

Lincoln's Team in Division 2 South finished season a visit to Boston in a match that was to determine the winners of the title as our hosts, lying 1 point behind leaders Spalding but with an inferior points difference, needed to win to have their name engraved on the trophy.

On board 1 Lincoln's Dave Bull was paired as black against Mark Stephens with the opening following Dave's favourite Pirc Defence 1. e4 d6 2. d4 Nf6 3. Nc3 g6 4. Nf3 Bg7 5. Be2 0-0 6. 0-0 a6 7. Be3 b5 8. a3 Bb7 and Dave has conceded the centre but has developed his bishops into fianchetto positions.

Play continued 9. d5 c6 10. Qd2 Ng4 11. dxc6 Nxc6 12. h3 Nxe3 and Dave has taken white's dark squared bishop which makes his bishop on g7 very strong 13. Qxe3 Rc8 14. Rfd1 Ne5 15. Nd4 Nc4 16. Qc1 and Mark preferred to retreat the queen to protect the pawn on b2 whereas 16. Bxc4 may have been a better option although 16. ...Rxc4 would still give Dave the upper hand 16. ...Qb6 17. Nf3 and Dave seized on an opportunity to totally unhinge white's defence - can you see what it was?

Dave played 17. ...Nxb2 (threatening 18. Qxb2 Bxc3) 18. Nd5 Bxd5 19. Rxd5 Na4 20. e5 Nc3 21. Qd2 (perhaps 21. Rd2 was better) Nxd5 22. Qxd5 Rxc2 and with Dave the exchange and two pawns up white resigned.

Unfortunately for Boston it was not their best night as a win for Richard Kerrigan and draws for Charlie Moss and yours truly meant that Lincoln won 3-1 meaning that Spalding win the championship with Lincoln finishing in 3rd place.

