OBSERVATIONS OF 1H1426+428 WITH THE WHIPPLE 10 M IMAGING ATMOSPHERIC CHERENKOV TELESCOPE

D. Horan and for the VERITAS Collaboration
SAO, Whipple Observatory, P.O.Box 97, Amado, AZ 85645 .
horan@egret.sao.arizona.edu

TeV gamma-ray observations are reported of 1H1426+428, an X-ray selected BL Lacertae object at a redshift of 0.129. The X-ray spectrum appears to peak near 100 keV; if this is the peak of the synchrotron emission, then this AGN is a prime candidate for TeV gamma-ray emission assuming a Compton-synchrotron model. During the 1999, 2000 and 2001 observing seasons, the source has been intensively studied with the Whipple 10m imaging atmospheric Cherenkov telescope. The average signal recorded over the 2000 observing season (March-June) was above the 4σ level. The flux above 400 GeV was 0.96 $\pm$ 0.21 x 10^{-11} $cm^{-2}s^{-1}$. There was evidence for a two-day flare in March 1999 and a one-day flare in May, 2000. We will present these results along with the results of the 2001 observations. We suggest that, like Markarian 501 and 1ES2344+514, 1H1426+428 could be another example of an extreme BL Lac.