

This week's game involves two Russian Grandmasters Vladislav Artemiev and Danil Dubov when they met at Sochi in the 2018 Russian Team Championships. Both now in their twenties they are considered prodigies having been awarded their grandmaster statuses at the ages of 16 and 14 respectively.

The opening followed the closed Sicilian 1. e4 c5 2. Nc3 Nc6 3. g3 g6 4. Bg2 Bg7 5. d3 d6 6. Be3 e5 7. Nh3 Nge7 8. 0-0 0-0 and both players have castled with all their forces still intact 9. f4 exf4 10. Nxf4 b5 and the exchange of pawns brings white's knight into play but also opens up the diagonal for black's bishop 11. a3 b4 12. axb4 cxb4 and now white must move his knight exposing the pawn on b2 13. Nd5 Bxb2 winning the pawn for black (see diagram) - was this a trap, however? (See diagram) - can you see white's next move.

Vladislav played 14. d4 Bxa1 15. Nf6+ Kh8 sacrificing the rook but blocking off black's bishop from its defensive position on g7 16. Qxa1 Qa5 17. Qd1 Ng8 18. N4d5 Be6 19. Nxc8 Rxd8 20. Bg5 Rg7 21. Bf6 Rag8 and white's bishop on f6 had pinned the rook and now controls the diagonal.

Play continued 22. Ne3 Qb6 23. Qd2 Na5 24. h5 b3 25. Rb1 b2 26. c4 Rb8 with black counterattacking by supporting the passed pawn on b2 27. Kh2 Qb4 28. Qf2 Nxc4 29. Nxc4 Bxc4 and white, yet again, avoids an exchange of queens but loses a pawn in the exchange 30. d5 Qb6 opening the diagonal 31. Rxb2 Bb3 and winning back the pawn on b2 32. Qe1 Qb4 33. Qa1 Rbg8 34. Qxa7 Qc4 35. Qxf7 gaining two more pawns and black resigned.

Lincoln Chess Club play at the Lincoln Labour Club, Grafton House, 32 Newland. LN1 1XJ on Wednesdays at 7.30pm. Although we are yet to meet due to the lockdown www.lincolinchessclub.co.uk

