

This week's game has been sent to me by Claudio Mangione when he was playing for Grantham I against Mansfield I in the Nottinghamshire Chess League Division 1. Grantham are the current champions of Division 1 and Claudio has been a key player in their success over the last couple of years since he moved to Lincolnshire from his native Sicily. Claudio has also helped Lincoln to win the Lincolnshire League Division 1 and is also one of Lincolnshire's top players helping the county team to reach the national semi-finals in the last two seasons.

Claudio paired as white on board 2 against Jim Burnett and we pick up the game after black has just played 16. ...Be7 strengthening his defence of the pawn on c5 which is also the focus of Claudio's attention (see diagram). Claudio played 17. Bh3 Rfd8 18. Nd5 Qd6 19. Bxd7 Qxd7 20. Nxc5 winning the pawn (19. ...Rxd7 20. Nxc5 is even worse for black) 20. ...Bxc5 21. Rxc5 Rac8 22. Qc2 Rxc5 23. Qxc5 f5 after Claudio's consolidation of the position black counter-attacked with f5.

However, Claudio had other ideas 24. Ne7+ Kh7 25. exf5 Bf7 winning another pawn 26. Re1 Bxa2 but after Jim winning the pawn back Claudio won the game with a neat finish 27. f6 gxf6 28. Qh5 Qe8 29. Qf5+ Kg7 30. Qf4 Kh7 31. Re4 Rd7 32. Qf5+ Kg7 33. Rg4+ Kf7 34. Qg6+ Kxe7 35. Re4+ Be6 36. Rxe6+ and black resigned as 36. ...Kxe6 37. Qxe8+ follows. 63
A win for Ivan David and draws for Nigel Birtwistle and Kevin McCarthy gave Grantham a 3-2 win putting them top of the league with 3 wins out of 3.

Grantham Chess Club play at the Electric Social Club, Commercial Road on Wednesdays at 7.30pm. see granthamchessclub.blogspot.com

The very best for Christmas and the New Year to all readers.

