

Neil Roberts and myself competed in the Under 1750 grade event, a FIDE rating which roughly equates to under 140 grade on the ECF scale. My rating of 1600 put me 23rd in the starting line up out of 78 with Neil on 1622 was in 19th position. Whilst I could manage only 3 draws in the 5 rounds we played Neil fared better winning 2 and drawing 1 of his games.

The time control was interesting with players starting with 90 minutes on the clock with 30 seconds being added for every move made. In the early stages of the game when book moves were being followed players frequently had more time left than they started with leaving plenty of time to consider their moves later on.

Neil's best game came in round 3 when he was paired as white against 11 year old Radha Ratnesan from Surbiton in Surrey with the opening following the Trompowski Attack 1. d4 Nf6 2. Bf4 e6 3. e3 b6 4. Nf3 Bb7 5. Nbd2 d5 6. Bd3 Be7 7. c3 Nbd7 8. Qe2 c5 9. h3 Ne4 10. Ne5 Ndf6 and both players have advanced their knights into menacing positions (see diagram), however Neil's next move was to prove decisive - can you see it?

Neil played 11. Bb5+ and with black unable to block the check she had to play 11. ...Kf8 stopping her from castling 12. Nxe4 dxe4 13. dxc5 Bxc5 14. Rd1 and Neil has cleared the way for his rook to take control of the d-file 14. ...Qe7 15. Bg5 a6 16. Rd7 Qe8 17. Rxf7+ Qxf7 18. Nxf7 Kxf7 and black has to lose her queen and a pawn for a rook and knight and Neil went on to win a few moves later.

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

