

I sincerely thank the authors for their efforts to revise their paper. Some good progress has been made. However, I am still at a loss what the aim of this paper is supposed to be. The title “Half a century of UBV photometry at Hvar” still suggests an account of the history of the Hvar Observatory photometry. In agreement with this, the Introduction is only about the history of the Hvar Observatory. This is outside the scope of A&A as I perceive it.

To be acceptable for publication in A&A, the paper must be made fit the scope of the journal: “original research in astronomy and astrophysics” (<https://nestor.aanda.org/>). “Original” means that the work is original at the time of submission. It is not sufficient to repeat work that was highly original in the past. Except for the characterization of the photometric quality of the Hvar site, I see very little that has not been known before. For instance, it is a major merit of the authors’ lifetime work to have demonstrated that virtually all Be stars are variable. But meanwhile, many other papers based on observations with Hipparcos, TESS, Gaia (not mentioned by the authors), BRITE, BeSS, etc. have shown the same. There is no longer anything original in this conclusion.

In more general terms: in my understanding, A&A does not publish unsolicited reviews. This paper impresses by its review character – but as such it is not suitable to A&A.

I can well imagine that the following process will lead to a manuscript that I would gladly recommend for publication in A&A:

- 1) Identify the original research the readers of A&A shall learn about.
- 2) Adopt a fitting title.
- 3) Replace Sect. 1 with an introduction to the chosen subject.
- 4) If Be stars continue to play a major role, replace Sect. 2 with a single paragraph about what Be stars are. When I encouraged the authors to add a simple short introduction to Be stars, I did not imagine a historical account of the authors’ contributions and other historical reminiscences. A paper about Be stars should briefly say what Be stars are. All the rest of Sect. 2 (V/R variations, all the many wrong past ideas, etc.) is not used in the remainder of the paper and, therefore, superfluous for the purposes of this paper if it is to appear in A&A.
- 5) Reduce Sect. 3.1 to a summary of the work by Harmanec et al. (1994). The statement at the end of Sect. 3.1 that more details can be found in this publication evidences that Sect. 3.1 does not report much new. Add brief descriptions of the improvements applied.
- 6) Keep Sects. 3.2 and 3.3.
- 7) Retain all Figures belonging to Sect. 3.
- 8) Retain Table 1. Consider performing a minimum of an analysis to improve on the original-research aspect. For instance, only from the Hvar photometry can diagrams with the various photometric ranges in Table 2 be produced. I expect such an effort to lead to relatively novel results, especially if stars with the 5 different variability patterns developed in Sect. 4 are plotted with different symbols. If such work is added to the paper, Table 2 can be kept. Otherwise, it should be deposited with the CDS.
- 9) Most of the observations in Sect. 4 have been published before, and the compilation of the literature on these 19 stars can probably be used in future research. But there is nothing novel in this, and so this section is not publishable by A&A. unless there are examples of important new original insights, which, of course, should be published. Do keep the classification scheme of Sect. 4. For each of the 5 categories, pick one star with prototypical behavior in the Hvar photometry and illustrate the characteristics in one figure each. Consider plotting the data before and after the new data reduction so that the effect of the new reduction can be appreciated; it would be sufficient to do this in select diagrams.
- 10) Remove from Sect. 5 all discussion of stars, for which the now published Hvar photometry has not contributed original research results. Obviously, this excludes most mentions of orbital parameters unless the Hvar photometry corroborates them in the sense of original research, which should be appropriately highlighted.

Publication of the observations: I thank the authors for their agreement to make their database public. I would encourage them to use the CDS rather than an institute-based solution. Everyone is familiar with CDS standards and so is happy to use data deposited there. The CDS also

takes care of all changes in computer hard- and software. Who will do this in Prague and Zagreb a decade from now? However, as a reviewer of this paper, I cannot argue this strongly because, if the data get lost, the losses to the readers of this paper will be minimal as the paper does not make much new use of them. Moreover, it would do the author's work a big disfavor if the paper were scattered over A&A, CDS, Zenodo, and institute archives. The combination of A&A and CDS would be the strongest.

Zenodo: Thank you for this suggestion. However, this would lead to a gray halo around A&A, and, therefore, I would like to ask the editor whether A&A supports the usage of Zenodo beyond the purposes of a mere data repository. If yes:

- Are reviewers expected to review texts and figures to be deposited with Zenodo?
- Are authors expected to consider comments from the reviewer?
- Can texts in Zenodo be referenced by referencing the A&A paper? If not, how would this be enforced? I would like to avoid that, in future publications, the authors can say "As we have shown in Božić et al. (2026, A&A) ..." but only refer to unreviewed texts on Zenodo. I admit to being reluctant to review long texts and numerous figures that I consider to be outside the scope of A&A.
- If there is already a general A&A policy on this (I did not find one), a link will answer my questions. I do not need individual replies.

