

The last Wednesday before Christmas has, for the last 19 years, been reserved for the Christmas Blitz when we at Lincoln Chess Club play for the Tony Turp Memorial Trophy. Tony was the chairman of our club and author of this column until his untimely death in the year 2000. The following year we decided to honour his memory and the first winner of the trophy was Tony's son Michael-John.

Since then a further 16 different names have appeared on the trophy. David Coates, Robert Dale and Murray Smith have each won twice and on two occasions the trophy has been shared, the last being in 2018 when Neil Roberts and Ian McDonald were joint winners.

In this season's event there were 11 players competing in the 4 round handicap blitz where the start time on the clock varies with the top players having 5 minutes and ungraded players 12.

Neil Roberts, joint winner from 2018, shared the lead with Herman Kok on maximum 2 points and they met in round 3 having 8 and 6 minutes respectively, and began the game with Neil as white following the Scotch Gambit 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 exd4 4. Bc4 Be7 5. Nxd4 Nxd4 6. Qxd4 d6 (see diagram) but then Herman, under time pressure, overlooked Neil's next move 7. Qxg7 Be6 8. Bxe6 fxe6 9. Qxh8 Kf8 10. Bh6+ and Herman resigned.

In the last round Neil lost to William Orr who also finished on 3 points along with Qais Karimi and Adam Mann to give a four way tie for first place. However, Neil was crowned champion after the sum of progressive scores was applied and so joins the select band who have won the trophy twice.

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

