

Lincolnshire's team in the Open/Minor section of the MCCU qualifying competition played their penultimate match when they played Shropshire at the neutral venue of the Syston village hall near Leicester. Lincolnshire, winners of the National Minor Counties championship last season have had another good season with 5 points from 3 matches. Shropshire, have struggled in their first season in this section and could only field 12 players instead of the usual 16. However, Lincolnshire captain Nigel Birtwistle was happy to play a 12 board match.

On board 8 Lincolnshire's David Coates was paired as white against Tony Preece from the Maddocks Chess Club with the opening following the Dutch defense 1. d4 e6 2. c4 f5 characterized by blacks second move 3. g3 Nf6 4. Bg2 a5 5. Nf3 Be7 6. 0-0 0-0 and both players castle king's side 7. Nc3 d6 8. b3 Qe8 9. Bb2 Qh5 and black's queen looks menacing.

Play continued 10. e3 Nbd7 11. Ne1 Qh6 declining the exchange of queens 12. Qe2 Ng4 13. h3 Ngf6 14. Nd3 e5 15. Nd5 Nxd5 16. Bxd5+ Kh8 (see diagram) and David has a very strong bishop on d5. David now played 17. dxe5 allowing black to play Qxh3 losing a pawn, was this an oversight on David's part or was it a trap?

David played 18. Nf4 Qh6 19. Kg2 Nxe5 20. Rh1 Qf6 and now, having opened up the h-file he springs the trap with 21. Rxh7+ Kxh7 22. Rh1+ Qh6 23. Rxh6+ winning the queen and David went on to win a few moves later.

Wins also for Paul Cumbers, Stephen Prior, Nick Stead, Stuart Williams, Joe Kilshaw and Francis Bowers plus draws for Keith Palmer and Graham Ladds gave Lincolnshire a comfortable 8-4 win.

Lincoln Chess Club play at the Lincoln Labour Club, Grafton House, 32 Newland. LN1 1XJ on Wednesdays at 7.30pm although we are not meeting during the Coronavirus crisis.  
[www.lincolnchessclub.co.uk](http://www.lincolnchessclub.co.uk)

