

The Lincolnshire County Championship took place at the RAOB club on South Park recently with 14 of the county's top players vying for the honours in a five round swiss tournament.

Joint winners from last year, Lincoln's Ayman Hamman and Boston's Kevin McCarthy were amongst the field and the pick of the early rounds was Kevin's match against team mate and tournament favourite Nigel Birtwistle and we pick up the game after Nigel as black has just played 33. ...Qxe5 gaining a two pawn advantage and appeared to have Kevin on the ropes with the passed pawn on d3 (see diagram).

However Kevin had counterplay with the mate threat and continued with 34. Rde1 Qf6 35. Qxb5 Rxh4 36. Qxa5 regaining one of the pawns 36. ...Qf5 37. Re5 Qf2 38. Re1 Rh2 and now Nigel threatens mate 39. Qb5 Kh8 40. Qb7 Rf7 41. Qb5 Kh7 42. Ka2 Kh8 43. Rb1 (releasing white's queen to threaten c4) Qf4 44. Rgf1 Rf2 45. Rxf2 Qxf2 46. Qxc4 winning back the second pawn and a draw was agreed.

Scunthorpe secretary and county captain Denis Georgiou won his first three games and was the overnight leader but lost to Nigel in round 4. In the final round Nigel drew with Ayman Hammam to take the title with 4 points. There was a three way tie for second place between Kevin, Ayman and David Coates on 3½.

Denis did not add to his overnight score and had to be satisfied with a share of the under 150 grading prize with Geoff Collyer. Mike Kelly, also on 3 points, won the under 125 grading prize and also the Quilter Trophy.

