

Lincoln's team in Division 2 North were on the road in the pleasant surroundings of St.James School in Bargate against Grimsby E. Having lost the first two matches Lincoln needed a win to avoid being early contenders for the wooden spoon.

On board 3, Lincoln's stalwart Herman Kok was making a welcome return to match play and was paired as black against Grimsby's Mark Radley with the opening following the Scandinavian Defence 1. e4 d5 2. exd5 Nf6 3. Nc3 Nxd5 4. Bc4 Nxc3 5. Qf3 e6 6. Qxc3 Nc6 7. Nf3 Qf6 8. 0-0 Qxc3 9. dxc3 and after the initial exchanges white has doubled c-pawns but is slightly ahead on development.

Play continued 9. ...Bd6 10. Bb5 Bd7 11. Be3 a6 12. Bd3 h6 13. Rad1 0-0-0 14. Rd2 f5 15. Rdd1 and white has to back track as 15. ...f4 could trap whites bishop, Herman now played 15. ...e5 threatening 16. ...e4 forking bishop and knight and white again retreated with 16. Be2 g5 17. a3 f4 18. Bc1 Bf5 19. Ne1 causing another retreat to protect the pawn on c2 and now the bulk of white's pieces are on the back row.

Herman continued the pawn advance with 19. ...e4 20. b4 h5 21. Bc4 f3 22. Bxg5 and white gains a pawn in an attempt to break out (see diagram) but has set up an opportunity to win the exchange can you see it?

Herman played 22. ...Bxh2+ 23. Kxh2 Rxd1 and he went on to win a few moves later.

A win for yours truly and a draw for Geoff Collyer meant that Lincoln got the show on the road with a 2½ to 1½ win.

Lincoln Chess Club play at the RAOB Club, 58 South Park on Wednesdays at 7.30pm. www.lincolinchessclub.co.uk. This coming Wednesday sees the annual Christmas Blitz - all welcome.

