

The latest of the Thursday Night challenges took place recently - so called Thursday Night Prizefight - with the usual cut and thrust taking place in the 6 round swiss tournament.

David Bale from Louth running under the handle Louthluddite was paired as black in round 3 against top seed and tournament favourite Martin Pettinger, both on a maximum 3 points, with the opening following the Sicilian Defence, Hungarian variation 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 g6 3. c4 Bg7 4. d4 Nc6 5. d5 Ne5 6. Nxe5 Bxe5 and white's central pawns are dominant although black controls the d4 square 7. Qc2 d6 8. Nc3 Bg7 9. Be2 Nf6 10. 0-0 0-0 and both players castle without further exchanges.

Play continued 11. h3 a6 12. f4 Nd7 13. a4 b6 14. Bd2 Qc7 15. Bf3 Bb7 16. Rae1 Rae8 17. Nd1 Bc8 18. Bc3 Qb7 19. Bxg7 Kxg7 20. Qc3+ Kg8 and white nullifies the bishop threat and now advances his central pawns 21. e5 b5 22. axb5 axb5 23. Ne3 bxc4 24. Nxc4 Qb8 but black countered with a pawn advance which has opened up the queen side 25. Re2 Ba6 26. Rfe1 Nb6 27. b3 Rd8 28. exd6 exd6 29. Re7 Nxc4 30. bxc4 Rde8 31. R1e4 Rxe7 32. Rxe7 Re8 33. Re4 and rather than exchanging rooks white prefers to retreat to e4 (see diagram) - however, this has created an opportunity for David - can you see it?

David played 34. ...Qb1+ 35. Kh2 Rxe4 36. Bxe4 Qxe4 gaining the piece and he went on to win a few moves later.

Both players won their remaining 3 games so David took the spoils with a maximum 6 points with Martin in second place on 5.

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.lincolnchessclub.co.uk

