

Lincoln's team in Division 2 South continued their quest for this season's title when Louth were the visitors to South Park. With Lincoln and last season's champions neck and neck at the top of the table a win was needed to maintain the pressure and to add to a possibly decisive point difference tally.

As is the convention in Division 2 matches the home team play white on odd boards so it was my pleasure to be paired as black on board 4 against Louth captain Cameron Marnoch and we pick up the game after white has just played 20. b3 (see diagram) with honours even so far and both queens actively controlling the centre. I speculatively advanced the pawn 20. ...d5 so see what would happen and white responded 21. Nf3 dxe4 22. Qxe4 Bd5 23. Qe3 and this gave me an opening as I now played 23. ...Qxe3 24. fxe3 isolating the pawn on the e-file 24. ...Rfe8 25. c4 Bxf3 26. Rxf3 (not 26. gxf3 Rxd3) meaning that white cannot link his central pawns.

I took advantage bring pressure to bear with 26. ...Rd3 27. Re1 Rd2 28. a4 Rd3 29. e4 Rd4 30. e5 Re6 31. Ref1 Rd7 32. Re1 Rde7 33. Rd3 and white tried some counterplay 33. ...g6 but to no avail 34. Rde3 f6 and there is nothing that white can do to save the pawn 35. Rd1 Rxe5 36. Rd1+ Kf7 and I went on to win a few moves later.

Wins also for captain James Irwin and Jules Brown plus a draw for Herman Kok gave Lincoln a very useful win by  $3\frac{1}{2}$  points to  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

Lincoln Chess Club play at the RAOB Club, 58 South Park on Wednesdays at 7.30pm. [www.lincolinchessclub.co.uk](http://www.lincolinchessclub.co.uk)

