

Lincolnshire's team in the U120 competition played their second match in the Midland Counties group stages when they visited near neighbours Nottinghamshire at the Bramcote Memorial Village hall. In their first match Lincolnshire drew 8-8 with Worcestershire so a good result was needed to reach the national stages where the top 2 counties (out of 5) qualify. However, Nottinghamshire are one of the top counties so a difficult match was expected.

On board 4 Gary Scott from Horncastle was paired as white against Mike Swanwick who plays for the Nottingham Nomads with the following the Trompowsky attack named after the Brazilian champion Octavio Trompowsky (1897-1984) 1. d4 Nf6 2. Bf4 d6 3. Nf3 g6 4. h3 Bg7 5. e3 0-0 6. Nbd2 Re8 7. Bd3 Nbd7 8. c3 e5 and black is the first to break the shackles in an otherwise circumspect opening 9. dxe5 dxe5 10. Bg5 Nf8 11. Ne4 Qe7 12. Qc2 h6 13. Nxf6+ Bxf6 14. Bxh6 and Gary has gained a pawn but black replied with 14. ...e4 forking bishop and knight so the advantage could be short-lived (see diagram).

However, Gary played 15. Bxf8 exd3 (15. ...Kxf8 was better for black) 16. Bxe7 dxc2 effectively exchanging queens 17. Bxf6 and Gary is a piece and a pawn up but with black having a dangerous pawn on c2 17. ...Bf5 18. Nd4 Be4 19. f3 Bd3 20. Kd2 Bc4 21. Kxc2 and having seen off this threat Gary went on to win.

A win for Charles Ayton from Louth and a draw for William Orr also of Horncastle was all that Lincolnshire could muster as Nottinghamshire ran out winners by 9½ to 2½.

Horncastle Chess Club meet at the Bull Hotel in the town centre every Thursday at 7pm. A happy new year to all.

