

In this year's Lincolnshire County Championships the final round threw up an interesting pairing with Herman Kok from Lincoln playing against Jan van Gemeren from Spalding although both players are originally from Holland. Herman tells me that in the 20 plus years that they have both lived in our fair county he has never beaten Jan - is this about to change?

With both players on 2½ points there was prize money at stake with Herman as white opening with the Modern Defence 1. d4 g6 2. e4 Bg7 3. Nf3 d6 4. Nc3 Nc6 5. Bb5 Bd7 6. Bxc6 bxc6 and Jan retook with the b-pawn to help combat Herman's central pawns 7. e5 h6 8. 0-0 e6 9. Ne2 Ne7 10. Ng3 Rb8 11. c4 Bc8 12. Qc2 a6 13. Bf4 Nf5 14. Nxf5 exf5 15. exd6 cxd6 16. Rfel+ and Jan's reluctance to castle has come to haunt him as he must now move his king as 16. ...Be6 would be met by 17. d5 (see diagram).

Jan played 16. ...Kd2 and Herman closed in for the kill with 17. c5 Bf8 18. cxd6 f6 as after 18. ...Bxd6 then 19. Bxd6 Kxd6 20. Qc5+ would follow with multiple threats from rook and knight. Playing 18. ...f6 only delayed the inevitable as Herman played 19. Qc4 Bxd6 20. Qf7+ and Jan resigned as 20. ...Be7 21. d5 would eventually open up the position to expose black's king and seal his fate.

Herman's 20 year wait was over which also gave him a share of 3rd place and the Under 180 grading prizes.

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

