

Lincoln's team in Division 2 North got the new season underway when they were the visitors to Brumby Hall, the Appleby Frodingham Steel Works Social Club, where Scunthorpe A were the hosts.

As reigning champions Lincoln wanted a good start to the campaign but I found that my 3 top players were unavailable for various reasons so I had to draw on my reserves including Jules Brown who joined the club at the start of the year and has had a few of good wins in our internal competitions so, although it was his debut, his estimated grade of 135 meant that he was thrown into the deep end on board 1 against Rod Wardlaw, graded 151.

We pick up the game, with Jules as black, after an exchange of rooks 37. ...Kxe7 with white having the bishop against Jules's two extra pawns (see diagram).

Play continued 38. Bf4 Kd7 39. Kc3 Kc6 40. Kc4 a6 41. Kc3 b5 42. a5 (instead of 42. axb5) g6 43. g4 Kd5 44. Kd3 c4+ 45. bxc4 bxc4+ and Jules now has a passed pawn 46. Kc3 Kc5 47. Be3+ Kb5 48. Bb6 f5 49. gxf5 gxf5 giving Jules another passed pawn 50. Kd4 Kb4 51. Ke5 c3 52. Kxf5 c2 53. Be3 Kxa5 54. Ke4 Kb4 and white must backtrack his king but it is too late 55. Kd3 Kb3 56. Kd2 Kb2 57. Kd3 c1(Q) 58. Bxc1 Kxc1 and white resigned.

Wins also for Paul Fischer and yours truly plus a draw for Dave Bull mean that Lincoln stated the defense of their title with an unlikely $3\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ win.

The solution to last week's puzzle is 1. Rd1 Kxd1 2. Kf3 Kd2 3. Ne3 Kxe1 4. Bc3 mate.

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

