

This week's game has been sent to me by Stephen Prior from Grantham when he played for the Lincolnshire Open team in last summer's Online County Championship in the match against Middlesex.

In this match Stephen was paired as black on board 6 against Etan Ilfeld from Hendon with the opening following the Sicilian Defense Hungarian variation 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 g6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Qxd4 Nf6 but with Stephen playing 2. ...g6 rather than 2. ...d6.

Play continued 5. Bb5 Nc6 6. Bxc6 dxc6 7. Qxd8+ Kxd8 and Stephen elects to retake the pawn allowing an exchange of queens. However, this means that Stephen's king cannot castle. 8. Nc3 Bg7 9. Bf4 Nh5 10. 0-0-0+ Ke8 11. Bc7 Bg4 12. Rd3 Bxf3 13. Rxf3 Rc8 14. Bg3 Nxg3 15. hxg3 Rd8 and the exchange of pieces has doubled up white's g-pawns. 16. Rd1 Rxd1+ 17. Nxd1 h5.

White now attacked Stephen's poorly defended queen side pawns with 18. Rb3 b5 19. a4 a6 20. c4 bxc4 21. Rb6 Kd7 22. Rxa6 Bd4 23. Ne3 Rb8 24. Nxc4 Rb4 25. b3 Rxb3 26. Na5 Ra3 27. Rxc6 Rxa4 28. Rc4 Rxc4 29. Nxc4 Bxf2 and after all the queen side pawns and the remaining rooks had been captured Stephen gained the pawn advantage (see diagram).

After a protracted end-game Stephen managed to win through helping Lincolnshire to an 8-4 victory against the tournament favourites.

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

