

Grantham Sharks II, Lincolnshire's team in the 4NCL, booked into the Holiday Inn at Birmingham Airport for the 4th weekend in this season's campaign. The first match was the final match in Division 2A with Grantham starting play in 5th place on 5 points needing to beat Kings Head and hope that other results go their way.

On board 5 Grantham captain Nigel Birtwistle was paired as black against Mark Davey from Middlesex and we pick up the game after white has just played 16. Be2 (see diagram) trying the counter an already powerful attack by Nigel.

Nigel played 16. ...Nxe4 winning the pawn as white cannot play 17. Nxe4 as 17. ...Nxb2 and 18. Qxa2 follow. White played 17. Bxc4 Bxc4 18. Nb3 but Nigel maintained the pressure with 18. ...Bxb3 19. cxb3 Nxc3+ 20. bxc3 Rxc3 winning another pawn and opening up white's defence. Nigel closed in for the kill 21. Qd2 Qf5+ 22. Kb2 Rc2+ 23. Ka3 Bb2+ 24. Ka4 b5+ 25. Ka5 Bc3+ and white resigned as his queen is lost.

Wins also for Rupert Willis and Samuel Milson plus draws for Klaudia Kulon, Paul Cumbers and Daniel McGowan gave Grantham a win by 4½ to 3½. On the adjoining tables Grantham's nearest rivals came unstuck as Grantham crept into the promotion pool in 4th place on 7 points ahead of Guildford III on points difference.

Meanwhile the Lincolnshire County Championships will be held on July 16/17 at the Atrium in the Lindum Business Park in North Hykeham, with thanks to Finance Director and Lincoln player Herman Kok.

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

