

Lincolnshire's team in the Open/Minor Counties competition played their second match in the MCCU group stages when they played Worcestershire at the picturesque village hall in Frolesworth in Leicestershire. Last season, Worcestershire won the corresponding fixture although this was Lincolnshire's only loss of the season as they went on to become national minor counties champions.

On board 5, Lincoln's Murray Smith was paired as black against Gary Jackson from Banbury and we pick up the game after white has just played 20. Rxd4 (see diagram) after an exchange of bishops - can you see how Murray gains the advantage.

Murray played 20. ...Qb6 attacking both the rook on d4 and the bishop on b3. White replied with 21. Qd1 Nc5 22. Bc2 Qxb2 and white manages to defend both pieces but cannot stop Murray from gaining a pawn 23. Rd8 Qxa3 and a second pawn falls.

Work still needs to be done to press home the advantage 24. Rxe8+ Nxe8 25. Qd8 Qc1+ 26. Bd1 Kf8 27. Qd4 Nb3 28. Qg4 Nd2 29. h4 Nxc4 and another pawn falls as 30. Qxc4 Qxd1+ follows. White actually played 30. Kh2 Ne5 31. Qd4 f6 32. Bb3 Qa3 33. Bc2 b6 34. f3 Qa2 35. Be4 Qe6 36. h5 gxh5 37. Nxb5 Qd6 38. Qxd6 Nxd6 and with the queens off the board Murray went on to win a few moves later.

Wins also for captain Nigel Birtwistle, Stephen Prior and Chris Holt all from Grnatham, Joe Kilshaw and Arya Parnian from Grimsby, Ian McDonald from Lincoln and Newark secretary Graham Ladds plus draws for Paul Cumbers, Nick Stead, Stuart Williams, Ivan David, Denis Georgiou, Peter Cusick and Chris Hill gave Lincolnshire a comprehensive 11½ to 4½ win.

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

