

Zenón Franco

Anand

move by move

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About the Author

Zenón Franco is a Grandmaster from Paraguay, now living in Spain. He represented Paraguay, on top board, in seven Chess Olympiads, and won individual gold medals at Lucerne 1982 and Novi Sad 1990. He's an experienced trainer and has written numerous books on chess.

Also by the Author:

Test Your Chess

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Series Foreword

The Move by Move format is designed to be interactive, and is based on questions asked by both teachers and students. It aims – as much as possible – to replicate chess lessons. All the way through, readers will be challenged to answer searching questions and to complete exercises, to test their skills in key aspects of the game. It's our firm belief that practising your skills like this is an excellent way to study chess.

Many thanks go to all those who have been kind enough to offer inspiration, advice and assistance in the creation of *Move by Move*. We're really excited by this series and hope that readers will share our enthusiasm.

John Emms,
Everyman Chess

Introduction

It was with great pleasure that I took on the task of writing about Viswanathan ('Vishy') Anand, the most successful World Chess Champion of this century. Anand is the first and only world champion who has gained the title by competing in three different types of competition: the 2000 event used a system of knock-out matches, 2007 was a double-round all-play-all, and in 2008, 2010 and 2012 he gained (or retained) the title by winning a traditional head-to-head match.

Anand was born on the 11th of December 1969 in Chennai, India and learned chess at the age of six. He quickly made a name for himself, gaining the IM title in 1984, winning the Indian Championship in Mumbai in 1986, at age 16, and the World Junior Championship in Baguio City in 1987, becoming India's first GM the following year. In 2000 he was proclaimed, for the first time, the outright World Champion, winning a tournament made up of a series of knock-out matches; in the final, played in Tehran, he defeated Alexei Shirov.

Anand gained his title at a time when there were still two world championship systems running in parallel: an unofficial title held by Garry Kasparov, and the official FIDE one, which Anand won. Kasparov retired from serious competition at the end of the 2005 Linares tournament, at which time the unofficial world title was held by Vladimir Kramnik, who had defeated Kasparov in 2000. Nevertheless, Kasparov is reputed to have turned to Anand and said something like: "I'm handing the baton over to you now."

Anand was unable to live up to this on the occasion of his next championship event, in San Luis 2005, which was won by Veselin Topalov. However, 2007 saw Anand make a big step forward and, in the Elo ratings list published on April 1st of that year, Anand occupied the top spot for the first time; he was 38 years old, and had been one of the top three players in the world for the previous fifteen years.

The "baton" handed on by Kasparov was finally grasped later that year, when Anand was proclaimed World Champion for the second time, after winning the all-play-all tournament in Mexico City, which had been set up to decide the holder of the now reunified world title.

Anand successfully defended his title three times in matches, beating Kramnik in Bonn in 2008, Topalov in Sofia in 2010, and Gelfand in Moscow in 2012.

At the end of 2013 Anand lost his title to Magnus Carlsen in a match held in Chennai. However, in November 2014 he will have the opportunity to become world champion for

the sixth time. Anand has qualified as Carlsen's official challenger by convincingly winning the Candidates Tournament held in Khanty-Mansiysk (Russia) in March 2014.

The structure of this book

This book is a little different from the majority of its predecessors in the *Move by Move* series. First, we shall make a brief appraisal of Viswanathan Anand's style, followed by a section in which we highlight some facets of Anand's play, with positions that can be used for training purposes. As I mentioned in my previous book for Everyman, it's a proven fact that some form of active learning is much more effective than merely receiving information passively.

The bulk of the book, the most important part, comes next. It contains 32 of Anand's best games, presented in chronological order, along with reminders of the most important moments in his chess career. The selected games start in 1991 and culminate with 2014 Candidates Tournament.

As usual in the *Move by Move* series, the games are sprinkled with questions and exercises.

Wherever possible I have also used Anand's own annotations (and those from other leading masters) since there can be no better guide, but I have generally expanded these, since very often what is obvious to a World Champion often requires further clarification to the student.

On a final note I should like to say that it's been a real pleasure to write a book about one of the best chess players of all time, someone who is furthermore a sociable and intelligent man with a great sense of humour, as can be seen from any of his interviews, and as I had the good fortune to be able to appreciate during the many tournaments Anand has contested in Spain.

I hope this book will help you understand a little better and admire even more the wonderful chess legacy of the five-time World Chess Champion, a legacy which is still incomplete.

