

Lincolnshire's team in the national correspondence championships have started this season's campaign. Last season Lincolnshire finished bottom of Division 2 so were relegated to Division 3 gaining only 3½ points including a win and a draw for Herman Kok and two draws each for Harry Russell and Ian Scott.

A couple of new players have been added to the team, Joe Kilshaw from Grimsby and Alex Ashworth from Lincoln have replaced Behzad Parnian and Mike Colebrook so we are looking for better things.

Herman has again been on the winning trail in his game with the white pieces against Frank Holt from Yorkshire D and we pick up the game after black has just played 12. ...Na5 attacking Herman's queen (see diagram) but providing an opportunity for Herman to gain an advantage - can you see it?

Herman played 13. Qc2 attacking the knight on f5 so black replied with 13. ... Ne7 14. b4 forking the knight and bishop 14. ...Bxb4 15. cxb4 but work was still needed to force home the advantage as play continued 15. ...Rc8 16. Qe2 Nc4 17. Nbd2 Ng6 18. Be3 Re8 19. Nxc4 dxc4 and black has a dangerous passed pawn 20. Qc2 b6 21. Rfd1 Qc7 22. Rac1 Ne5 23. Nxe5 Qxe5 24. a4 Qe4 25. Rd4 Qxc2 26. Rxc2 Red8 27. Kf1 Rxd4 28. Bxd4 and Herman still has the advantage with only a couple of pieces remaining on the board 28. ...Kf7 29. Ke2 Ke6 30. Kd2 Kd5 31. Kc3 Re8 32. Be3 h6 33. Rd2+ Kc6 34. Kxc4 and black's hopes are fading fast with the capture of the passed pawn.

Herman still needed to press home the advantage 34. ...Re4+ 35. Rd4 Rxd4+ 36. Bxd4 Kd6 37. h4 h5 38. g3 Kc6 39. b5+ Kd6 40. a5 bxa5 41. Bxa7 Kc7 42. Bd4 Kd7 43. Kc5 Kc7 44. b6+ and black resigned.

Herman drew his other game as black against the same opponent - more of the rest of the team anon.

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

