

Lincoln's David Coates has been spreading his wings lately by playing for Slough Sharks in the Four Nations Chess League (4NCL) Division 4. This is the UK's premier team competition which this season involves 68 teams spread over 4 divisions. The top division attracts the world's top players and even in Division 4 the standard is still pretty high with both David and his opponent Jac Thomas having grades of over 150.

We pick up this game after David as white has just played 44. Red1 (see diagram) threatening black's knight. The game is materially equal but David has the problem of his bishop on b1 being out of the game. Play continued 44. ...Rb5 45. Rd4 Rcc5 46. Ne1 Nf6 47. b4 Rd5 48. Ba2 bring the bishop back into play 48. ...Rxd4 49. Rxd4 Ne4 50. Nd3 Rb6 51. Bc4.

Black saw what he thought was an opportunity with 51. ...Nxf2 52. Nxf2 Rxb4 followed by 53. ...d5 trapping the bishop but David saw this and played 53. Nd3 Ra4 54. Rf4 protecting the rook with the knight and went on to win.

Several players from Lincolnshire currently compete in the 4NCL for different teams and we are hoping to draw on their talents by entering our own team in the 4NCL later this year. The competition involves teams of six players playing eleven rounds at central venues playing two or three rounds over a number of week-ends between November and May. This will involve entry fees, travel costs and hotel expenses so we are looking for sponsors. If you would like to help then please contact Kevin McCarthy who has set up a web site for the new team on www.PandorasBoxChessClub.org.uk.

