

The latest Monday Night Dogfight event, as organizer Nigel Birtwistle calls it, took place with 16 of the county's top players locking horns in the 6 round Swiss tournament. Nigel, himself entered the competition at the start to ensure that there were enough players for the 6 rounds as, disappointingly, numbers have fallen away in recent weeks.

After the first 3 rounds Nigel and Martin Pettinger led the field having won all their games and they met in round 4. The opening with Nigel as white followed the Reti King's Indian 1. Nf3 Nf6 2. g3 g6 3. Bg2 Bg7 4. 0-0 0-0 all very symmetrical until 5. c4 d6 6. d4 Nc6 7. Nc3 e5 8. dxe5 dxe5 with Nigel following the exchange variation rather than 8. d5.

Play continued 9. Bg5 Be6 10. Qc1 Bxc4 winning a free pawn for black 11. Nd2 Be6 12. Nde4 Qe7 13. f4 h6 14. fxe5 Qb4 15. Nxf6+ Kh8 16. Bxh6 Qd4+ 17. Kh1 Qxe5 but this was a trap enabling Nigel to gain a piece and have his knight and bishop in attacking positions (see diagram) 18. Nfe4 f5 19. Bf4 Qd4 20. Ng5 Bc4 21. Qe1 Rae8 22. g4 Bh6 and black has to guard against 23. Qh4+ so Nigel now played 23. Qh4 Kg7 24. Ne6+ Rxe6 25. Bxh6+ Kg8 26. Bxf8 and Nigel gained a rook and bishop for the knight 26. ...Rxe2 27. Nxe2 and with black losing his other rook he resigned.

Nigel won two and drew the other of his remaining games to finish on 5.5 whilst Martin and Andy Hebert shared second place on 4.5.

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.lincolinchessclub.co.uk

