

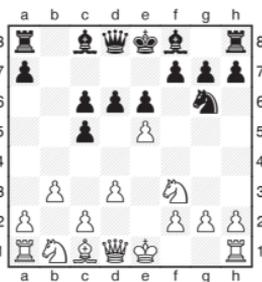
Michael Adams



How Anand won battle of nerves

Vishy Anand retained his world title in a close match against Boris Gelfand. FIDE's failure to restrict short draws meant the event wasn't much of a spectacle as many games concluded in early peace due to the tension of the occasion.

The last full-length game featured creative ideas from both players:



V. Anand - B. Gelfand

World Championship, Moscow 2012

8.h2-h4

A deep concept, giving up a pawn purely to restrict Black's forces 8.e5xd6 Qd8-f6 is awkward.

8... **Ng6xe5**
9.Nf3xe5 **d6xe5**
10.Nb1-d2 **c5-c4**

After 10...Bf8-e7 11.Bc1-b2 0-0 12.Qd1-g4 f7-f6, both Black bishops are hemmed in, so Gelfand takes a brave decision to open lines at all costs.

11.Nd2xc4 **Bc8-a6**
12.Qd1-f3 **Qd8-d5**

13.Qf3xd5
 13.Qf3-g3 looked interesting.

13... **c6xd5**
14.Nc4xe5 **f7-f6**
15.Ne5-f3 **e6-e5**

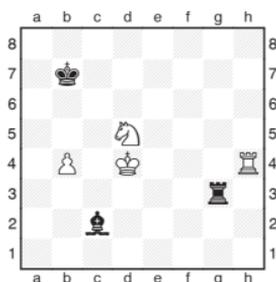
16.0-0 **Ke8-f7**
 Black's harmonious set-up and bishop pair compensate for the pawn.

17.c2-c4 **Bf8-e7**
18.Bc1-e3 **Ba6-b7**
19.c4xd5 **Bb7xd5**
20.Rf1-c1 **a7-a5**
 20...Rh8-c8 21.Rc1xc8 Ra8xc8 22.Be3xa7 Rc8-a8 23.Ba7-e3 Bd5xb3 was more precise.

21.Be3-c5 **Rh8-d8**
22.Bc5xe7
 Not for the first time, a draw was agreed prematurely. White could have continued with 22...Kf7xe7 23.Rc1-c7+.

Although the games remained balanced in the rapid section, Vishy deservedly squeaked home. He frequently enjoyed substantial time advantages, which unsurprisingly told in the end.

Here is the conclusion of the decisive encounter:



V. Anand - B. Gelfand
 World Championship, Rapid Tie-break, Moscow 2012

57... **Rg3-g5**
 Watching the game I thought Gelfand would play 57...Bc2-a4, keeping a close watch on the pawn.

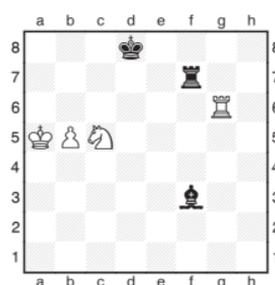
58.b4-b5 **Bc2-f5**
59.Rh4-h6 **Bf5-g4**
 59...Bf5-g6 was better.

60.Rh6-f6
 Anand plays the endgame cleverly, not hurrying to make direct threats, which are easier to meet with your clock ticking down. This move prevents Bg4-f3.

60... **Rg5-f5**
61.Rf6-b6+ **Kb7-a7**
62.Rb6-g6 **Bg4-f3**
63.Rg6-g7+ **Ka7-b8**
64.Nd5-c3 **Bf3-b7**

It was more practical to play 64...Bf3-e2, aiming for the drawn rook and knight versus rook endgame.

65.Kd4-c4 **Bb7-f3**
66.Kc4-b4 **Bf3-d5**
67.Nc3-a4 **Rf5-f7**
68.Rg7-g5 **Bd5-f3**
69.Na4-c5 **Kb8-c7**
70.Rg5-g6 **Kc7-d8**
71.Kb4-a5



71... **Rf7-f5**
 Gelfand should still hang on with 71...Bf3-h1, as he can give up his bishop for the pawn if need be. Now Vishy seizes his chance to create a winning endgame.

72.Nc5-e6+ **Kd8-c8**
73.Ne6-d4 **Rf5-f8**
74.Nd4xf3 **Rf8xf3**
75.Ka5-b6 **Rf3-b3**

Black would hold here if he could play Rf5-f8 and Kc8-b8, but doesn't have time to set up the drawing position. After 75...Rf3-f8, White wins by using the whole board 76.Kb6-a7 (76.Kb6-a6 Kc8-b8 is a draw) 76...Rf8-f7+ 77.Ka7-a8 (White is also winning after 77.Ka7-a6, but he will have to transfer the King to the corner to clinch the point.) 77...Rf7-f5 78.Rg6-b6 Kc8-c7 79.Ka8-a7 Rf5-f4 80.Rb6-c6+ Kc7-d7 81.Ka7-b7 and White advances the pawn to win.

76.Rg6-g8+ **Kc8-d7**
77.Rg8-b8

Black resigned, as 77...Rb3-b1 78.Kb6-a7 enables the pawn to inch forward.