

ChessStar-2022

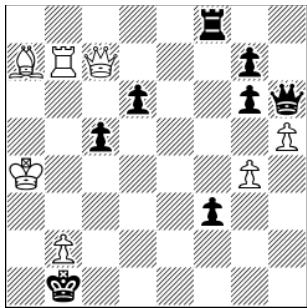
Preliminary results in the studies section

ChessStar's annual studies tourney has quickly become the equal in prestige to that of any print magazine. When asked to judge the 2022 edition, I felt honored and also excited to become acquainted with the 34 studies published in ChessStar in 2022. ChessStar's earlier tourneys were still fresh in my mind. The 34 did not disappoint, as each study has something to offer. After applying the usual rules for various criteria, such as soundness, originality, economy, etc., I produced the recommended ranking below. All the entries were good fighters, but some had weaknesses that led to them getting knocked out. The most common weakness was too many captures, particularly of immobile units. To fans of endgames, read on; some very pleasing studies await you!

The distribution of differences is as follows:

Steffen Nielsen

1st Prize

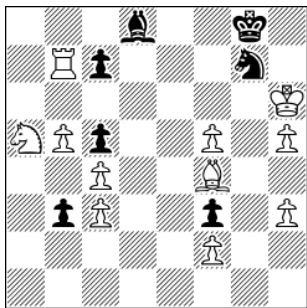


Draw 7+8

1.g5! [Thematic try 1.Qxd6? Qf4+ 2.b4 Qxd6 3.bxc5+ Qb6! 4.Rxb6+ Kc1 5.h6 gxh6 6.Rxg6 f2—+] **1...Qxg5 2.Qxd6 Qf4+ 3.b4 Qxd6 4.bxc5+ Qb6! 5.Rxb6+ Kc1 6.h6!** [6.Rxg6? f2 7.c6 Ra8!—+] **6...gxh6 7.Rxg6 f2 8.c6 f1Q 9.Rg1=** A clever logical study (the best kind!) in which White sacrifices a pawn on the first move to clear a file for the Rook on move 9. In between these events we see many interesting motifs, including Black's Queen sacrifice to keep the a7-g1 diagonal closed. ½

Steffen Nielsen

2nd Prize

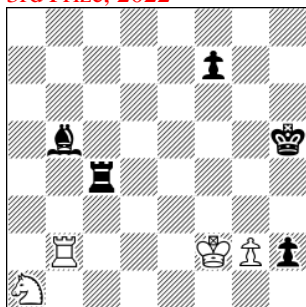


Draw 11+7

1.f6 b2 2.b6! [2.f7+? Kxf7 3.b6 Kg8! 4.bxc7 Nf5+ 5.Kg6 Nh4+=] **2...b1Q 3.f7+ Kxf7 4.bxc7 Bg5+ 5.Bxg5 Nf5+ 6.Kh7 Qe4** [6...Qc2 7.c8R+! (7.c8Q+? Ne7+ 8.Kh6 Qh7+! 9.Kxh7 stalemate; 7.c8N+? Kf8!-=; 7.c8B+? Kf8 8.Rb8 Kf7!-=) ; 6...Qd3 7.c8N+! (7.c8R+? Ne7+ 8.Kh6 Qd6+=) 7...Kf8 8.Bh6+ Nxh6+ 9.Kxh6+—] **7.c8B+! Kf8 8.Rb8 Kf7 9.Bb7!+—** An unusual study in pawn promotion effects. Each of three black Queen moves along the b1-h7 diagonal forces a different under-promotion. Very nifty composing. ½