GM Zenón Franco Ocampos
September 2014

With special thanks to Jonathan Tait for his very useful suggestions and improvements.

Game Seven

“An Effort of which I am Very Proud”

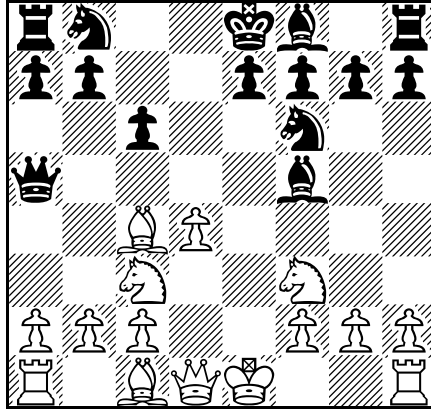
Anand has good memories of the tournament in Biel/Bienne: excellent organization, very comfortable conditions, and pleasant walks along the lakeside. This sense of well-being was reflected in Anand’s chess as early as the very first round, in which he conjured up a spectacular combination of great beauty, one of which he was very proud, and that produced a miniature.

Game 7
V.Anand-J.Lautier
Biel 1997
Scandinavian Defence [B01]

1 e4 d5

Anand couldn’t recall Lautier having played the Scandinavian Defence before, but assumed that he had made a thorough study of it in the previous few months while he had been absent from competition.

2 exd5 ♖xd5 3 ♘c3 ♗a5 4 d4 ♘f6 5 ♘f3 c6



6 ♖c4

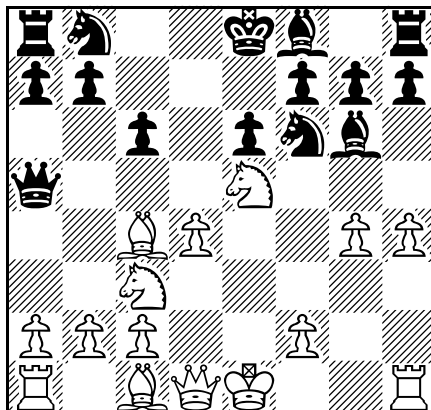
Question: Anything to say about this?

Answer: Yes. Anand explained that 6 ♘e5 was more popular at that time, but he opted for this move partly for practical reasons, since it was probable that Lautier was less familiar with it. 6 ♘e5 is a main line, but at that time it was less popular. There was also an objective element in Anand's choice: during preparation for his World Championship match with Kasparov (in which Anand had played the Scandinavian himself in one game), he had noticed that that "the lines with 6 ♖c4 were very dangerous for Black to navigate."

6...♗f5 7 ♘e5

This was chosen for similar reasons. Although 7 ♗d2 offers White a slight edge, Anand remembered that, according to his analysis, 7 ♘e5 and 8 g4 set Black more problems.

7...e6 8 g4 ♗g6 9 h4



9...♖bd7!

Here 9...♗b4 10 ♕d2 ♘e4 11 f3! ♘xc3 12 bxc3 ♕xc3 13 ♖b1 gave White some advantage in D.Campora-Cu.Hansen, Palma de Mallorca 1989; and 13 h5! is even stronger, though White needs to be careful: for example, 13...♗d7!? 14 ♗xd7 ♕xd7 15 hxg6?? loses to 15...hxg6 16 ♖f1 ♖h2, but after 15 ♖b1! b5 16 ♕e2 ♕xd2+ 17 ♗xd2 ♗xa2 18 ♖c1, the g6-bishop can finally be taken.

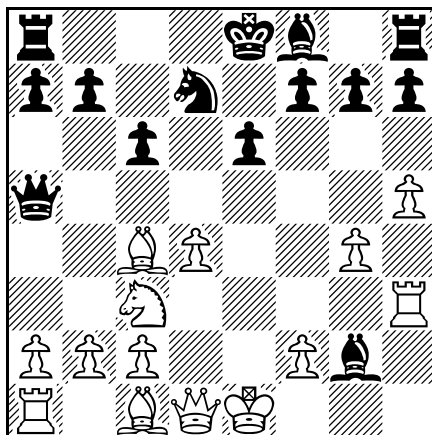
In light of this, Black began to use the text move, to exchange the strong knight on e5.

10 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 11 h5 ♕e4 12 ♖h3

Developing the rook along the third rank is quite normal in the lines where White plays g2-g4 and h2-h4. Among its other advantages, the rook defends the possible weak point on c3.

12...♕g2

A neat zwischenzug, the idea of French GM Eric Prié, provoking ♖g3. The alternative is to play 12...♕d5 straight away.



