings (extra or replacement)	\$360
Finderscope bracket with base	\$120
8x50 finder with illuminated reticle (Japan)	\$140
AP finder bracket	\$60
TEC 12" dovetail plate	\$90
Eyepiece Turret	\$500
Mahogany case for I-Turret	\$150
Field Flatteners	\$750
Adapter for large format CCD camera	\$50

## OVERVIEW

This manual has been written to help you enjoy using your TEC APO 180 refractor.

The APO 180 has number of features that in a given combination are rarely found in one scope:

Precision apochromatic objective with modern coating that makes lenses almost invisible.

Retractable Dew Shield. Light weight tube assembly. FeatherTouch 360° rotatable focuser with coarse and fine focusing. Collet type eyepiece holder.

Line of accessories, including::

Precision tube rings with adjustable latches

Dovetail plate (same width and fit as Losmandy plates)

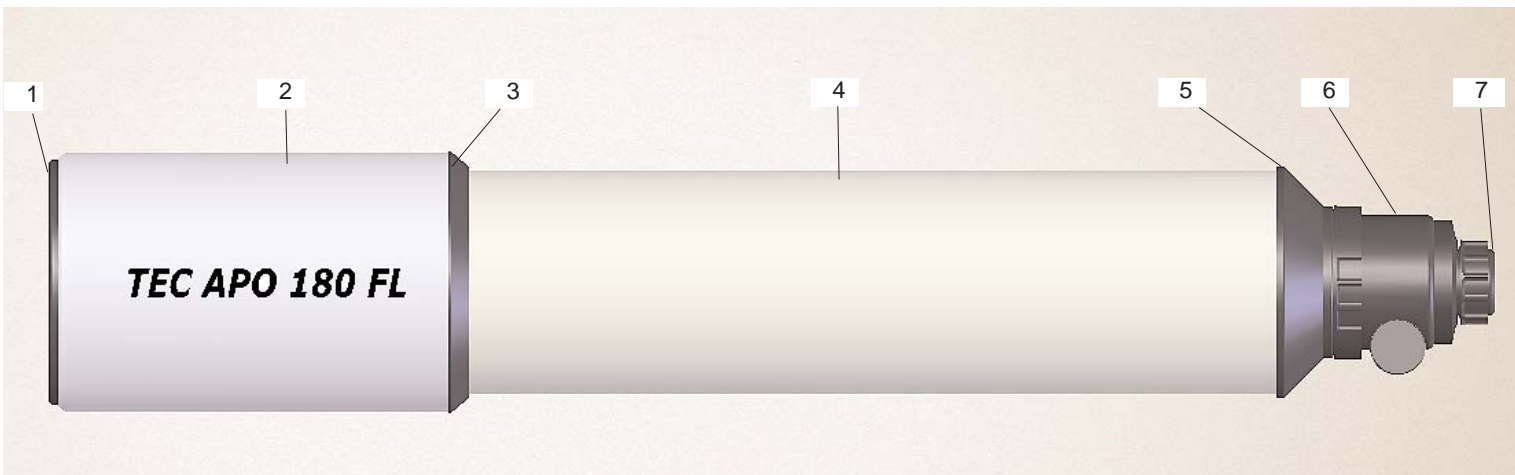
Finder bracket with new principle of finder adjustment with two thumb screws only.

Field Flattener with adapter for large CCD cameras (STL of SBIG.)

*ALL PARTS OF THE TELESCOPE, INCLUDING: OPTICS, COATINGS, ETC. ARE MADE IN THE USA.*

## GETTING TO KNOW YOUR TELESCOPE

The parts of the telescope and their functions are identified and described below.



1 Front Cover. - black anodized mached Aluminum with push-pull spring loaded latches. It protects the optics and holds the dew shield during transportation.

2 Retractable Sliding Dew Shield. This feature makes the OTA shorter for handling and transportation. The open end of the shield is rounded to improve aerodynamics of the front end of telescope. Rounded edge creates less turbulence compared to straight cut baffles.

3 Shield flange. It holds the shield with four 4-40 screws.

4 Tube assembly. The tube interior is coated with a special light absorbent coating and has 4 sharp edged baffles, which block internal reflections.

