

This week I'm looking back to the early days of the Covid lockdown when online chess was the only game in town. David Coates had set up a weekly tournament on chess.com for Lincoln Chess Club players and in the first of these events, called the Lincoln Blitz there were 5 rounds with only 5 minutes on the clock in each round. Ten players took part and our featured game came in round 3 between Herman Kok and Alex Squire.

Herman, as white, opened with 1. d4 e6 2. e4 d5 which turned out to be the French defense with Herman continuing with the exchange variation 3. exd5 Qxd5 4. Nc3 Qd8 5. Nf3 Bb4 6. Bd3 Nc6 7. 0-0 f6 and Herman has castled to secure his defenses with honours even so far materially although Herman's pawn on d4 looks vulnerable but maybe this is a trap?

Play continued 8. Ne4 f5 9. Bg5 Be7 10. Bxe7 Qxe7 11. Nc5 Qd8 12. Re1 and now black's pawn on e6 is in Herman's sights. However, black played 12. ...Nxd4 (see diagram) presenting Herman with an opportunity - can you see it?

Herman played 13. Nxd4 Qxd4 winning a pawn for black but 14. Bb5+ c6 15. Bxc6+ bxc6 16. Qxd4 wins the queen. Black soldiered on with 16. ...Nf6 17. Nxe6 Bxe6 18. Rxe6+ Kf7 19. Qc4 Kg6 20. Rael Rhd8 21. g4 fxg4 22. Qxg4+ Kf7 23. Re7+ Kf8 24. Qxg7 mate.

Herman finished in equal third place on 3 points well behind organizer David Coates who won all his games.

Lincoln Chess Club play at the Lincoln Labour Club, Grafton House, 32 Newland. LN1 1XJ on Wednesdays at 7.30pm.  
[www.lincolinchessclub.co.uk](http://www.lincolinchessclub.co.uk)

