

It was quite a feather in Hannah Dale's cap to be invited to play in Division 3 of the 4NCL, this being the UK's premier team tournament, where she was on board 8 playing for Hilsmark Coventry against Susan McFarland, a former director of the British Chess Federation.

After a cautious opening the game reached a seemingly locked position (see diagram) where Susan, as white, had just played 31. Bd2 and all who were watching, including World No 16 Russian Alexei Shirov, thought that the game was drawn.

Hannah had other ideas and played 31. ...Rh3 setting up a kings side attack 32. Be1 Rdh6 33. g4 g5 34. a4 Rf6 35. Rgf2 h5 36. Kg2 hxg4 37. fxg4 Rfh6 and now Hannah has opened up the h file, has a passed pawn on f4 and crucially controls e3.

Play continued 38. Kh1 Qh7 39. Qd2 Ng6 40. Rg2 Kg7 41. Kg1 Nh4 42. Bxh4 R6xh4 and now the way is clear 43. Rff2 Kg6 44. Qe2 Re3 45. Qf1 Rhh3 46. Rg3 (hoping for 46. ... fxg3 47. Rf6+) Rfxg3+ 48. hxg3 Rh1+ and white resigned with the prospect of losing her queen and indeed mate in 6 would follow.

Unfortunately Hannah's team mates did not do so well with the team losing 2½ to 5½ and alas the team came bottom of the league with 2 points.

Hannah will be playing for Lincolnshire's own newly established team in 4NCL Division 4 - Pandoras Box - this season, more details on www.PandorasBoxChessClub.org.uk.

In last weeks puzzle 1. Ne3 was the key to unlocking black's defence.