5 OTA Focusing Mounting Flange.

6 Focuser. See following Instructions written by Detlef Schmidt (Starlight Instruments Inc.).

The focuser's tube is coated inside with the same special coating as the tube assembly.

7 Plug. It is a small part that keeps the focuser end closed.



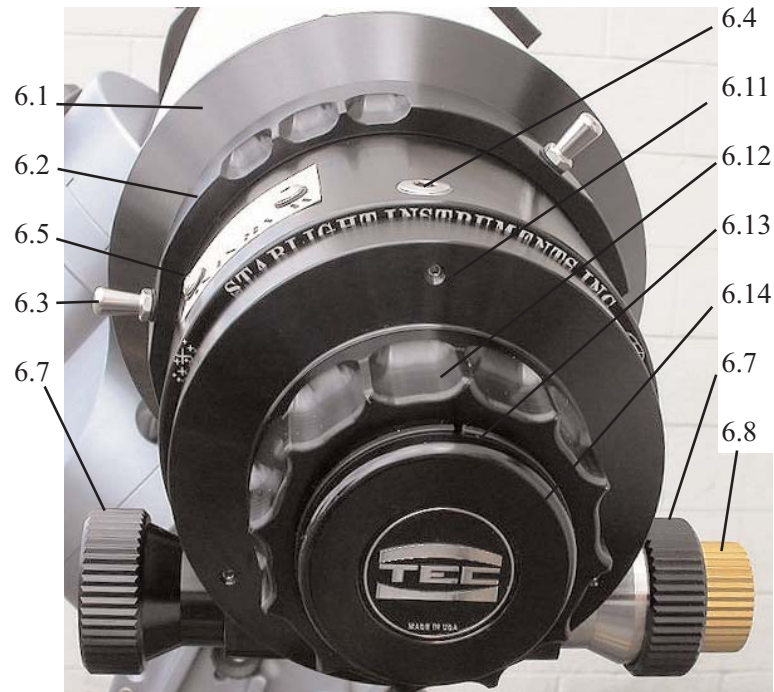
# FEATHER TOUCH FOCUSER MODEL 3545

## Care and use of the Feather Touch 3545

The Feather Touch 3545 was a collaborative design effort between Telescope Engineering and Starlight Instruments for TEC's line of fine refractors. It was designed to provide the user with the best possible control while focusing using a 9:1 fine focus reduction assembly along with other features that make the use of the telescope simple and functional. All efforts were taken to design it with the best available materials and technology to achieve long-lasting functionality and reliability.

### Part Description

- 6.1 OTA Focuser Mounting Flange
- 6.2 Focuser Locking Collar
- 6.3 Locking Collar Stems
- 6.4 Tension Adjustment Screw
- 6.5 Finder Base Screw Holes (Plugged with (2), 8-32 Button Head Screws)
- 6.6 Focuser Housing
- 6.7 Coarse Focus Knobs
- 6.8 Fine Focus Knob
- 6.9 Draw Tube with mm scale
- 6.10 Draw Tube End Cap
- 6.11 Draw Tube End Cap Locking Screws
- 6.12 Eyepiece Collet Locking Nut
- 6.13 Eyepiece Collet Sleeve
- 6.14 Plug with TEC logo



### Description of Design Features

1. The Feather Touch 3545 achieves excellent focusing capability using a 9:1 Planetary Reduction Assembly coupled to a fine focus knob (fig. 6.8). The fine focus knob should be used once the image is close to focus and final tweaking is required.
2. The two coarse focusing knobs (fig. 6.7) on each side of the focuser allow quick rough positioning of the eyepiece or imaging equipment. They are coupled to the rack and pinion set and the fine focus knob.
3. The assembly incorporating the focusing knobs, the pinion and its housing is called the pinion assembly (not shown). This assembly is attached to the focuser housing using (2) 6-32 socket head cap screws. The position of the pinion assembly relative to the rack, is precisely adjusted by Starlight Instruments using 4 flat bottom set screws (internal to the pinion assembly) to provide the minimum amount of backlash between the rack and the pinion for ease of operation. The other adjustment that is made is to align the pinion axis to be parallel to the rack face.



