

Anand looks back on a satisfying journey

Almost everything I want to do, I've done, says the Grandmaster

CHESS

RAKESH RAO
NEW DELHI

It seems like yesterday that India was warming up to this exciting chess talent. This was bound to happen when, in the span of five months – between August 2 and December 30, 1987 – a teenager named V. Anand moved from being the country's first World junior champion to the first Grandmaster! Almost 32 years later, at 50, Viswanathan Anand has delivered far more than he once promised. In the pro-

cess, Vishy, as he is known in the chess world, revolutionised the sport in India. **Bringing joy** True to his name, Anand brought joyous times for a nation starved of world beaters. Five world titles across three formats, two World Cups and triumphs spread over tournaments, worth winning. In an illustrious career spanning over three decades, and counting, the former World No. 1 was ranked in the top-10 list for nearly 25 years! "Like all life stories, when it started I had no idea of the

destination," said Anand. "As they say, it's been glorious. Almost everything I want to do, I've done. I can look back with a lot of pleasure. But I think you really only look back when you do it for others." Anand said he had learnt most of life's lessons through chess and that whenever he looked back on events he did so in the context of what it meant in chess terms. On his book, *Mind Masters*, to be released on Friday, Anand said: "For a lot of people, this will be the closest they come to the mind of a chess player. "I think there are far more

Indians who follow my results than those who follow the moves. "So I hope that they will become acquainted with my chess journey and also my life lessons. And get a deeper understanding of me as a person, as well. So in that sense, it's meant for the non-chess audience and for people who are curious in some way." Asked whether he felt age impacted his recent performances, Anand was candid. "I've noticed I've become much more unstable, I've become much more inconsistent. And before I had a sense of control or feeling a

sense of control. I realised now looking back and forgetting the little details. I think the past looks much better now, than when it was present," he said. **Extra time** Returning to the present, Anand said, "I'm proud of the last few years, that I'm able to fight, in what is becoming a very young sport very fast. "Now, it feels like the whistle has been blown, but the referee has given a bit of extra-time, like in football. And it feels like, I know, this is just fun. And of course, you still have to challenge yourself."



Master of the game: Vishy, as Anand is known in the chess world, revolutionised the sport in India. • RAJEEV BHATT

Dhruv Sunish goes down fighting

INDIANS ABROAD

SPORTS BUREAU
CAIRO
Dhruv Sunish fought hard but was beaten 6-1, 6-7(7), 6-1 by Facundo Juarez of Argentina in the first round of the \$15,000 ITF men's Futures tennis tournament in Cairo, Egypt. **The results:** **\$15,000 ITF men, Cairo, Egypt: Singles (first round):** Facundo Juarez (Arg) bt Dhruv Sunish 6-1, 6-7(7), 6-1. Omar El-Moslemany (Egy) bt Atharva Sharma 6-2, 6-2; Giulio Colacioppo (Ita) bt PC Vignesh 6-4, 6-0. **\$15,000 ITF men, Doha, Qatar: Singles (first round):** Simon Freund (Swe) bt Haadin Bava 6-2, 6-1. **\$15,000 ITF women, Cairo, Egypt: Singles (first round):** Nada Fouad (Egy) bt Aaliya Ebrahim 6-4, 6-2. **Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):** Emma Belluomini (Ita) & Malvika Shukla bt Julia Klimovicz (Bra) & Katarina Sopkova (Aut) 6-3, 6-3.

Internationals dominate opening day

Woods-Thomas' win brings the lone cheer for USA

PRESIDENTS CUP

REUTERS
MELBOURNE
A Presidents Cup rivalry all but buried by decades of American dominance flickered back to life at Royal Melbourne on Thursday, as the unfancied International team stormed to a 4-1 lead by routing Tiger Woods' USA in the fourballs matches. Ernie Els' rookie-laden outfit played fearlessly on a gusty day at the sandbelt course as the Internationals secured a day one lead for the first time at the biennial tournament since 2003. Woods, only the second playing-captain in the 25-year history of the tournament, upheld his end of the bargain, as he anchored a comprehensive 4&3 win with Justin Thomas over Australian Marc Leishman and Chilean debutant Joaquin Niemann. But that was as good as it got for the U.S. which was



Stunning win:Ancer combined well with Oosthuizen to get the better of the fancied Johnson and Woodland. • GETTY IMAGES
consistently bamboozled by Royal Melbourne's undulating greens. **Dream team flops** Dustin Johnson and Gary Woodland had been branded a dream team by U.S. media after their pairing was announced on tournament eve. But they walked off 4&3 losers after a thrashing by South Africa's Louis Oosthuizen and Mexican debutant Abraham Ancer. **The results: International leads USA 4-1** [Marc Leishman & Joaquin Niemann lost to Tiger Woods & Justin Thomas 4 & 3; Adam Hadwin & Im Sung-jae bt Xander Schauffele & Patrick Cantlay 1 up; Adam Scott & An Byeong-hun bt Bryson De Chambeau & Tony Finau 2 & 1; Hideki Matsuyama & C.T. Pan bt Webb Simpson & Patrick Reed 1 up; Abraham Ancer & Louis Oosthuizen bt Dustin Johnson & Gary Woodland 4 & 3].

The Korean and Dutch way of sports excellence

The former was able to develop into a force in football

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Nation building, best done with sports, was emphasised fluently with the Korean example by the Minister-Counselor for Political Affairs of the Embassy of Korea, Yoo Chang-Ho, during one of the sessions of the Global Sports Summit organised by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) on Wednesday. Making comparisons with India in terms of being suppressed under the colonial rule, apart from the country being devastated by the Korean war in 1950, Yoo Chang-Ho, explained how sports had played a big part in restructuring the nation, not only as one of the sports power, but also as the 11th largest economy in the world. The Korean expert revealed that traditional Korean sports were used as the roots to lay a strong foundation for Korean sports.



Yoo Chang-Ho.
• SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"Our national growth is 2.5%, but our sports growth is 7%. "Every time we host a major international competition, it mobilises and unites the whole country. There is more development. There is also demand for sports facilities," he said. Countering a question about big sports facilities in huge buildings of Korea as an "exaggeration", the Korean said that it was a fact that big buildings would often ensure the availability of a swimming pool or tennis courts, or other facilities. "Sports facilities are readily available for everyone," said Yoo Chang-Ho, as he gave a glimpse into the growth of Korea. **A ground every 7km** Dutch football coach Johan van Geijn, head of International Cooperation of KNVB, said that a football ground was available every seven kilometres and there were 75 grounds.

"Anyone who is registered with KNVB, is assured of 22 league matches in a year, in the age group of 7 years to 50 years. We have a small country. You can travel from the north tip to the south in about four hours. You have to drive just about seven kilometres to find an opponent. We keep the cost low. There are about 3000 clubs. Most of the time, it is not about winning," said the Dutch specialist, as he emphasised the need to enjoy sports in all age groups. He also pointed out that about 5000 coaches at all levels were constantly educated so that they could provide good basics to everyone. "There is high quality control, and we make sure that coaches are dealing with the children in the best way," he said. Even as it aspires to become a sports power, India has a lot to learn, in terms of ensuring basic sporting facilities, at least for everyone aspiring to play.