

Lincoln's quest to retain the Division 2 South title came to an ignominious end. Their final match was at Boston with the hosts propping up the table with one point with two games left whilst Lincoln with 8 points needed a win to finish second in the table.

One board one, Lincoln's captain Robert Dale was black against Boston captain Mark Stephens with the opening following the Trompowsky attack 1. d4 Nf6 2. Nc3 e6 3. Bg5 Bb4 4. Qd3 h6 5. Bxf6 Qxf6 6. Qc4 Nc6 7. e3 d5 8. Qb3 a6 9. a3 Bxa3+ 10. Qxc3 Qe7 and both players have drawn the teeth of the initial attacks. So to the second wave 11. Nf3 Qd6 12. Bd3 Ne7 13. 0-0 b6 14. e4 Bb7 15. e5 Qd7 16. Qd2 c5 17. c3 c4 and both players now have advanced pawns.

Play continued 18. Bc2 Bc6 19. Nh4 Ba4 20. Bxa4 Qxa4 21. f4 Qd7 22. Rf3 Nf5 23. Nxf5 exf5 24. Rg3 g6 reaching the position shown in the diagram. Both players viewed the positions on the other boards which showed Lincoln 1-0 in the lead thanks to a win by Hannah Dale and looking like at least a draw in the other two, so Mark declined Robert's offer of a draw and immediately found a winning move 25. e6 fxe6 26. Rxc6 Qf7 27. Rxc6+ Qxc6 28. Re1 winning black's queen and the game.

In a change of fortunes only yours truly could manage a draw so Boston won by 2½ to 1½. Furthermore, Boston defeated the newly crowned champions Louth by the same score, still finishing bottom with 5 points but with a lot of encouragement for next season.