**NOTE: It is possible to reverse the pinion assembly for left handed preference but Starlight Instruments does not recommend the user reversing this assembly because of possible misalignment resulting in a loss of performance or possible damage. Please contact Starlight Instruments or TEC if this change is desired.**



4. The Feather Touch 3545 focuser is assembled to the OTA via the Focuser Mounting Flange (fig. 6.1), and the Focuser Locking Collar (fig. 6.2). Loosening the focuser Locking Collar allows the focuser to be rotated to any position relative to the telescope for ease of use. Once the focuser has been positioned, it can be locked by turning the Locking Collar by either grabbing the grooves on this collar or by grabbing the optional Locking Stems and rotating the Locking Collar clockwise until it is tight. The Locking Stems (6.3) help to provide a better grip for tightening the collar. They can however be replaced with the 10-32 Button Head Cap Screws for a cleaner look if that is desired.

**NOTE:** The focuser can be removed by loosening the Locking Collar and unscrewing it completely and then pulling the focuser from the Adapter Flange. This should only be done in rare circumstances and after contacting Starlight Instruments or TEC because of possible damage that may result.

5. The drag between the Focuser Housing (fig. 6.6) and the Draw Tube (fig. 6.9) can be adjusted by using two adjustment methods. The Tension Adjustment Screw can be adjusted using a 3/16 inch Allen wrench. Only a slight amount of rotation on this screw makes a notable difference. Tightening this screw will allow larger loads to be lifted without the focuser moving from the dead weight that may be attached to it and it will also decrease the amount of deflection during positional changes during long exposures. Generally the factory settings should be sufficient for most applications.

In addition, adjustment can be done in a simpler way - by tightening a thumb screw (not shown in the picture, but easy to find) under the pinion assembly).

6. In the event that different equipment such as: an optional Field Flattener or AP 2.7" threaded End Cap (available from Starlight Instruments) is needed at the end of the focuser, the Draw Tube End Cap (fig. 6.10) can be removed by loosening the (3) 6-32 socket head set screw (6.11) and then unscrewing the back.

7. The 2 inch Eyepiece Holder does not use traditional thumb screws. This focuser uses an Eyepiece Collet Locking Nut (fig. 6.12) and an Eyepiece Collet Sleeve (6.13). This design assures that the eyepiece or imaging equipment is always precisely positioned and held into place during imaging. To secure your eyepiece, insert the eyepiece into the 2 inch opening making sure that the nut has been turned counter clock wise to open the collet sleeve and push in the eyepiece. Tighten the Collet Nut clockwise until it is tight.

**WARNING: Failure to tighten the Collet Nut can result in personal injury and/or damage to equipment. Always make sure that the eyepiece is secured properly during use.**

**WARNING: Never point the scope to the sun without proper filtering or without the Front Cover in place. Failure to do so can result in personal injury or damage to the collet locking sleeve and/or optics. The Collet Sleeve is plastic and can melt if it gets too hot. Possible fumes during melting can cause fogging or damage to the optics.**

8. If a finder base is to be attached to the focuser housing make sure that the screws being used are the proper length.

**WARNING: If they are too long they will contact the draw tube thereby causing damage to the anodized surface of the draw tube.**

## **WARRANTY**

Starlight Instruments Incorporated guarantees this product to be free of any defects in material or workmanship for 3 years to the original owner. Disassembly of focuser outside of the described items voids all warranties.

Starlight Instruments Inc. • P.O. Box 68282, Schaumburg, IL 60168-0282. USA.

Phone: **847-985-9595**.

## TELESCOPE CASE

Each telescope APO180 comes with case made by Thermadyne Company according to specs. Thermadyne case is made out of plastic and has hard foam interior with a few special sections that allow to hold the APO180 with rings and plate attached.

There is a small cut section near the focuser end 8" X 3" X 5" that can be used for diagonal, eyepices or other small size accessories.

Dimensions for the case are: 54"L X 14"H X 13"W; weight 32lb.

