

Lincolnshire's team in the Minor Counties competition played their final match in the Midland Counties qualifying competition when they played Warwickshire in the village hall in Underwood northwest of Nottingham. Having won their opening three matches Lincolnshire were assured a place in the National Stages but a win would see them top the group.

On board 6 Stephen Prior from Grantham was paired as white against Warwickshire captain Golam Ali with the opening following a variation of the Trompowski attack 1. d4 Nf6 2. Bf4 d5 3. e3 e6 4. Nf3 Bd6 5. Bg3 Bxg3 6. hxg3 and black chooses to exchange the bishops on g3 but allows Stephen to open up the h-file for his rooks.

Play continued 6. ...Nbd7 7. Bd3 c6 8. Nbd2 Qe7 9. Ne5 Nxe5 10. dxe5 Nd7 11. Qg4 g6 12. Nf3 Nc5 13. 0-0-0 and Stephen now castles queen side so that he can re-enforce his attack down the h-file 13. ...b5 14. Rh6 Nxd3+ 15. cxd3 f5 16. Qg5 Qg7 and black declines the invitation to exchange queens 17. Rdh1 Ba6 (see diagram) - can you see Stephen's next move?

Stephen played 18. Qxg6 hxg6 sacrificing his queen but in exchange for 19. Rxh8+ Kd7 20. Rxa8 Kc7 21. Rah8 and black resigned.

Wins also for Paul Cumbers from Sheffield, captain Nigel Birtwistle from Grantham, Samuel Milson from Louth, Francis Bowers from Peterborough, Kevin McCarthy from Lincoln, Denis Georgiou from Scunthorpe and Stuart MacDonald from Grimsby plus draws for Chris Dorrington, Nick Stead, Keith Palmer and Arya Parnian gave Lincolnshire a comfortable 10-6 victory.

Lincoln Chess Club play at the Lincoln Labour Club, Grafton House, 32 Newland. LN1 1XG on Wednesdays at 7.30pm.
www.lincolinchessclub.co.uk

