

Lincolnshire's team in the Under 140 grade section played their third match of the season when they played Staffordshire at the neutral venue of the Old School Rooms in Rothley, Leicestershire. With one win and one loss so far Lincolnshire needed a good result to keep in contention for a place in the national stages.

On board 7 Lincolnshire's Alex Ashworth from Grantham was paired as black against Staffordshire captain Matti Rehman with the opening following the King's Indian Defence 1. d4 Nf6 2. Nf3 g6 3. e3 Bg7 4. Be2 d6 5. c4 Nc6 6. 0-0 0-0 and a circumspect opening with both players safely castling 7. Nc3 a6 8. Rb1 Bf5 9. e4 Nxe4 10. Nxe4 Bxe4 and white gave away a pawn where 9. Bd3 would have been better.

Play continued 11. Ra1 Rb8 12. Nd2 Bf5 13. Nb3 Nb4 14. a2 Nc6 Alex thought about 14. ...Bc2 or 14. ...Nc2 but decided to retreat instead 15. Be3 e5 16. d5 Ne7 17. Qd2 Re8 18. f4 c6 19. Bf3 exf4 20. Bxf4 (see diagram) and white's latest move set up a position to gain another pawn - can you see it? Alex played 20. ...Qb6+ 21. Qe3 blocking the check and protecting the knight on b3 but 21. ...Qxe3+ 22. Bxe3 Bxb2 and Alex is 2 pawns up 23. Ra2 Bg7 24. Nd4 Bd3 25. Rc1 Nxd5 26. cxd5 Rxe3 and this exchange gained another pawn and Alex went on to win a few moves later.

Wins also for Grenville Wollerton, John Pocock and Chris Cumbers also from Grantham, William Orr and Paul Fischer from Lincoln and Terry Bennett from Spalding plus draws for Will Grummitt, John Mainwaring, Neil Roberts, Glyn Williams and yours truly gave Lincolnshire a comfortable win by 9.5 to 6.5.

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

