

Lincoln's team in Division 2 North played their final match of the season when Louth Pins were the hosts. The normal venue of St.James church hall was unavailable so the Trinity Centre on Eastgate, rebuilt after the fire a few years ago, was the alternate. While we were playing upstairs we were pleasantly entertained by the Meridian Singers who were practicing down in the main church.

At the start of play Lincoln were top of the table needing a win to secure the title and on board 1 Lincoln's Herman Kok was paired as black against John Grasham and we pick up the game after the sequence 17. Bxd5 exd5 18. Qxf5+ (see diagram) with John winning two pawns for a bishop but with the prospect of a pawn avalanche to follow.

Play continued 18. ...Kg7 19. hxg4 and 19. ...hxg4 20. Qxg4+ could follow. However Herman played 19. ...Raf8 20. Qd3 hxg4. White still had two passed pawns 21. f5 Qg5 22. f6+ Kf7 23. Rh7+ Ke6 24. Rdh1 Rxh7 25. Rxh7. Herman now turned the tables when he played 25. ...Ndx5 26. dx5 Nxe5.

At this point Herman asked me what the score was and I replied that James Irwin and myself had won our games so we led 2-0. Even though he was about to take the pawn on f6 he offered a draw, which John accepted, knowing that this would secure a win for the team.

Qais Karimi also won his game meaning that Lincoln ran out winners by  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$ . Lincoln narrowly took the title on points difference from Grimsby 1875 with another 3 teams only a point behind.

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)

