

This season's Division 1 campaign got underway when Grimsby were the visitors to South Park. Last season Grimsby, champions for the previous 3 seasons, were narrowly pipped to the title by a resurgent Louth while Lincoln found themselves near the foot of the table narrowly avoiding the wooden spoon on points difference.

In this match both teams were missing a couple of players and on board 5 the reserves had been drafted in with Neil Roberts from Lincoln paired as black against Steve Rimmer from Grimsby with the opening following the Dutch Defence Leningrad variation 1. d4 f5 2. c4 Nf6 3. g3 g6 4. Bg2 Bg7 characterised by the f5, g6, Bg7 combination.

Play continued 5. Nf3 d6 6. Nc3 0-0 7. 0-0 c6 8. Qc2 Qe8 9. e4 fxe4 10. Nxe4 Nxe4 11. Qxe4 Bf5 12. Qe2 Bg4 and Neil has pinned the knight and is now looking to take advantage of the open f-file (see diagram).

After 13. h3 Neil played 13. ...Bxf3 14. Bxf3 Qf7 threatening to take the bishop 15. Bg4 h5 and now white realizes that the bishop is trapped so plays 16. Bxh5 gxh5 and Neil went on to win a few moves later.

In the other games Kevin McCarthy made a return to competitive chess and drew with Grimsby captain Nick Stead on board 1 and Ian McDonald, on board 3, drew with Steve Allott. Sadly this was all that Lincoln could muster as Grimsby ran out winners by 3 points to 2.

Hopefully, the return of Murray Smith and Herman Kok in future matches will improve Lincoln's fortunes.

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