Michael Pasman

3rd Prize, 2022

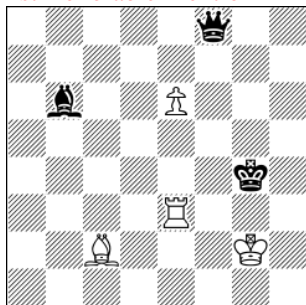


Draw 4+5

1.g4+! Kxg4 [1...Kh4 2.Rxb5!—+] **2.Kg2 h1Q+ 3.Kxh1 Bc6+** [3...Rc1+ 4.Kh2 Bc6 5.Rb4+ Kg5 6.Nb3 Rc2+ 7.Kh3 Rc3+ 8.Kh2=] **4.Kh2 Rc5 5.Rb4+!** [5.Rc2? Rh5+ 6.Kg1 Be4!—+; 5.Nc2? Rh5+ 6.Kg1 Kg3 7.Kf1 Ba4 8.Kg1 Rh2—+] **5...Kf3 6.Rb3+ Kf4 7.Kg1** [7.Rb4+? Be4—+] **7...Bd5** [7...Rc1+ 8.Kf2 Rxa1 9.Rf3+! stalemate; 7...Be4 8.Ra3=] **8.Rd3!** [8.Ra3? Rb5! 9.Nc2 Rb1+ 10.Kf2 Rb2—+] **8...Rb5** [8...Ke4 9.Nb3! Rb5 10.Nc1 Rb1 11.Rc3! Kd4 12.Rd3+ Kc4 13.Rd1=] **9.Nc2 Be4 10.Rc3** [10.Rd7? Rg5+ 11.Kf1 Bxc2 12.Rxf7+ Ke3—+] **10...Rb1+ 11.Ne1! Rxe1+ 12.Kf2 Ra1 13.Rf3+! Bxf3** stalemate. A pleasant and economical setting of a familiar stalemate scheme. The model stalemate can appear as early as move 9 (after 7... Rc1+) but Black seeks complications and suffers the same stalemate after the white Knight hops to e1. ½

Amatzia Avni

1st Honorable Mention

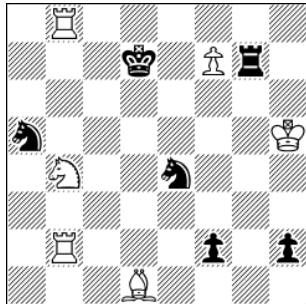


Win 4+3

1.e7 Qf6 2.Bd1+ Kg5 3.Rg3+ Kh6 4.Rh3+ Kg5 [4...Kg7 5.e8N+!] **5.Rh5+ Kf4 6.e8Q Qg7+ 7.Kf1 Qg1+ 8.Ke2 Qf2+ 9.Kd3 Qd4+ 10.Kc2 Qc4+ 11.Kb1 Qb4+ 12.Ka2 Qd2+ 13.Ka3 Qd6+ 14.Ka4 Qxd1+ 15.Kb5 Qb1+ 16.Ka6!** [16.Kc6? Be3!]=] **16...Be3** [16...Bd4 17.Rh4+++; 16...Bd8 17.Qe5+ Kg4 18.Qe2+++] **17.Qa4+! Kf3 18.Rh3+ Kf2 19.Qh4+++** The play is elegant with short, clear supporting variations, including the nice 4...Kg7 5.e8N+! The climax is 16.Ka6!, instead of 16.Kc6?, so that 17.Qa4+ isn't blocked. Only a clean final mate is missing. 1–0

Michael Pasman

2nd Honorable Mention



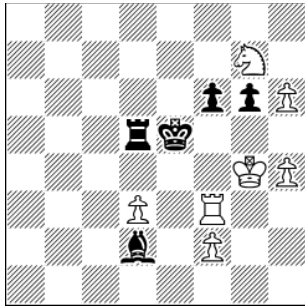
Draw 6+6

1.Rd8+! Ke6 2.f8N+! Kf6 [2...Kf5 3.Rd5+ Kf6 4.Rxf2+ Nxf2 5.Bf3 Rg3 6.Rd6+ transposes to main line] **3.Rxf2+ Nxf2 4.Bf3 Rg5+ 5.Kh4 Rg4+ 6.Kh5 Rg3 7.Rd6+ Ke5 8.Rd5+ Kf4 9.Bh1 Nxh1 10.Ne6+ Ke4** [10...Kf3 11.Rd3+ Ke4 12.Kh4=] **11.Kh4 Rg8** [11...Nf2 12.Kxg3 h1Q 13.Ng5+ Ke3 14.Rxa5=] **12.Ng5+** [12.Kh3? Rh8+ 13.Kg2 Nf2—+; 12.Nc5+? Kf3 13.Rf5+ Ke2—+] **12...Rxc5 13.Kh3 Rg8 14.Kxh2 Rh8+ 15.Kg1! Nc4 16.Rg5 Ne3** [16...Ne5 17.Kg2 Nf3 18.Rg4+=] **17.Nd3! Kxd3** [17...Nf5 18.Nc5+ Ke5