13 ♖e3

Question: The rook goes to e3? Doesn't this just invite Black to play ...♗b6-d5 - ? Isn't it better to play the natural 13 ♖g3 - ?

Answer: When Anand opted for 13 ♖e3, he logically took this knight manoeuvre into account. 13 ♖e3 is a notable and very deep idea, not preparation but over-the-board inspiration.

Nevertheless, it's not clear that it's the best move, for equally deep reasons. In fact 13 ♖g3 was Anand's first thought, which he also considered to be slightly better for White, even though an eventual ...♕d6 hits the rook.

13...♗b6?!

A very natural response, which seems to exploit the position of the rook on e3 by play-

ing ...♘d5; but, as Anand will prove brilliantly, it's not the best.

Instead, 13...b5 14 ♙d3 b4 15 ♘e4 wouldn't be very promising either. Black would soon have to acquiesce to the exchange of his light-squared bishop, surrendering the bishop pair and remaining with a somewhat inferior position.

Question: Alright then, what's Black's best move here?

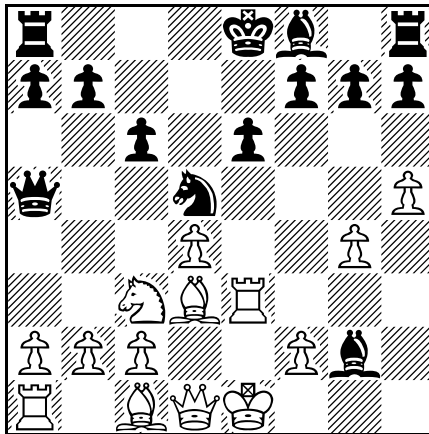
Answer: Patience; all will soon be revealed.

14 ♙d3!

In contrast, 14 ♙b3 ♘d5 is less clear.

14...♘d5

14...c5 would be met by 15 f3, when 15...cxd4? fails to 16 ♙b5+.



Exercise: What was Anand's idea in putting his rook on e3?

Answer:

15 f3!

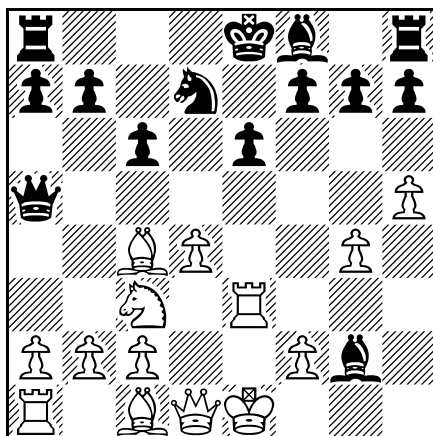
This calm move is the key to White's idea. "He is willing to jettison a few pawns and/or the exchange in order to snare the bishop on g2." (Anand)

Anand calculated that, although he would have no material advantage following the demise of the g2-bishop since Black gains a rook and two pawns for two minor pieces, the minor pieces will be more active than the black rook, which lacks open files. Coupled with White's lead in development, this will give White the advantage.

Yes, all this was calculated and evaluated by Anand when he played 13 ♖e3. Admirable, don't you think?

In contrast, 15 ♖g3 ♘xc3 16 bxc3 ♙d5 17 ♙d2 ♚a4 gave Black good play in Ch.Bauer-E.Prié, French Championship, Auxerre 1996.

Going back a little, since neither 13...♖b6 nor 13...b5 was best, let's return to your earlier *Question*.



Exercise: Knowing what we know now, years after this game, what was Black's best 13th move, and does it call the idea 13 ♖e3 into question?

Answer: It was much better to play 13...♖c7!, another idea of Eric Prié's, possibly found after his game with Bauer. Prié claims that Lautier was shown this move before the game, but he forgot the analysis. The point is that 14 f3? now fails to 14...♖h2! (and 14...♗e7 may be even better).

Prié later got the chance to play 13...♖c7! in T.Moriuchi-E.Prié, San Sebastian 2005. White responded with 14 f4?!, weakening his pawn structure, and after 14...♖b6 15 ♗b3 0-0 16 ♗f2 ♗d5 17 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 18 ♖f3 ♖f6, Black soon opened the kingside and gained the advantage, winning in 29 moves.