Weight of case with telescope and rings is 70lb. The case has two spring-loaded handles on each side and a couple of whells at the bottom section near the objective side.

Shipping weight of the above combination + double-wall carton box is appr. 80lb.



## ACCESSORIES

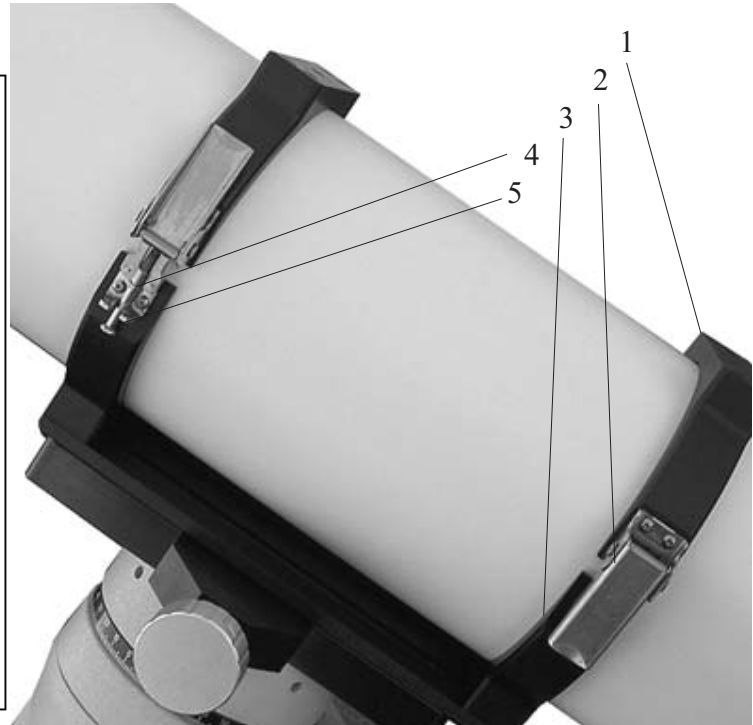
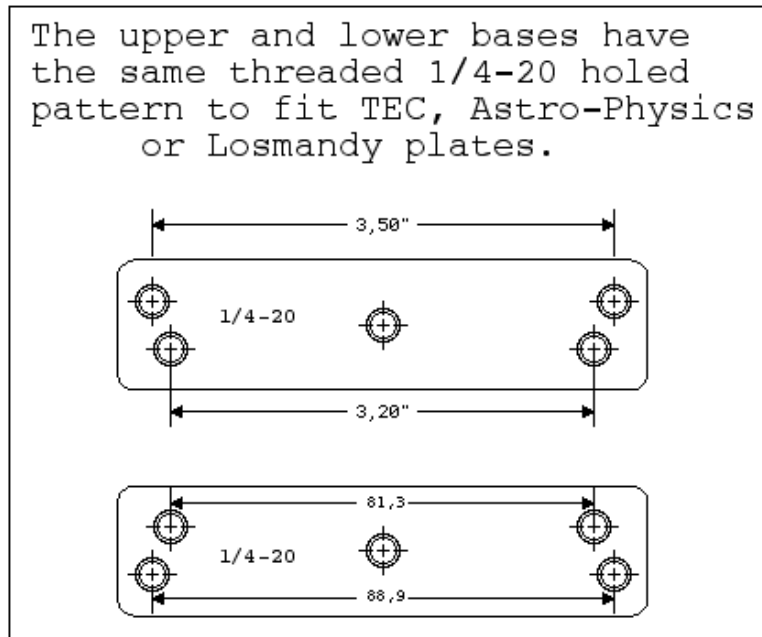
### TUBE RINGS

CNC machined, black anodized aluminum, compact and lightweight design with stainless steel latches (set of two rings weights only XXX g). Ring hole pattern is shown in the sketch below.

Each ring contains:

Upper Base (1); Latch (2); and Lower Base (3).

Latches for the scopes of the third and fourth run are adjustable. The screw (5) has a Phillips type head for easy adjustment, the small nut (4) will hold screw in place after adjustment.



