

Grantham Sharks II, Lincolnshire's team in the 4NCL played their penultimate match of the season in Division 1. Having lost all their matches in Group 1B they found themselves in the demotion pool where they played the bottom 4 teams from Group 1A. In the demotion pool they carried forward the points gained from the other 3 teams in the pool from Group 1A, which unfortunately was zero, and having lost the first two matches in the pool they were still not off the mark.

Hoping for better things against their next opponents Oxford I on board 7 Grantham's Stephen Cairns was paired as white against Tim Dickenson and we pick up the game after black has just played 15. ...Nxd4 (see diagram).

Stephen replied with 16. Nxd4 cxd4 17. Qb2 and Stephen is threatening both 18. Qxb7 and Qxd4 17. ...Bc6 18. Qxd4 winning the pawn but still needed to be careful to seal the win. Play continued 18. ...Rad8 19. Qc3 Ng4 20. Bf4 Qc5 21. Rbd1 Rc8 22. Qb4 Qh5 23. Qe7 Rfe8 24. Qg5 Qxg5 25. Bxg5 and Stephen could breathe a little easier with the queens off the board 25. ...Ne5 26. Bf5 Rb8 27. Bf4 Rb3 28. Rd6 Rb6 29. c5 Ra6 30. Bxe5 Rxe5 31. Bd3 and black resigned as the bishop is lost.

A win also for Claire Summerscale and draws for Ben Purton, Martin Burrows and Daniel McGowan were not enough as Oxford ran out winners by 4½ to 3½.

Grantham Sharks II also lost their last match to Kings Head I by 4 points to 3 with wins for Kevin McCarthy and a default on board 8, losing all their matches, so must now look forward to better things next season in Division 2.

Lincoln Chess Club play at the RAOB Club, 58 South Park on Wednesdays at 7.30pm. [www.lincolnchessclub.co.uk](http://www.lincolnchessclub.co.uk)

