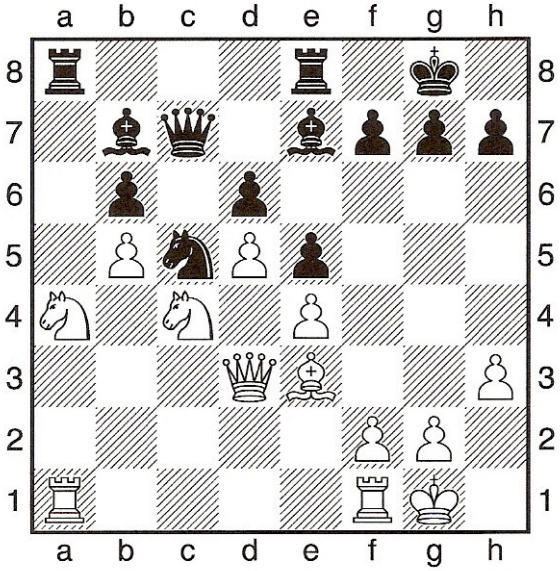
CHESS NOTES 27.11.10 Peter Sherlock

Lincolnshire's team in the Minor Counties competition opened their campaign by hosting Leicestershire at the Lindum Construction complex in North Hykeham. Having reached the national semi-finals last season, Lincolnshire were in confident mood for a good start this time in the first match in the Midland Counties group stage against one of the other fancied teams.

On board 3 Lincolnshire's captain Nigel Birtwistle, who also plays for Grantham – the current champions of Notts League Division 1 – was paired as white against Graham Sharpe from Littlethorpe and we pick up the game after Graham has just played 24. ...Nc5 (see diagram) countering Nigel's attack on b6.

Play continued 25. Bxc5 bxc5 26. Nab6 Rxa1 27. Rxa1 Rb8 and Nigel's knights look very strong 28. Ra7 Bd8 29. Qa3 Qe7 30. Qf3 Bxb6 31. Nxb6 Qc7 32. Nc4 Qd7 and even after the exchange of pieces Nigel's rook is now in the mix. Nigel now brings his queen into play 33. Qb3 Kf8 34. Qa4 Ke8 35. Qa5 f5 36. f3 fxe4 37. fxe4 Qe7 38. Qb6 and black resigned in the face of multiple threats.

Wins also for Chris Dorrington from Bourne, Louth's Samuel Milson, Stuart MacDonald from Grimsby and Alistair Summers from Peterborough together with draws for Grantham's Nick Payne and Ivan David, Claudio Mangione, Geoff Collyer and Kevin McCarthy from Lincoln, Newark's Daniel Wells and Keith Palmer from Louth meant that Lincolnshire just edged home by 8½ points to 7½.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