Rings can be attached to the mount with either TEC Dovetail plate, AP or Losmandy plates.

### NOTE:

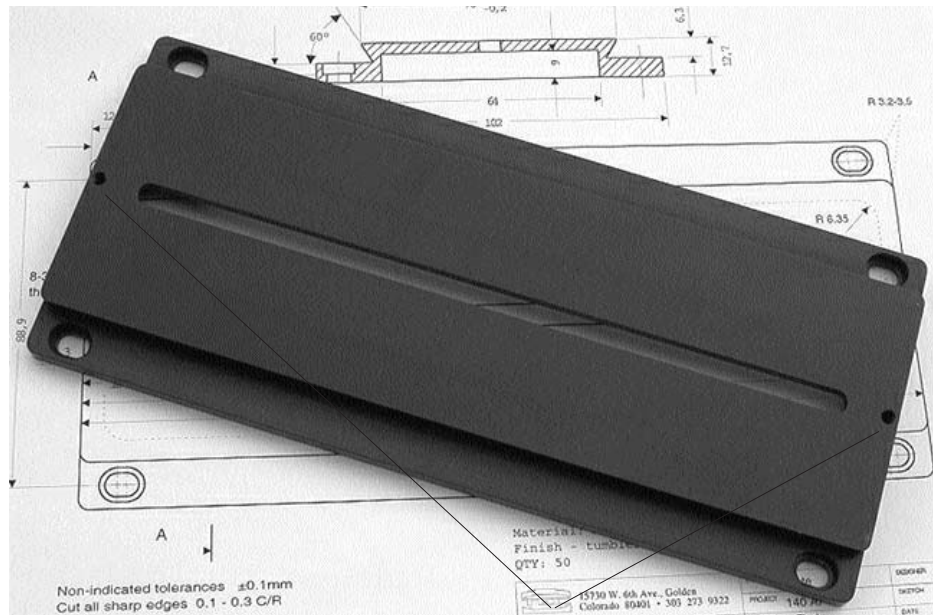
*From users feedback - it is better and more safe to keep rings on the OTA all the time if possible - this way there is no chance of scratching the tube.*

## DOVETAIL PLATE

The Dovetail Plate, like all other accessories for this telescope, is CNC machined for lightness and rigidity from aluminum stock, and then black anodized for a tough, corrosion-free surface.

Though having the same width and hole pattern as Losmandy plates, the TEC Dovetail Plate for APO180 refractors is only 12" long and is compatible with Losmandy, WYO or Casady Saddle systems.

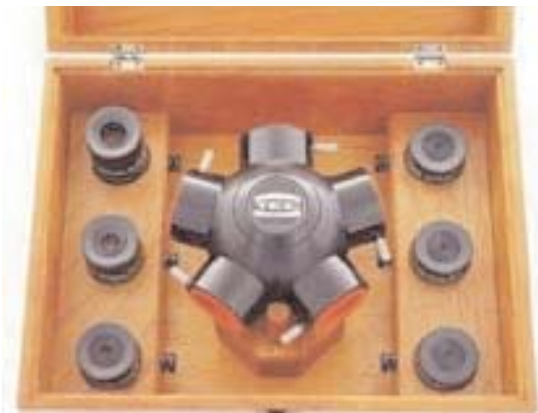
Two 8-32 security screws must be installed on each end of the Plate; these security screws prevent the dovetail and OTA from accidentally slipping off the dovetail holder.



8-32 threaded holes for security screws

## EYEPIECE TURRET

Eyepiece Turret with Mahogany case. Precision holder for five 1.25" eyepieces. Diagonal mirror made of Quartz. Case safely holds six 1.25" eyepieces and I-Turret. Case dimensions: 5.5" x 8.25" x 10.75"; weight - 2lb. This new component will let you change your favourite eyepieces very fast - just click from one to the next one and enjoy observing.



## CLEANING :

The tube assembly and front baffle are powder coated, to clean them use water with a soap or mineral spirits (paint thinner); do not use Acetone or other strong chemicals. Please contact us if you need the lens to be cleaned.

