

The Lincolnshire Division 2 South championship race is hotting up. Boston and Spalding share lead the five horse race with 7 points. Lincoln are third on 5 points with reigning champions Louth on 3 points but with games in hand. So this week's match between Lincoln and Louth was vital to both teams if they are to keep in touch with the leaders.

On board 4 Lincoln's Dave Bull was paired as black against Charles Ayton who began proceeding with the Bird's opening 1. f4 d6 2. d4 Nf6 3. c4 g6 4. e3 Bg7 5. Nf3 0-0 and Dave surrenders control of the centre with a solid defence based on the King's Indian 6. Be2 Bf5 7. Nh4 Bxb1 (preferring the exchange to retreat) 8. Rxb1 Nbd7 9. 0-0 c5 10. d5 Ne4 putting black's knight into a strong position.

White countered with 11. Nf3 Re8 12. Ng5 Nxc5 13. fxc5 Ne5 removing the knight but doubling up the g-pawns and allowing Dave's other knight a route into the action 14. e4 e6 15. Bf4 exd5 16. exd5 Re7 17. Bxe5 Rxe5 and Dave's rook is now very strong (see diagram).

White defended with 18. h4 Re4 19. Qe1 Qe7 giving white a few problems as the bishop is under threat. Play continued 20. Qg3 Rxe2 winning the bishop although 20. Rf2 is met by 20. ...Bd4 and Dave also had 21. ...Re8 as backup so maybe the bishop was lost in any event and white resigned a few moves later.

However a draw for Hannah Dale was Lincoln's only other contribution and Louth ran out winners by 2½ to 1½.

