

Lincolnshire's team in the Minor Counties competition ventured to the neutral venue of Handsworth near Sheffield to play in the Open/Minor counties semi-finals. Having topped the East Midland's zone Lincolnshire were paired against the West Zone runners-up Greater Manchester.

On board 14 Scunthorpe secretary and county president Denis Georgiou was paired as black against Alan Beresford from Chorlton-cum-Hardy and we pick up the game after white has just played 24. Nd1 (see diagram) perhaps looking to counter the threat of Denis's knight on g4. However, this opened the door for a winning move for Denis - can you see it?

Denis played 24. ...Nce5 25. Rh3 Nf6 and now Denis is threatening both white pawns on g2 and e4, 26. Ne3 Nxe4 winning the pawn 27. Nf3 Nc3 28. Kd2 Nxe2 29. Kxe2 Nxf3 30. gxf3 Rg7 31. Kf2 f5 and Denis exchanged a few more pieces before starting to advance his pawns.

White countered with 32. Rh8 Kf6 33. Rd8 d5 34. Ke2 Ke7 35. Rb8 Kd6 36. c3 Kc7 37. Re8 Kd7 38. Rb8 Bc8 and now white's rook is trapped 39. Ra8 Kc7 40. Ra7+ Bb7 41. a5 Kb8 42. Rxb7+ Kxb7 forcing the exchange and Denis went on to win a few moves later.

Wins also for Stephen Prior and Ivan David from Grantham, Joe Kilshaw from Grimsby, John Naylor from Louth and Graham Ladds who plays for Newark plus draws for captain Nigel Birtwistle, Harry Russell, Kevin McCarthy, Andy Hebert, Ian McDonald and Steve Allott gave Lincolnshire a win by 9½ to 6½, a place in the final against Worcestershire and also a place in the national finals.

Scunthorpe Chess Club also known as Appleby Froddingham meet on Monday and Thursday evenings at Brumby Hall on Ashby Road.