(18...Kf4 19.Ne6+=) 19.Kg2 Kf6 20.Ne4+=] **18.Rh5! Rxh5** stalemate. The final model stalemate position is well known. Here it receives a new, long and intense introduction. ½

Steffen Nielsen

3rd Honorable Mention

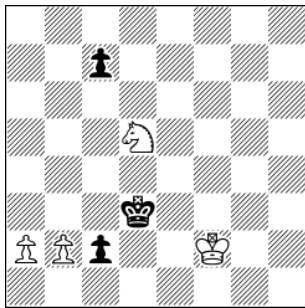


Win 7+5

1.h7 Rd8 2.d4+! [2.h8Q? Rxh8 3.d4+ Kxd4=] **2...Rxd4+ 3.Rf4! Rd8 4.Rd4! Rxd4+ 5.f4+! Rxf4+ 6.Kh3 Be1 7.h5! Rh4+ 8.Kg2-**
+ A humorous and original chess fantasy! **1-0**

Pavel Arestov

4th Honorable Mention

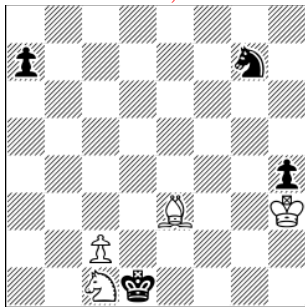


Win 4+3

1.Nf4+! [1.Nb4+? Kd2 2.Nxc2 Kxc2 3.a4 Kxb2 4.a5 c5 5.a6 c4 6.a7 c3 7.a8Q c2] **1...Kd2 2.Ne2 c5 3.b3!** [3.a4? c4! 4.a5 c1Q 5.Nxc1 Kxc1 6.a6 Kxb2] **3...c1Q 4.Nxc1 Kxc1 5.a4 Kc2 6.a5 Kxb3 7.a6 c4 8.a7 c3 9.a8Q c2 10.Qa1+-** A small scale logical study, but perfectly formed. **1-0**

M. Hlinka & L. Kekely

Commendation, 2022

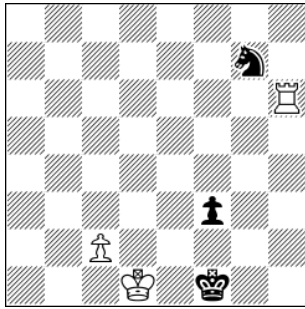


Win 4+4

1.c4 Nf5 2.Bf4 Nd4 3.Kxh4 [3.Be3? Nf5 4.Bf4 Nd4 loss of time] **3...Kc2** [3...a5 4.Kg4 a4 5.c5 a3 6.Be3 Nc2 7.Bg5 Nd4 8.Bf6 Nc6 9.Nb3 Nb4 10.Na1 Kd2 11.Kf5+-] **4.Kg4 Kc3 5.c5 Kc4 6.Ne2!** [6.Bd6? Kd5=] **6...Nc6 7.Bd6** [7.Be3? Nb4 8.Nf4 a5=] **7...Nd8** [7...Na5 8.Bf8 Kd3 9.Kf3 Nc6 10.Nf4+ Kd4 11.Ne6+ Kc4 12.Ke4+-] **8.Bf8!** [8.Be7? Ne6 9.c6 Kd5 10.Nf4+ Kxc6! 11.Nxe6 Kd7=] **8...Ne6 9.c6 Kd5** (or Kb5) [9...Nc7 10.Bd6 Na8 11.c7 Nb6 12.Kf5+-] **10.Nf4+! Nxf4 11.c7+-** The pawn excelsior is adorned with two near-echo Knight sacrifices. **1-0**

Pavel Arestov

Commendation

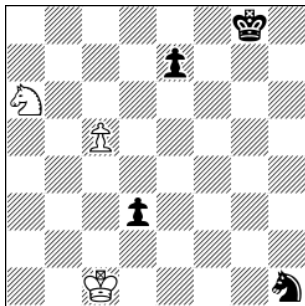


Win 3+3

1.Kd2 [1.Rg6? f2 2.Rxg7 stalemate] **1...f2 2.c3!** [2.c4? Kg1 3.Rg6+ Kf1 4.c5 Nh5! 5.c6 Ng3 6.Rxg3 stalemate] **2...Kg1** [2...Nf5 3.Rf6 Ng3 4.Ke3+-] **3.Rg6+ Kf1 4.Rg5 Ne8** [4...Ne6 5.Rf5+-] **5.Rf5** [5.Rg6? Ng7! loss of time] **5...Nd6 6.Rf4 Kg2 7.Ke2 Ne4 8.Ke3 Nxc3 9.Rxf2+ Kg3 10.Rd2+-** A logical study with "pawn one or two" based on zugzwang. **1-0**