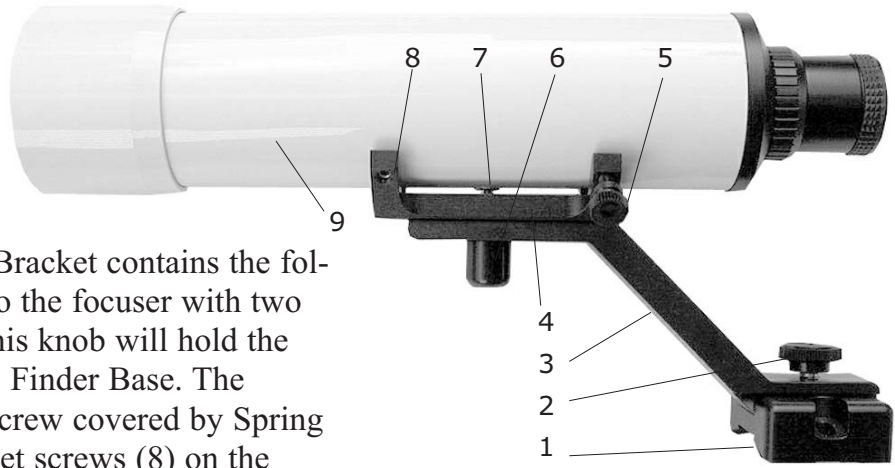
**Latest updates for this manual or new accessories are available on our web:**  
**[www.telescopengineering.com](http://www.telescopengineering.com) and on the TEC-scopes users group:**  
**<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/tec-scopes>.**



## TEC FINDERSCOPE BRACKET

The TEC Finderscope Bracket is designed to hold a traditional 50mm optical finder or a Red Dot sight.

This new design requires only 2 thumb screws for alignment. It looks and works in a much more elegant way. The Finderscope Bracket contains the following parts: Finder Base (1), that attaches to the focuser with two 8-32 screws; Holding Knob (2), tightening this knob will hold the Finder Arm (3) with Finder Holder (4) to the Finder Base. The Finder (9) is spring-loaded with spring and screw covered by Spring Cover (6). The Finder holder has two 10-32 set screws (8) on the objective side and two 10-32 Alignment Thumb Screws (5). A special insert (7) must be installed in the finder's body. TEC performs this installation for free in any brands. Please note that finder's diameter should not be larger than 2". When attaching the finder base to the focuser housing make sure to use screws of the proper length.



Finder base

### WARNING:

**IF THE SCREWS ARE TOO LONG, THEY WILL CONTACT THE DRAW TUBE AND DAMAGE ITS ANODIZED SURFACE !**

Shown in the above picture is the Astro-Physics Finder bracket with finder. This combination is less expensive and does not require an insert installation.

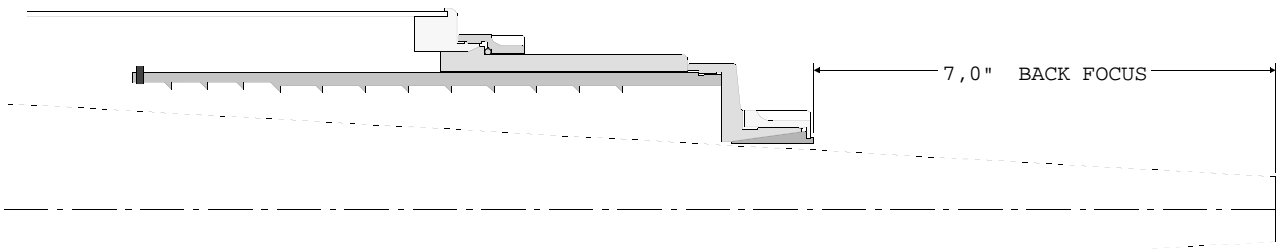
The Red Dot sights could also be installed. This installation requires fewer parts: only a Finder Base and a Finder Arm with knob.



