

In 2008 Liverpool was the centre of chess with the British Championships taking place in St. George's Hall and also the Glorney-Faber International tournament for juniors being played at the John Moores University.

Hannah Dale, as she was then, now Hannah Ball living in Hong Kong had represented England in each of the previous four years and this year it was her honour to be team captain. In the Under 16s the boys play for the Glorney Cup and the girls for the Jessie Gilbert trophy (renamed from the Faber Cup) after the Croydon chessplayer who died tragically in 2006 - Hannah knew her briefly in her days as a Surrey junior - and this trophy sat proudly on the Dale mantelpiece as England comfortably took the title with 10½ points ahead of Ireland on 7½.

Hannah, playing on board 3, did particularly well gaining 4½ points out of 5 winning £50 for being joint winner, with Sheila Dines of England, of the highest score award.

Her game against Shona Jordan of Scotland threw up an interesting position as shown in the diagram after Hannah, as white, has just played 18. Qd4 inviting Shona to take the knight on d5. Black declined this offer by playing 18. ...Kh8 can you see why?

Had play continued 18. ...cxd5 then 19. Bxd5+ Bxd5 20. Qxd5+ Kh8 21. Nf7+ Rxf7 22. Qxf7 and mate follows or 21. ...Kg8 22. Nxe6+ winning the queen followed by the classic smothered mate 22. ...Kh8 23. Qg8+ Rxg8 24. Nf7.

As it happens play did continue 18. ...Kh8 19. Nf4 Bc7 20. h3 Bxe5 21. Qxe5 Nd7 22. Qc7 winning a piece and Hannah went on to win.

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

