Subject: Re: Astronomys` Sixth Neighbour Needs Help
Posted by Ben Panter on Sat, 26 Jul 2003 07:48:53 GMT

Hi Bruno,

> I can`t thank you enough!
> I managed to run a 3800 star file in under 11 minutes whereas before
> it took over 24 hours. Now I am running a 9300 star file!
> For the larger file I am using a dual processor computer with 1 Gb and
> with 2400GHz each processor. The program sucks 99.8% of the CPU but
> it is running.

Apologies if I'm telling you something you already know...

I'm a bit of an IDL numpty myself, and an astronomy Phd.er - but I tend
to use a lot of CPU time, quite often harvested from other user's
workstations. You can make IDL far more polite to your system using a
command called "nice". Different LINUX set ups do it different ways, but
if you have launch, say, idlde or idl, type

nice idlde

or

nice idl

This assigns a priority to your IDL environment below that of other
things (like X and whatever your desktop is). In this way IDL will be
pushed to the back when another program needs a quick bit of CPU.

The codes which I run here take about 1.5 years - but by "borrowing" CPU
 time (running my codes niced on other people's machines) we can run in
parallel on 20 - 25 machines and complete in a few weeks.

HTH,

  Ben

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My name (no spaces)@bigfoot which is a com.