

Lincolnshire's team in the Under 1825 grade section of the Online County Championships were also in semi-final action, meaning that both of the county's teams had reached this stage. Having lost to Northumberland in the last match in Group A Lincolnshire were drawn against the Group B winners, Middlesex.

On board 6, Bernard Pratten from Scunthorpe was paired as white against Michael Price from Uxbridge with the opening following the Sicilian Defence 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 g6 with black opting for the dragon variation 6. Be3 Bg7 7. f3 0-0 8. Qd2 Nc6 9. Bc4 Bd7 10. 0-0-0 Rc8 and Bernard opts to castle queen side.

Play continued 11. Bb3 Ne5 12. Bh6 Nc4 13. Bxc4 Rxc4 14. Bxg7 Kxg7 15. g4 Qa5 16. Nb3 Qa6 17. Kb1 Rfc8 and black is looking to build an attack with his queen and rooks 18. Rhe1 b5 19. Qd3 b4 20. Nd5 Nxd5 21. exd5 Bb5 and black's attack is looking ominous (see diagram) - can you see how Bernard escaped?

Bernard took advantage of the open e-file with 22. Rxe7 Rxc2 23. Qd4+ Kg8 24. Rxa7 Bd3 25. Ka1 Qb5 26. Qf4 threatening 27. Qxf2+ so black played 26. ...Qxd5 but Bernard was able to play 27. Rxd3 knowing that black could not play 27. ...Qxd3 as 28. Qxf2+ and black resigned a couple of moves later.

Wins also for Martin Pettinger, Behzad Parnian, Neil Milson and yours truly plus a draw for Ben Mason was just enough to see Lincolnshire over the line by 6.5 points to 5.5.

Lincoln Chess Club play at the Lincoln Labour Club, Grafton House, 32 Newland. LN1 1XJ on Wednesdays at 7.30pm. Although we are yet to meet due to the lockdown www.lincolnchessclub.co.uk

