

Lincoln's team in Division 2 North began the league season when Scunthorpe A were visitors to South Park. Last season Lincoln came runners up in this division having been champions the season before so a good result was needed to maintain the good run of form. However, Lincoln's opponents are tricky opponents having been champions themselves a couple of years ago.

On board 1 Herman Kok, now able to play in Division 2 as his grade is below the 155 cut off for Division 2, was paired as white against Scunthorpe captain Joanne Hutchinson and we join the game after Joanne has just played 24. ...Be7 (see diagram). Herman's next move opened up black's defence - can you see it?

Herman played 25. Nxd5 calculating that 25. ...cxd5 26. Rc3+ would give black a few problems. Black actually played 25. ...Qc4 26. Nxe7+ Rxe7 leaving Herman a pawn up.

Play continued 27. Rc3 Qa6 28. b4 Kd8 29. Kb2 Ke8 30. d5 Nb6 31. dxc6 and Herman opened up the d-file 31. ...Na4+ 32. Kb3 bxc6 and black retakes the pawn rather than taking the rook 33. Rcd3 Nb6 34. Qh4 Qa4+ and black has some counterplay 35. Kb2 Nc4+ 36. Kc3 Nxe5 37. fxe5 Qxa3+ winning back the pawn 38. Kd2 Qb2 39. Qc4 Rf7 40. Qxc6+ Kf8 41. Qc5+ Kg7 42. e6 and Herman closes in for the kill 42. ...Rb7 43. Rd7+ Rxd7 44. exd7 Qf6 45. Qc3 Qxc3+ 46. Kxc3 Rd8 47. Kc4 Kf7 48. Kc5 Ke7 49. Kc6 and black resigned.

A win also for Qais Karimi on his debut and a draw for James Irwin gave Lincoln a narrow 2½ to 1½ win.

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

