

This season's campaign got underway with a couple of games in Division 2 South. In the opening game Lincoln travelled to the Electric Social Club in Grantham against the reigning champions. The match ended in a draw with, unusually, all four games being drawn as well with little more to report.

The second match was Lincoln's longest trek of the season to the Spalding Services and Social Club overlooking the River Welland on Spalding's High Street. On board 4 Lincoln's Dave Bull was paired as white against Spalding captain Frank Robinson with the opening following the Vienna Game 1. e4 e5 2. Nc3 Nf6 3. Bc4 d6 4. d3 Nc6 5. f4 exf4 6. Bxf4 Be7 and Dave opens up the f-file aiming at black's pawn on f7.

Play continued 7. Nf3 Bg4 8. Be3 Bxf3 9. Qxf3 Ne5 10. Qg3 Nxc4 11. dxc4 g6 12. 0-0 c6 13. e5 Nh5 14. Qf3 f5 15. exf6 Nxf6 and Frank has withstood the pressure on f7 and has come out equal after Dave taking the f-pawn with the en passant move (see diagram).

However, Dave had other ideas and exploited the weakness in black's defense with 16. Bh6 preventing Frank castling king's side 16. ...Qc7 17. Bg7 0-0-0 18. Bxf6 winning the piece 18. ...Rhf8 which Frank may have regained but 19. Qh3+ Kb8 scuppered this and 20. Bxe7 Qxe7 21. Rxf8 Rxf8 22. Rf1 Re8 consolidated Dave's advantage 23. Qf3 h5 24. h3 h4 25. Qf6 Qe3+ 26. Kh1 Qg3 27. Ne4. Frank then played 27. ...Rxe4 28. Qd8 mate but Frank's options were limited in any case.

Draws for Ian McDonald and yours truly meant that honours were even in another 2-2 draw. Grantham also drew with Louth in the only other match in this Division so all is still to play for.