P. Arestov & P. Krug

Commendation

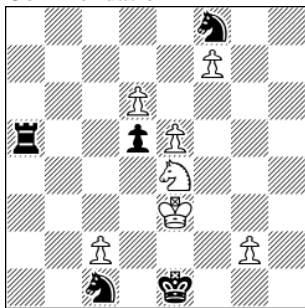


Win 3+4

1.c6 d2+! 2.Kxd2 Ng3 3.c7 Ne4+ 4.Ke3 Nd6 5.Kf4 Kf7 6.Ke5 Nc8 7.Nb4 Na7 8.Kd5 Kf6 9.Na2! [Thematic try 9.Kc5? e5 10.Kb6 Nc8+ 11.Kb7 Nd6+ 12.Kb8 e4 13.Nc2 Ke5 14.Ne3 Kf4 15.Nc4 e3 16.Nxd6 e2=] **9...e5 10.Nc3 Ke7 11.Kc5 Kd7 12.Kb6 e4! 13.Nd5** [13.Nxe4? Nb5!=] **13...Nc8+ 14.Kb7 Nd6+ 15.Kb8 Ke6 16.Ne3** [16.Nc3? e3 17.Nb5 Kd5=] **16...Ke5 17.Nc4+ Nxc4 18.c8Q+-** An atypical thematic try (not in parallel to the main line) leads to a loss of one tempo. **1-0**

Martin Minski

Commendation

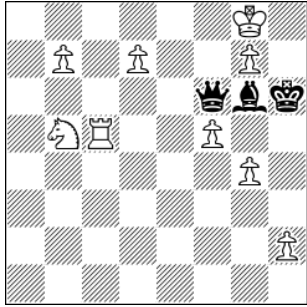


Draw 7+5

1.d7! d4+ [1...Nxd7 2.e6 d4+ 3.Kxd4 Ne2+ 4.Ke3=] **2.Kxd4 Ne2+ 3.Ke3** [3.Kc4? Nxd7 4.e6 Ne5+ 5.Kb4 Ra8+-] **3...Rd5 4.e6 Nxe6 5.Nc5! Re5+** [5...Nf8 6.c4 Rd6 7.Nd3+ Kf1 8.Ne5 Nc3 9.c5=] **6.Ne4 Rf5 7.Ng5 Re5+ 8.Ne4 Rd5 9.Nc5 Re5+ 10.Ne4=** Play ends in a curious symmetrical positional draw. The final position is nearly set in the starting diagram. **½**

Michael Pasman

Commendation



Win

9+3

1.g5+! Kxg5 2.Nd6 Qd8+ [2...Kh6 3.Ne8 Bf7+ 4.Kh8+-] **3.Ne8 Bxe8 4.h4+!** [4.Rc8? Bf7+! 5.Kxf7 Qxd7+ 6.Kg8 Qxb7=] **4...Kh6** [4...Kxh4 5.Rc8 Bf7+ 6.Kxf7 Qxd7+ 7.Kg6!+-] **5.b8Q Qxb8** [5...Bf7+ 6.Kxf7 Qxd7+ 7.Kf6 Qxg7+ 8.Ke6+-] **6.Rc8 Qb3+ 7.Kh8 Bxd7 8.Rc7! Qb2** [8...Qb8+ 9.g8N+ Kh5 10.Rxd7+-; Main 8...Qf7 9.Rxd7 Qxd7 10.g8N+ Kh5 11.Nf6+ Kxh4 12.Nxd7+-] **9.Rxd7 Qf6 10.Re7 Qxe7 11.g8N+ Kh5 12.Nxe7+-** Complicated play leads to Knight promotions and two grabs of the black Queen. I do not think this improves upon Skuja 1949. **1-0**

Judge: Richard Becker, Oregon City, USA, January, 2023