

Pandora's Box, Lincolnshire's team in the 4NCL (Four nations chess league) played their latest round of matches in the first season. Lying just outside the top four promotion places in Division 4 Pandora needed to pull something out of the box.

In their match against Oxford II Pandora's Andrew Hammond was paired as black against Timothy Dickinson with the opening following the Sicilian Defence 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. c3 Nf6 4. e5 Nd5 5. d4 cxd4 6. cxd4 b6 7. Bd3 Ba6 8. Be4 and white prefers to avoid the exchange of bishops and so is unable to castle.

Play continued 8. ...Nc6 9. Nc3 Nxc3 10. bxc3 Rc8 and Andrew now sets his sights on the hanging pawn on c3 11. Qa4 Na5 12. Bb2 (see diagram) b5 - a key move in the game as 13. Qc2 b4 14. a3 bxc3 enabled Andrew to concentrate the attack with white's king stuck in the centre 15. Bxc3 Qc7 16. Bxa5 Qxa5+ 17. Qd2 Rc3 18. Ng1 Bb4 and with multiple threats from black's rook white resigned.

A win for Nigel Birtwistle and draws for Jason Dilley, Jos Woolley, David Coates and Kevin McCarthy meant that Pandora won 4-2.

In their other game against London Masters I the match finished 3-3 with wins for Jason Dilley and Nigel Birtwistle and draws for Jos Woolley and David Coates. However, Kevin McCarthy's opponent was found to be ineligible and so Pandora's Box were awarded the match 4-2.

This means that Pandora now lie in 5<sup>th</sup> place on points difference behind Anglian Avengers, their first opponents in the last round of matches this week-end, we wish them well.