15...♗b4

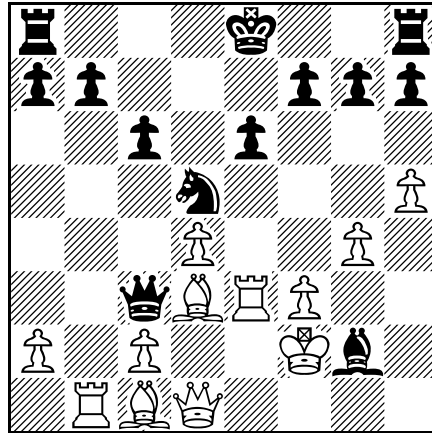
After 15...♖xc3 16 bxc3 ♖xc3+ 17 ♗d2 ♖xd4 18 ♗f2 ♗xf3 19 ♗xf3 0-0-0 20 ♖b1, or 15...♖xe3 16 ♗xe3 ♖b6 17 ♗f2 ♗h3 18 ♖b1 (or 18 ♗g3), we reach the kind of position described by Anand above, and which is good for White.

In this last line, Black might create more confusion with 16...♗a3!?, but the engines still prefer White, albeit not to any great degree.

16 ♗f2! ♗xc3

Now 16...♖xc3 17 bxc3 ♗xc3 18 ♖b1 ♗xd4 19 ♗xg2 ♗xe3 20 ♗xe3 brings about an even more favourable scenario for White, who threatens to capture on b7, while if 20...0-0 then 21 ♖c1, followed by ♖b2, is very strong.

17 bxc3 ♖xc3 18 ♖b1



18...♖xd4

In the event of 18...♗xf3 19 ♖xf3 ♖xd4 20 ♖xb7 0-0, then 21 ♗e4 saves the exchange and wins, as indicated by Anand. Inserting 19...♗xe3 20 ♖xe3 allows White to defend the d4-pawn and threaten ♖xb7, while if 20...b6 (20...0-0-0 fails to 21 ♖xb7!), exploiting the loose black queen) 21 ♗d2 ♖a3 22 ♗e5! White's activity gives him a decisive advantage.

Switching the move order by 18...♗xe3 19 ♗xe3 ♗xf3 20 ♖xf3 allows White to retain his important central pawn. Then after 20...0-0-0, White activates his pieces with surprising speed: 21 ♖b3 ♖a5 22 ♗e4! and now 22...♖hf8? loses at once to 23 ♗xc6! bxc6 24 ♖xc6+ ♖c7 25 ♖a6+ ♗d7 26 ♖b7, while 22...♖c7 runs into 23 ♗f4 ♖d7 24 ♗xc6! ♖xc6 25 ♖c3.

19 ♖xb7 ♖d8

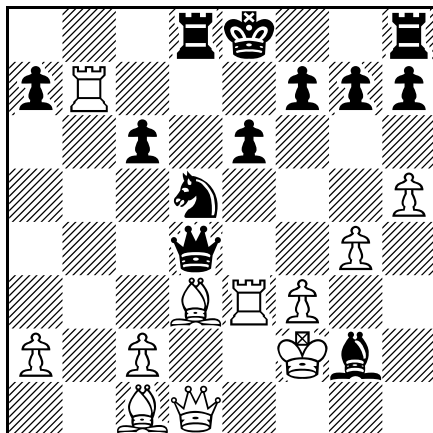
Exercise: The other critical line was 19...♗h3. What did Anand have in mind in that case?

Answer: White can exploit the loose black queen once again with 20 ♖xf7!. Anand commented that he looked no further, but Lautier calculated more deeply: 20...c5 (defending the queen and threatening to take the rook) 21 ♖f5!! and wins; for example,

21...c4 22 ♖f4!! or 21...♗xe3 22 ♗xe3 ♖b2 23 ♖e2! (threatening ♗b5+; Anand's 23 ♖xc5 0-0 24 ♗g3! wins as well) 23...exf5 24 ♗xc5+ and mates.

In the event of 19...♗f4 20 ♗g3 ♖d6, White has the nice shot 21 ♗a3!, and if 21...♖xa3 then either 22 ♗e4! (Anand) or 22 ♗b5!, while after 21...♗xh5+ 22 ♗xg2 ♖g3+ 23 ♗f1, White threatens 24 ♖e7+ as well as to capture the knight on h5.

Finally, 19...0-0-0 can be met by the simple 20 ♖xf7 ♗b8 21 ♖g1!.



Exercise (difficult): The black king is still in the centre and White's pieces are active. Is it possible to exploit these factors? If so, how?

Answer:

20 h6!!

