

The annual Lincolnshire County Championships took place at the regular and salubrious venue of the Atrium in the Lindum Business Park with 24 of the county's top players pitting their wits in the 5 round tournament spread over two days.

After the overnight break reigning champion Paul Cumbers who now lives in Sheffield and Claudio Mangione from Lincoln shared the lead with a maximum 3 points and were paired against each other in round 4 with Claudio, as white, starting proceedings with the English Opening 1. c4 e5 2. g3 Nc6 3. Nc3 g6 4. Bg2 Bg7 5. d3 d6 6. e4 Be6 7. Nge2 Qd7 and after a quiet opening neither player has castled 8. Nd5 Nce7 9. d4 c6 10. Ne3 Bh3 11. 0-0 Bxg2 12. Kxg2 exd4 13. Nxd4 h5 14. Rb1 h4 15. g4 h3+ 16. Kh1 0-0-0 and Paul has castled queen side hoping to back up his advanced pawn on h3.

Claudio started an advance of his own with 17. b4 d5 18. exd5 cxd5 19. c5 f5 20. b5 f4 21. Nec2 g5 and now both players have threatening pawn advances (see diagram). Claudio now played 22. c6 Qd6 23. Ba6 Qf6 24. Re1 Qf7 25. Qe2 Bf6 26. b6 Nxc6 27. Nxc6 bxc6 28. b7+ and Paul resigned as after 28. ...Kc7 29. Nb4 and 30. Na6+ follows.

Claudio also won his last game to be crowned champion with a maximum 5 points. Sam Milson from Louth came second on 4 points with Paul Cumbers, Doug Lindberg, Harry Russell, Denis Georgiou and Herman Kok sharing the 3rd prize on 3½ points.

Russell Ludlow was the pick of the grading prizes winning the U150 prize with 3 points and also winning the Quilter Trophy for the best under 160 player.

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

