

Lincolnshire's county team ventured into uncharted territory this year. The well worn track of previous campaigns has been to loose every match in the East Midland's round robin but still qualify for the minor counties competition. This year we drew with Derbyshire and then beat Leicestershire in a dramatic match where Jason Dilley won the deciding game and thus finished second in the East Midlands table.

So, into the unknown ... the Midland Counties semi-final, not in the minor counties, but with the big boys to be paired against Greater Manchester who finished top of the West Midlands section and are also last year's reigning champions in the national competition.

Our intrepid explorers ventured to the half-way venue at the Spital in Chesterfield. Undaunted, Kevin McCarthy who plays for Boston and Grantham was matched on board 2 against Alan Smith whose grade of 206 was somewhat more than Kevin's 162.

We join the match where Alan playing white has just played 30. Nxh7 (taking the rook) and thus winning the exchange and also is threatening the pawn on f7 as well as having a passed h pawn. Play continued 30. ...Rg3 31. Qf2 (not 31. Qxg3 Ne2+) f5 32. Nf6 Rxe3 33. Qc2 Re3 34. R4f2 Nc4 and Kevin's knights are now looking strong 35. Ra1 Qg7 36. a4 Qg3 37. h5 f4 38. h6 Na3 and Kevin ignores the h pawn and instead sets a little trap 39. Rxa3 Re1+ 40. Rf1 Re2 and white resigns loosing the queen to prevent mate.

Draws for Graham Ladds, Rick Davey and Geoff Collyer resulted in a win for Greater Manchester by 13½ to 2½.

