

Lincoln's team in Division 2 South played hosts to Louth in their penultimate match in this season's campaign. Lying in top spot one point ahead of Spalding but having played one match more a good result was needed to maintain the pressure.

On board 3 Lincoln's Herman Kok was paired as white against Francis Birkbeck from Louth with the opening initially following the Colle system 1. d4 d5 2. e3 Nf6 3. Bd3 c5 4. c3 cxd4 5. exd4 Nc6 6. Bg5 e5 7. dxe5 Nxe5 8. Qe2 Qe7 9. Bb5+ Bd7 10. Bxd7+ . Normally, black retakes with 10. ...Nexd7 but instead Francis played 10. ...Kxd7 followed by 11. Qb5+ Kc7 12. Ne2 Qe6. Herman could see all sorts of nasties (see diagram) starting with 13. ...a6 followed by 14. ...Nd3+ 15. Kf1 Nxf2 16. Kxf2 Ne4+ and 17. ...Nxg5 .

Thus Herman played 13. Bf4 pinning the knight on e5 13. ...Bd6 14. Bxe5 Qxe5 but Herman is still not out of the woods and is unable to castle 15. Nd2 Rhe8 16. h3 (preventing 16. ...Ng4) Re7 17. Kd1 Rae8 and black is piling on the pressure down the e-file 18. Nd4.

Francis now played 18. ...Qe1+ 19. Rxe1 Rxe1+ 20. Kc2 Rxa1 exchanging his queen for 2 rooks which sometimes gives the upper hand. However, Herman's knight on d4 proved decisive as he played 21. Qa5+ Kb8 22. Nb5 and black resigned unable to prevent loss of material.

A win for Dave Bull together with draws for Geoff Collyer and yours truly gave Lincoln a 3-1 win. Since then Spalding have lost both of their games in hand which means that Lincoln are Division 2 South champions.

Lincoln Chess Club play at the RAOB Club, 58 South Park on Wednesdays at 7.30pm. www.lincolnchessclub.co.uk