Appendices B and C: Independently of the answers by the editor, I would advocate adding

- Appendix B with Figs. B.1 through B.3 to Sect. 3;
- the single paragraph in Appendix C to Sect. 3 of the main text and submitting Tables C.1 through C.3 to the CDS.

I have not (re-)read appendices A and D.

Use of colors in figures: About 10% of all men have limited color vision of various kinds (I'm one of them). Therefore, graphical presentations should never depend on color only to distinguish different types of data.

Select other comments on the manuscript:

- **Title:** Please insert "early-type".
- **Abstract:**
 - The achieved accuracy (best, typical, worst) and the related timescale should be added.
 - The number of Be and binary stars should be added.
- **Lines 32-35:** In the version available to me of the cited paper, this is worded much more cautiously, and one of the reviewers has raised serious questions about this conclusion. It is very unfortunate that the authors insist on lumping all kinds of early-type stars together. The proverbial apples and oranges are both spherical and grow on trees, and yet they are very different fruits.
- **Sect. 3:** Add the coordinates of the Hvar observatory, its altitude, that is located on an island with a busy tourist resort very nearby, and some reference to a paper describing the observatory in more detail.
- **Around line 240:** A clearer definition and distinction of differential and all-sky photometry might help some readers.
- **Table 1:** Please add where the MK types come from (are they MKK types as stated in line 389?). There is no need for individual references. A global statement will do.
- **Table 2:** If the data are not exploited in the paper, the table should go to the CDS (see above).
- **Lines 398-400:** Please add that the Hvar photometry only captured the tip of this iceberg. For instance, much smaller-scale mass-loss events can be seen in the TESS data analyzed by Labadie-Bartz et al. (2025).
- **Table 3:** It would be very useful (not just save space) to add the last 5 columns to Table 1 (where, e.g., multiple comparison and check stars could appear in multiple rows and the lengths of period be limited to 4 digits).

- **Figure B.3:** In the caption, explain the arrows. The labels with the names of the volcanoes are hardly legible.
- **General:** I request that the authors critically read their manuscript for missing references.

Select replies to the authors' answers (for which I am grateful):

- a) **5)** *Please state that the variability seen in the Hvar photometry is entirely circumstellar as the stellar amplitudes are too low.*

Reply: We are hesitant to do that. Some campaigns on rapid variability of particular Be stars, cited in our study, showed that the Hvar photometry is capable to detect changes with a full amplitude less than 0.03 mag.

Let me rephrase my comment: Please state that the variability seen in the Hvar photometry is mostly entirely circumstellar. In all cases, the amplitudes of the pulsations are too low to detect several frequencies, the combination of which probably holds the key to the triggering of mass-loss events.

- b) **8)** *The main difference between Be and non-Be stars is that Be stars exhibit outbursts while the latter do not. It surprises that, in the manuscript, there is not a single occurrence of the word "outburst". This requires an explanation since the Hvar photometry is technically capable of capturing medium and major events.*

Reply: We think that the word "outburst" is inappropriate in connection with the development of new emission-line episodes, accompanied either by light brightenings or fadings (probably depending on the aspect angle). Outburst is indicative of a violent event and we do not see any such thing to happen.

I can agree with the authors' sentiments about the word outburst. But Be stars clearly undergo mass-loss events; their mass loss is discontinuous. This has been reported many times, and the VDD provides a good qualitative description of the circumstellar variability (e.g., Vieira et al. 2017). This must be mentioned because this behavior is the main legacy of the Hvar photometry.

- c) **Section 3, LTEMP and LTEMi:** *The physical difference should be made clear (referring to the VDD model?).*

Reply: We do not see the relevance of VDD model here, we refer to the work of Sigut and Patel (2013), which seems more appropriate.

Vieira+ 2017 have modeled the difference as a difference in inclination. This must be mentioned. The VDD model is the most advanced and most often used/cited model for the disks around Be stars. It would reveal an unscientific attitude to suppress its citation.

- d) **Line# 1281-1290:** *How much of the information about the circularity of orbits was obtained through the Hvar photometry? If the fraction is low, this paragraph should be deleted.*

Reply: This piece of information is now in Table 3 and we extended the discussion a bit.

My question was about the contributions by the Hvar photometry. I still see none so that there is no need to discuss a matter that is outside the reach of these data.

- e) **Line# 1291/1292:** *It would help to present this conclusion graphically.*

Reply: We are not sure what the referee suggests here.

Lines 1291/1292 said: *Our sample indicates that the least variable Be stars are found among objects with spectral types later than B5.* A simple graph of variability amplitude vs. spectral type (or B-V color) would achieve this. This example is only one of several missed opportunities to perform original research on the authors' database.

In the A&A online system, I shall suggest a reduction in length by 50%. That is, I see the target length at about a dozen pages in A&A.

Dietrich Baade