

The British Chess Championships took place recently at Hull City Hall. There were various sections and events spread over the 10 days and Murray Smith from Lincoln was in the over 50 years of age section which involved 7 matches, each afternoon from Sunday to Saturday.

In all there were 32 players in the section and Murray was ranked in second place with a FIDE rating of 2262 so was a little disappointed to finish in equal 5th place on 4½ points out of 7, just outside the prize money.

Murray's best game came in round 7 when he was paired as white against Graham Bolt from Exeter and we pick up the game after black has just played 17. ...g6 (see diagram) stopping Murray from playing 18. Nf5 - however, Murray found a better option - can you see it?

Murray played 18. c5 dxc5 giving away the pawn but opening up the d-file as play continued 19. Nd5 Nxd5 20. Rxd5 Re8 21. Bxh6 g5 22. Qd2 c6 23. Rd6 Rd8 24. Rd1 Rxd6 25. Qxd6 and now Murray has full control of the d-file 25. ...Qe8 26. Qc7 Qb8 27. Qe7 Qe8 28. Bxg5 putting Murray a pawn up Qxe7 29. Bxe7 b6 30. Rd7 f6 31. h4 a5 32. Rd8+ and black resigned as he has to exchange rooks leaving black's queen-side pawns at the mercy of Murray's bishop plus the extra pawn on the h-file.

Neil Roberts and myself travelled with Murray as we played in the Under 1750 section which was five afternoons Monday to Friday and we also met Ian McDonald who was playing in the Over 65 age group - more about Neil and Ian in the coming weeks.

Lincoln Chess Club play at the Lincoln Labour Club, Grafton House, 32 Newland. LN1 1XG on Wednesdays at 7.30pm.
www.lincolinchessclub.co.uk

