

Grantham Sharks II, Lincolnshire's team in the 4NCL, ventured to the Holiday Inn near to Birmingham Airport to play in rounds 5 & 6 in Division 2A. At the start of play Grantham were in equal 3<sup>rd</sup> place on 4 points and needed a couple of good results to put themselves in contention for top 4 place and qualification for the promotion pool.

Unfortunately, their week-end stuttered when they were well beaten 5½ to 2½ by Celtic Tigers and so to the Sunday when their opponents were Barbican 4NCL Youth who lead the section on 8 points.

On board 5 Grantham's Samuel Milson, who normally plays for Louth but is in his final year at Sheffield University, was paired as white against Barbican's Cosima Keen and we pick up the game after black has just played 14. ...b6 (see diagram) trying to counter Samuel's advanced pawns.

Play continued 15. b5 Nxd4 16. Nxd4 bxc5 and black elected to sacrifice his knight for 2 pawns 17. Nc6 Qb6 18. Nxd5 exd5 19. Qxd5 axb5 and this latest exchange has restored parity 20. Rfe1 Rxe1+ 21. Rxe1 Bb7 22. Qxf7 and Samuel gained a pawn and gained the upper hand by threatening 23. Re8+. Black responded with 22. ...Be5 but to no avail as Samuel played 23. Rxe5 Nf6 (not 23. ...Nxe5 24. Bxe5) 24. Re7 Rg8 25. Bh6 Nh5 26. Qf5 Nf6 27. Bxg7+ Rxg7 28. Qxf6 Qxc6 29. Qxg7 mate.

A win for Graeme Kafka and draws for Shawn Tavares, Paul Cumbers, Ben Purton and Guy Batchelor meant that the match finished as a 4-4 draw putting Grantham in equal 5<sup>th</sup> place on 5 points with it all to do in round 7.

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