This is not the first move that springs to mind. In *ChessBase Magazine #60*, Anand explained his thought process: “Here I saw the possibility of ♕g6 and then I realized that it didn't work because at a certain moment Black would simply play ...♖g8. Then I saw the possibility of h6, when ...♖g8 could be met by ♖g7+!. Suddenly, all that remained was to check the details.”

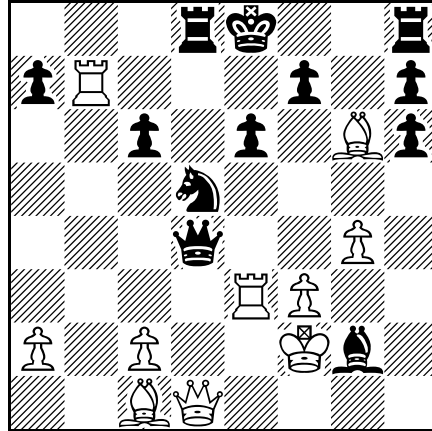
To clarify, the first line he saw (which didn't work) was 20 ♕g6?? ♜xd1 21 ♖xe6+ ♔f8 22 ♕a3+ (or 22 ♖xf7+ ♔g8) 22...♞e7 23 ♕xe7+ ♔g8 and Black wins.

20...gxh6?

“This gave me a chance to have a really beautiful finish. Black could still fight with ...♞xe3, but Joel hadn't seen the idea behind h5-h6.”

In view of the harsh punishment now meted out, 20...♞xe3 was preferable, though White would still be winning after 21 ♕xe3 ♜e5 22 hxg7 ♖g8 23 ♜c1! (covering the e3-bishop so as to enable ♔xg2, while also threatening ♜a3) or similarly 23 ♜g1!. Note that White should avoid 23 ♕h6? ♜h2!.

21 ♕g6!!



21...♘e7

Now if 21...♚xd1, Black does get mated: 22 ♖xe6+ ♜f8 23 ♙xh6+ ♜g8 24 ♙xf7 mate. And there are no better defences:

a) 21...♚xe3+ 22 ♙xe3 hxg6 (or 22...fxg6) 23 ♚d4 wins with multiple threats.

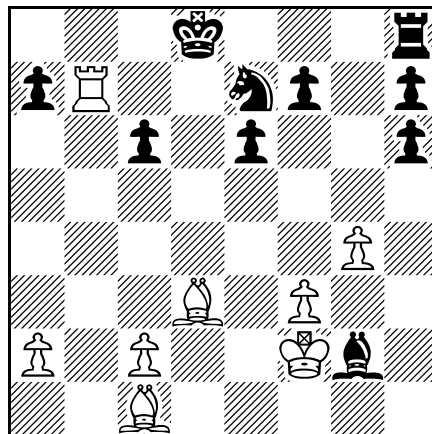
b) 21...♚f6 22 ♙xf7+ ♚xf7 23 ♖xf7 ♘xe3 24 ♚xd8+! (retreating the queen is good, but the most practical, and indeed strongest, option is simply to give it back) 24...♜xd8 25 ♙xe3 ♙h3 26 ♖xa7 with an easy win.

c) 21...♘e3 22 ♙xf7+ ♜f8 23 ♚xd4 ♖xd4 24 ♙xe3 wins easily too, threatening ♙xh6 mate as well as the rook and bishop.

22 ♚xd4 ♖xd4 23 ♖d3!

23 ♖xe6 ♗d7 24 ♖xd7 ♚xd7 25 ♙xf7 would win, but the text move is simpler, eliminating Black's only active piece.

23...♖d8 24 ♖xd8+ ♜xd8 25 ♙d3! 1-0



Anand: Move by Move

After 25...♗h1 26 ♗b2 ♖e8 27 ♗f6, Black is paralysed and will soon lose material.

Anand's good form in this event continued: he won a good game against Gelfand, among others, and finished in first place, half a point ahead of Karpov.

After Biel, Anand triumphed again in Belgrade, where he tied for first with Ivanchuk, and was in excellent form to contest the FIDE World Championship qualification event in Groningen at the end of the year, from which he emerged the winner – defeating Predrag Nikolic 2-0, Alexander Khalifman 3½-2½ (decided in the tie-breakers), Zoltan Almasi 2-0, Alexei Shirov 1½-½, Boris Gelfand 1½-½, and Michael Adams 5-4 (decided in a sudden-death blitz game) – and went on to challenge Karpov, the official FIDE World Champion, in Lausanne.