

Lincolnshire's team in the 4NCL, Grantham Sharks II, played their first week-end of matches in Division 2 group A at the Holiday Inn at Birmingham Airport. Having missed out on promotion to Division 1 last season the Sharks wanted to set of on the right foot in this season's campaign.

The first of the matches in group A, where the 8 teams play each other, was against Brown Jack Witney based in Oxford and on board 2 Ben Purton who normally plays for Guildford was paired as white against Lewis Martin and we pick up the game after Lewis has just played 40. ...Qc8 (see diagram).

Ben exchanged queens with 41. Qxc8 Nxc8 42. Rc1 Kg7 43. Kg2 f5 44. Re1 Re7 45. Bg5 Re6 46. b4 Bc7 47. exf5 Rxf5 48. h4 Re8 49. c5 and after a circumspect middle game Ben starts a pawn advance 49. ...Rf7 50. Re4 Rd7 and white's bishop is making things difficult for black's rooks and has set up an opportunity for white who played 51. f4 Rd5 52. fxe5 Bb8 53. Bf6+ Kf7 54. Nf4 forcing black into an exchange of pieces 54. ...Rxe5 55. Bxe5 Rxe5 56. Rxe5 Bxe5 57. Kf3 leaving Ben an exchange to the good and black reigned.

A win for Liam Vernal and draws for Daniel McGowan, Hugh Murphy, Nigel Birtwistle, Guy Batchelor and Claire Summerscale gave the Sharks and narrow win by 4½ to 3½.

In the second match of the week-end the Sharks lost by the same score to Warwickshire Select I leaving them joint 3rd on 2 points.

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

