

Lincolnshire's team in the Minor Counties championship were in action in their match against Shropshire played at the neutral but familiar venue of Syston in Leicestershire. This was the fourth match in the Midland Counties round robin and having won their opening two matches but lost to Leicestershire in the last match a good result was needed as only the top two qualify for the national stages.

On board 11 Stephen Prior from Spalding was paired as black against Marvin Carbin and we pick up the game after white has just played 46. Rxh7 (see diagram) putting him a pawn up so Stephen had it all to do in a tricky end-game. 46 Stephen pushed his passed pawn 46. ...b4 47. Rb7 Kg5 48. Kg1 Kf4 whilst also attacking white's pawns 49. Kf2 Rb2+ 50. Ke1 b3 51. g4 Kxe4 regaining the pawn 52. h4 Kf4 53. h5 Kxg4 and with white's rook tied up guarding Stephen's pawn on b3 Stephen is now a pawn up 54. h6 Rh2 55. Rxb3 Rxh6 leaving black's passed pawn on e5.

Stephen pressed home his advantage 56. Ke2 Rh2+ 57. Kf1 e4 58. Kg1 Rd2 59. Kf1 Kf4 60. Rb7 Ke3 61. Rf7 Rd1+ 62. Kg2 Kd2 63. Rd7+ Ke2 64. Rf7 e3 65. Kg3 Rg1+ 66. Kh2 Rg5 67. Rd7 Kf1 68. Rf7+ Ke1 69. Re7 e2 70. Re3 Kd2 and white resigned.

Wins also for Paul Cumbers, Samuel Milson, David Coates, Keith Palmer, Harry Russell, Joe Kilshaw, Ivan David, Geoff Collyer and Ian McDonald together with draws for Nigel Birtwistle, Claudio Mangione, Nick Stead and Denis Georgiou which added to Shropshire defaulting the bottom two boards meant that Lincolnshire won 14-2 with all players unbeaten.

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

