

Lincoln's team in Division 2 South played host to Grantham in the latest encounter in this season's campaign. Grantham were leading the table on 4 points from 3 matches whilst Lincoln, reigning champions from last season were in bottom spot having drawn their opening 2 matches so a win would see them level in their guests.

On board 1 yours truly was paired as white against Grantham secretary Chris Holt and we pick up the game after 24. ... Bxa8 following an exchange of rooks (see diagram). My strategy was to try to play f3 defending the pawn on e4 whilst allowing my bishop on g3 to occupy f2. Chris did his best to thwart my plans as the game continued 25. Ne1 Qb7 26. Nef3 (not 26. f3 Na4+) Nbd7 27. Kf1 Bc6 28. Ng1 Nh5 29. Bh2 and bishop is forced round the houses 29. ...Bc7 30. Ne2 (again not 30. f3 Qe3 making life more difficult) 30. ...Bb6 31. Bg1 Ndf6 also putting pressure on my e4 pawn.

I now played 32. g4 Nf4 33. Nxf4 exf4 34. Kg2 Qd7 35. Qc1 Qd6 and Chris changed his strategy to place his queen in a central position allowing me to finally play 36. f3. Expecting Chris to play 36. ...Bxg1 short on time he instead played 36. ...Be3 37. Bxe3 fxe3 creating a dangerous passed pawn but this backfired as I played 38. Nf1 e2 39. Ng3 Qe5 40. Nxe2 winning the pawn and Chris's flag fell a few moves later.

My win was Lincoln's only contribution as Grantham ran out 3-1 winners opening a 3 point gap at the top of the table ahead of Spalding and Louth.

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