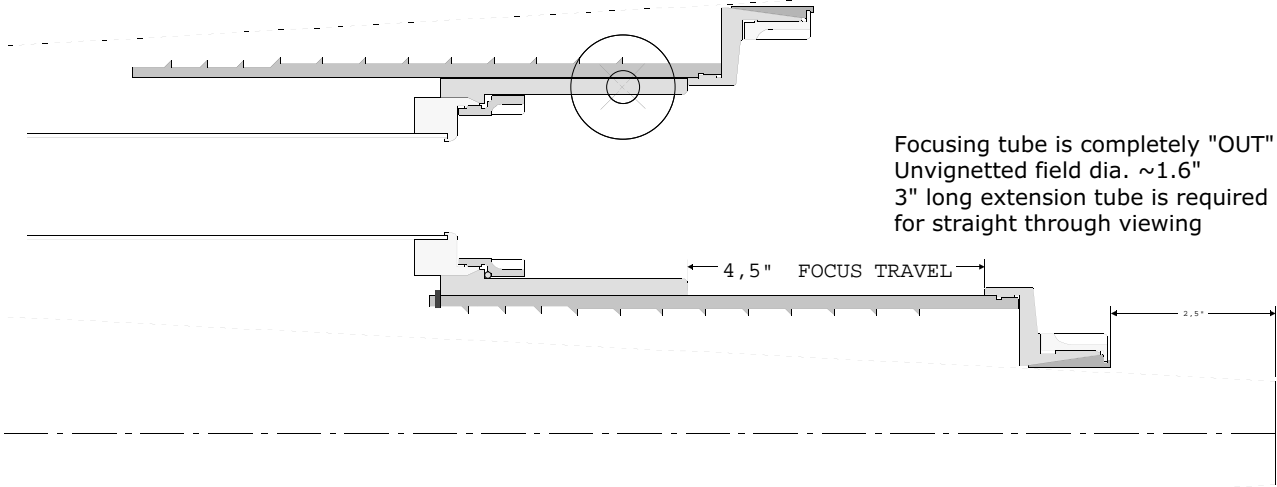


# FOCUSING DIAGRAM

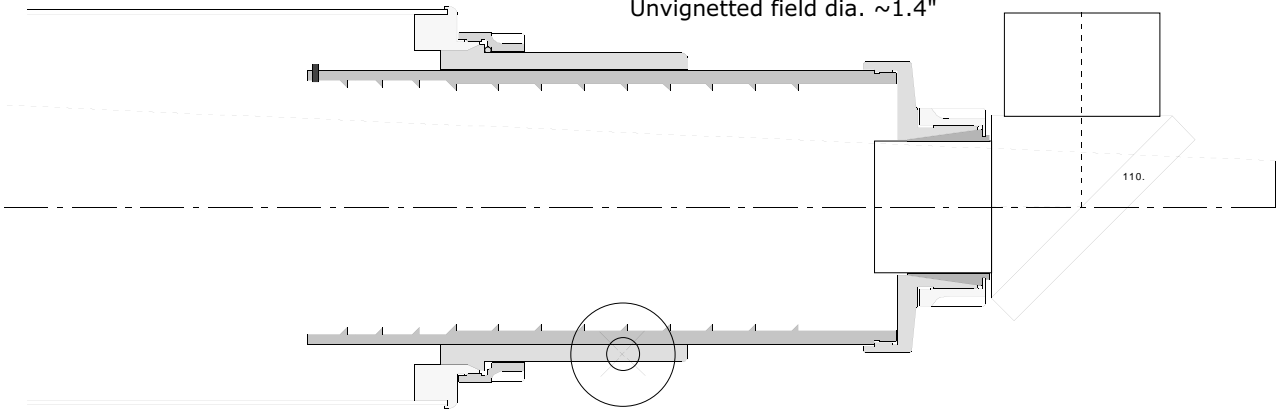
Focusing tube is completely "IN"  
Unvignetted field dia. ~1.0"



Focusing tube is completely "OUT"  
Unvignetted field dia. ~1.6"  
3" long extension tube is required  
for straight through viewing



With the 2" diagonal focusing tube is in the middle position  
Unvignetted field dia. ~1.4"



With the Field Flattener focusing tube is in the middle position  
Unvignetted field dia. ~2.4"

