

The British Championships were held in Swansea in August when Hannah Dale took advantage of the summer break from her studies at Lincoln Minster School to enter the Under 16 event.

In round 3, Hannah was black against Daniel Lai from Newcastle in a fascinating encounter with the opening following the Yugoslav variation of the Sicilian Defence 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 g6 6. f3 Bg7 7. Be3 0-0 8. Qd2 Nc6 9. 0-0-0 Nxd4 10. Bxd4 Be6 11. g4 Qa5 12. Kb1 Qc7 13. h4 Rfc8 14. h5 a6 and the book moves have led to the classical position where both players are poised to attack their opponents king down the right flank.

It is white who seizes the initiative first 15. hxg6 fxg6 16. Qh2 Kf7 17. Bxf6 Bxf6 18. Qxh7+ Ke8 19. Qxg6+ Bf7 20. Qf5 and white now has a two pawn advantage but is struggling to continue the attack and now it is Hannah's turn (see diagram) 20. ...Bxc3 21. bxc3 Qxc3 22. Bd3 Rc5 23. e5 (threatening 24. Rh1+). Hannah responds with 23. ...Bxa2+ and if white had played 24. Kxa2 then 24. ...Ra5+ wins for black. As it happened white played 24. Kc1 Qa3+ 25. Kd2 Qb4+ 26. Kc1 Qb1+ 27. Kd2 and with the threat of Rh8 still present Hannah could do no more than perpetual check and a draw was agreed.

Hannah had a tough time of it this year finishing with 2 points in a very high quality field where the title was shared by Daniel Hall from Swindon, graded 174 (compared with Hannah's 128) and Joseff Thomas from Monmouth (graded 177) who finished with 5½.

