

Grantham Sharks 2, Lincolnshire's team in the 4NCL, played in the final week-end of matches in this season's competition. Having finished in 4th place in Division 2B they joined the top 4 teams in Division 2A in the Promotion Pool.

Lying in last place they had it all to do in the 3 remaining matches to finish in the top four in order to gain promotion to Division 1. This got off to a bad start when they lost 7-1 to Alba on the Saturday and on the Sunday they fared little better with a 6½ to 1½ loss to Warwickshire Select 1 so their final match on the bank holiday Monday was for pride when they were paired against Cambridge University 1.

On board 4 Grantham's Hugh Murphy was paired as white against Adam Bukojemski and we pick up the game after black has just played 20. ...0-0-0 castling queen side (see diagram).

Hugh played 21. c4 looking to take advantage of pawn superiority on the queen's side. Black replied 21. ...Nd4 22. Bxb7+ Kxb7 23. 0-0-0 and Hugh castled queen side himself 23. ...Rd7 perhaps looking at 24. ...Rhd8 but Hugh played 24. cxb5 axb5 25. Nxb5 gaining a pawn 25. ...Rc8+ 26. Kb1 e5 27. Rhe1 Rc5 28. Nxd4 exd4 29. Re4 d3 30. Rd2 f5 31. Re3 Rcd5 32. Re8 Kb6 33. Kb2 f4 34. Rg8 and black resigned as 35. Rg7 would make life difficult.

A win also for Paul Cumbers plus draws for Liam Varnam, Graeme Kafka and Guy Batchelor was not enough to prevent a win for Cambridge University by 4½ to 3½ meaning that Grantham finished in last place on 2 points and look forward to another season in Division 2.

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

