

This season's Ritson Morry Trophy has now come to a conclusion, this being the Midland Counties Correspondence competition with Lincolnshire's sixteen man squad looking to improve on last years campaign where we finished in equal third place on 19 points.

Kevin Shutt, who also appears in this column as Lincoln's first team captain and county player, was allocated board seven against Andy Ambrose of Worcestershire playing two games, one as white and one as black. In the game where Kevin was black play started with the Sicilian defence (4 ... Qb6 variation) 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Qb6 5. Nb3 Nf6 6. Nc3 e6 7. Bd3 a6 8. 0-0 Be7 9. Be3 Qc7 10. f4 d6 11. a4 b6 12. Qf3 0-0 and the opening circumspect moves have left the fifth row unoccupied with both armies waiting like coiled springs.

Play continued 13. e5 dxe5 14. fxe5 Nxe5 leaving Kevin a pawn up (see diagram). Perhaps Andy thought about 15. Qxa8 which is risky for white's queen and actually played 15. Qe2 Bb7 16. Bf4 Bd6 17. Rad1 Nxd3 18. Bxd6 Qxd6 19. Rxd3 Nd5 20. Qf2 Qc7 21. Nxd5 Bxd5 22. Rc3 Qd6 23. Rd3 Rac8 24. Nd4 Be4 25. Rd2 Qc5 26. Re1 Bg6 27. c3 e5 28. Nc2 Qxf2+ 29. Kxf2 Rfd8 30. Rxd8+ Rxd8 31. Nb4 f6 32. Nxa6 Bc2 33. Nb4 Bxa4 and Kevin's accurate play ensured his one pawn advantage. 34. Ra1 Bb3 35. Ke3 Bc4 36. Ra3 Kf7 37. b3 Be6 38. Nd3 Bb5 39. g4 Ra8 40. Rxa8 Bxa8 and Andy resigned as now Kevin's passed e-pawn looked like winning the day.

The other game was drawn so Kevin was able to contribute 1½ points towards Lincolnshire's total of 17½ points again finishing in equal third place with Notts behind Warwickshire on 19½ and winners Greater Manchester on 21.

Lincoln Chess Club meet every Wednesday at the Ukranian Social Club on Lindum Road.

