

Lincoln's team in Division 1 played their final match of the season when they were the visitors to Louth playing in the Church Hall under the watchful gaze of St. James Parish Church.

Lincoln were lying in 3rd place on 3 points, 1 point ahead of our hosts who occupied bottom spot but with 2 games in hand so a good result was needed to avoid taking the wooden spoon.

On board 5 it was my pleasure to be paired as white against my good friend John Grasham who, like me, occupies a number of positions at county and regional level being the secretary of Louth and Horncastle Chess Clubs, Lincolnshire Chess Association and the Midland Counties Chess Union.

We pick up the game after black has just played 24. ...Rf3 (see diagram) and it looks like my pawns on b3 and c3 are in danger. I played 25. Qxa5 winning the pawn which would have been short lived if play had continued 25. ...Qxa5 26. Rxa5 Rxc3. However, John played 25. ...Qxb3 winning back the pawn but my next move undid his defense - can you see it?

I played 26. Qd8+ Kf7 27. Rf1 and now black's rook on f3 is pinned 27. ...Qxc3 28. Rxf3+ Qxf3 29. Rf1 and John resigned as his queen is lost. 27. ...Rxf1 28. Rxf1+ is little better as he loses his rook on e7.

A win also for James Irwin and a draw for Jules Brown meant that the match finished as a draw 2½ to 2½. Louth lost both of their remaining games meaning that they retained the wooden spoon.

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

