

With numbers continuing to diminish it was decided to have one weekly competition, open to all, but to give a mention to the best under 1600 grade player. 16 players logged on to the tournament was played over 5 rounds with 10 minutes plus a five second increment and coming into the last round an interesting position was reached. The overall lead was jointly held by Samuel Milson from Louth and Nigel Birtwistle from Grantham on 3.5 points, having drawn with each other in round 4.

Meanwhile, the best placed under 1600 player was yours truly on 3 points and, as it happened, Samuel and myself were paired to play each other in the last round and we pick up the game after I, as white, has just played 12. Nd2 (see diagram) having moved from f3 and it looks like I have the pawn on e4 at my mercy. However, Samuel came up with a saving move - can you see it?

Samuel played 12. ...e5 13. dxe5 Nxc5 14. Qc2 Nd3 15. Bxd3 exd3 and Samuel now has a dangerous passed pawn supported by the queen 16. Qc3 Bf5 17. Nf3 Qd5 18. Nd4 Bxe5 19. Bxe5 Qxe5 winning a pawn for black 20. Rad1 Rad8 21. Rd2 Rd6 22. Nxf5 Qxf5 23. Rfd1 Red8 24. f3 Qd5 25. e4 Qd4+ 26. Qxd4 Rxd4 27. Kf2 c5 28. b3 b5 29. Rc1 c4 30. bxc4 bxc4 and Samuel has two linked passed pawns 31. Rc3 Kf8 32. Ke3 Ke7 33. Ra3 Rd6 34. Rxa6 Rxa6 35. Kxd4 winning back a pawn Rc6 36. Kc3 Kd6 37. Rb2 Kc4 38. a4 Rb6 39. Rxb6 Kxb6 and unfortunately, I could not play 40. Kxc4 and Samuel went on to win a few moves later.

Nigel drew his last game so Samuel won the event whereas Denis Georgiou and John Pocock both won their last games so I had to be content with sharing first place in the U1600 category, joint 4th overall.

Lincoln Chess Club play at the Lincoln Labour Club, Grafton House, 32 Newland. LN1 1XJ on Wednesdays at 7.30pm. Now open after lockdown. www.lincolinchessclub.co.uk

