

Lincolnshire's team in the Midland Counties Under 120 grade competition got the season underway when they met Worcestershire at the familiar neutral venue of Syston Social Club near Leicester.

Last season Lincolnshire's only success was an 11-1 win against today's opponents but a more even contest was expected as Worcestershire had brought a much stronger team. In fact their average grade was 98, 4 higher than Lincolnshire's 94.

On board 6 out of 12 Philip Gutcher who comes from Grimsby and is captain of the Grimsby D team in the Lincolnshire League Division 2 North was paired as white against Michele Clack from Redditch and we pick up the game after Michele has just played 28. ...g6 (see diagram) with Philip having 2 rooks to black's 1 but an earlier exchange had left black with 2 menacing bishops.

Philip played 29. g4 hoping to open up black's defense 29. ...Qd8 30. Kh3 hxg4 31. Rxc4 Bg7 32. Qe1 Qc7 33. Rgf4 and now Philip's rooks are linked and pointing straight at black's pawn on f7 - 33. ...Qc3 34. Qxc3 Rxc3 exchanging queens 35. Rxf7 Rxe3+ 36. Kg4 Rxe4+ 37. Kg5 Rxd4 and black now was looking to take some of white's pawns 38. Kxg6 Rxh4 but this latest capture was one too many as Philip played 39. Rxg7+ Kh8 40. Rf8 mate.

Wins also for Gary Scott from Horncastle, Behzad Parnian from Grimsby, Daniel Southern and Will Taylor from Grantham and Peter Damms from Louth meant that the match finished as a 6-6 draw.

Lincolnshire's next match is away to near neighbours Nottinghamshire.

Lincoln Chess Club play at the RAOB Club, 58 South Park on Wednesdays at 7.30pm. www.lincolnchessclub.co.uk

