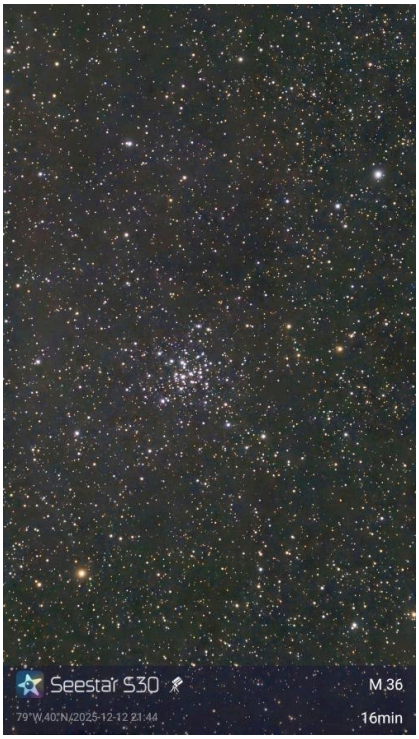
Fwd: [ORAS] Three Winter-y Clusters

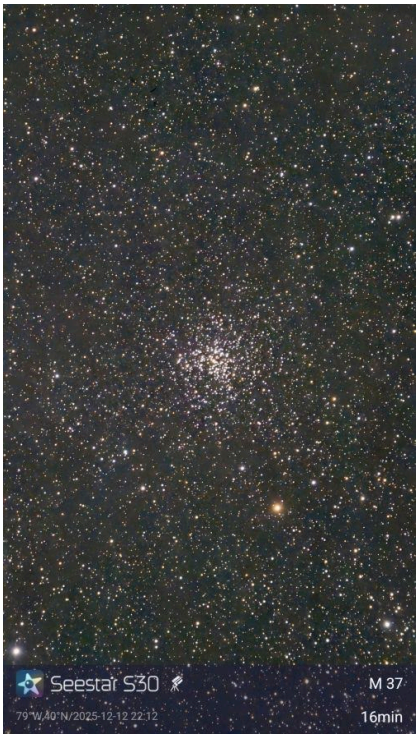
Larry McHenry <lsmch@comcast.net> Thu, Jan 15, 2026 at 4:56 PM
To: Larry McHenry <lsmch1977@gmail.com>

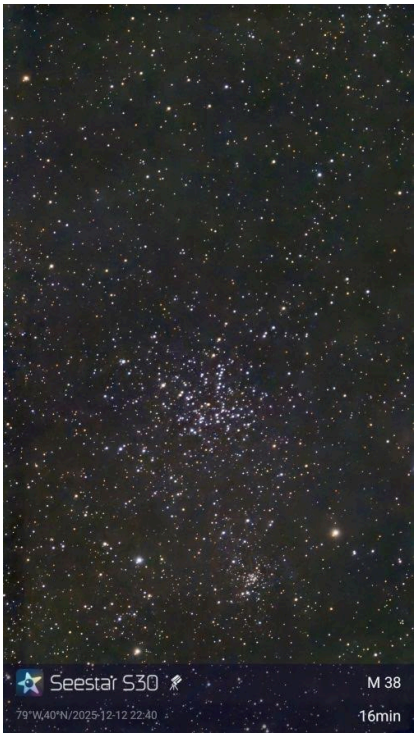
-------- Forwarded Message --------
Subject: [ORAS] Three Winter-y Clusters
Resent-Date: Sat, 13 Dec 2025 15:41:12 -0800
Resent-From: lsmch@comcast.net
Date: Sat, 13 Dec 2025 18:41:05 -0500
From: Larry Mc via groups.io <lsmch=comcast.net@groups.io>
Reply-To: ORAS@groups.io
To: oras io group <ORAS@groups.io>, KiskiAstronomers@groups.io <KiskiAstronomers@groups.io>

hi all,

Last night, prior to the Winter Storm that's heading our way pushing clouds ahead of it, we had a short window of opportunity to do a little observing.
So with the inches of snow accumulating this evening, I thought it would be a good time to share three frosty looking star clusters: M36, M37, and M38 all in the Winter-y constellation of Auriga "the Charioteer".







(SeeStar S30 f5, 60 second exposures in EQ mode, internal IR filter, livestacked for 16 minutes)

All three "Messier" clusters were actually discovered by Italian astronomer Giovanni Hodierna prior to 1654. But unfortunately for Hodierna, the word didn't really get out about his discoveries,
so it was nearly a 100 years later that French Astronomer Charles Messier 'rediscovered' the clusters in September of 1764 and added them to his 'not a comet list' of objects to avoid while comet hunting.
M36 is a +mag 6.3 open cluster about 4,340 light-years away with about 100
M37 is a +mag 6.2 open cluster about 4,500 light-years away with over 500 stars.
M38 is a +mag 7.4 open cluster about 3,480 light-years away with also about 100 stars.

Larry