

Lincoln's team in Division 1 visited St.James Church House in Louth recently to play a match that could determine the fate of this season's title. At the start of play the two teams were joint leaders on Division 1 on 6 points but Lincoln have played one game more courtesy of Louth's win at Lincoln a couple of weeks earlier so a win for Louth would see them champions.

On board 5 it was my pleasure to be paired as white against Louth's Steven Cade and we pick up the game after Steve has just played 9. ...Be6 (see diagram). I played 10. Nxf6+ Qxf6 11. Qxd6 winning the pawn 10. ...gxf6 would have maintained parity at the expense of doubled f pawns.

Play continued 11. ...Rd8 12. Qc5 Nc6 13. Bd3 Qg5 14. g6 (not 14. 0-0 Bh6) Bh6 15. Qe3 Qe7 16. 0-0-0 Be6 and that threat was parried. However, I could see 17. ...Bxb3 and 18. ...Nd4 giving black a menacing knight so I played 17. Bb5 Bxb3 18. Bxc6 Bxa2 19. Bxb7 Qxb7 and although I had lost the bishop I knew that my next move 20. b3 trapped black's bishop.

Steve played 20. ...Rdc8 21. Kb2 Qa6 22. Ra1 Qc6 23. Rhc1 Bxb3 24. cxb3 Qb7 and now after 25. Rxc8+ Rxc8 26. Rxa7 I was again a pawn up and went on to win.

Wins also for David Coates and Ian McDonald together with a draw for Geoff Collyer meant that Lincoln ran out winners by 3½ to 1½. Both teams have to play Grimsby who lie in third place on 4 points so it is still anyone's title.

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

