

This season's Correspondence Chess tournament is now under way. Having been relegated from Division 2, Lincolnshire are now in Division 3 hoping to bounce back but are competing against three teams from Yorkshire (C,D & E), two from Surrey (C & D) plus teams from Hertfordshire B and North Wales.

Each player in the 8 man team plays two games against the same opponent, one as white and the other as black. On board 4 Lincoln's Herman Kok was paired against John Nichol from Yorkshire E and in the game where Herman was black play began with the Hungarian Defence variation of the Giuoco Piano 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Be7 4. g3 d6 5. d3 and white seems to be confusing one opening with another as 4. g3 would normally be followed by 5. Bg2 (see diagram).

Herman took advantage with 5. ...Bg4 pinning the knight 6. h3 Bh5 7. Be3 Nf6 8. c3 d5 9. Bxd5 Nxd5 10. exd5 Qxd5 winning the pawn for Herman and now white's knight on f3 is doomed 11. c4 Qxf3 12. Qxf3 Bxf3 13. 0-0 0-0-0 14. Nd2 Be2 15. Rfe1 Bxd3 16. a4 Bb4 17. b3 Nd4 18. a5 Bxd2 19. Bxd2 Nf3+ 20. Kg2 Nxd2 and Herman is now two pieces and a pawn to the good 21. Rad1 Be4+ 22. Rxe4 Nxe4 23. Rxd8+ Rxd8 leaving unopposed rook and knight in Herman's favour and he went on to win a few moves later.

Herman won his game as white as well and commented to me that he felt that he expected more from his opponent in both games, but his two points are a welcome addition to our promotion push.

Lincoln Chess Club play at the Lincoln Labour Club, Grafton House, 32 Newland. LN1 1XJ on Wednesdays at 7.30pm. Now open after lockdown. www.lincolinchessclub.co.uk

