

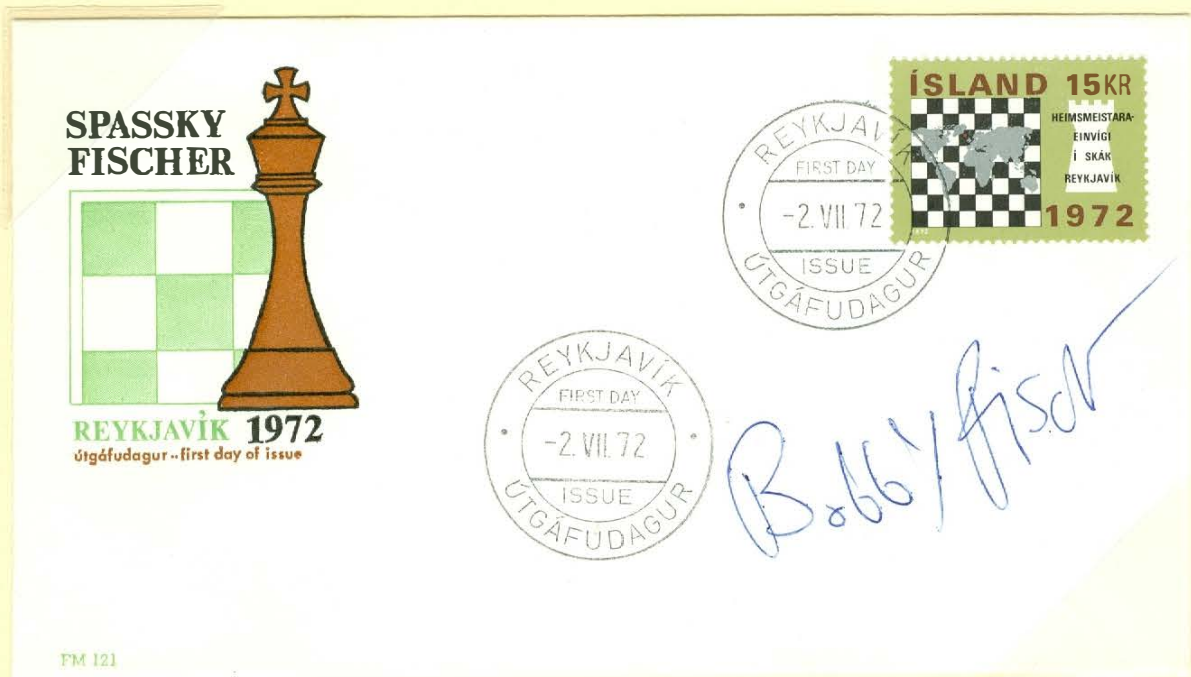
Bobby Fischer Remembered



This exhibit is intended to share the game of chess, as well as give the viewer just a glimpse of America's best-known chess grandmaster of all time -- Robert James (Bobby) Fisher -- as seen on postage stamps. Bobby was born on March 9, 1943 in Chicago and passed away on January 17, 2008 in Reykjavík, Iceland. Bobby Fisher was the eleventh World Chess Champion from 1972 until 1975.

Bobby Fischer was a paradox in many ways, a mystery to many and a supreme challenge to others -- but no one will dispute that he was a genius over the chessboard. His fighting spirit was legendary, and he was widely respected for his ability and knowledge over the chessboard. Bobby Fisher to date was the only American World Chess Champion.

It is unfortunate that Bobby Fisher will probably never appear on a U.S. postage stamp. The reasons for this are many and varied. However, none have to do with Bobby's ability to play the "game of kings". He was a chess prodigy early in his life, at age 15½, he became both the youngest grandmaster and the youngest candidate for the World Championship up to that time. He won the 1963-64 U.S. Championship with 11/11, the only perfect game score ever recorded in the history of the tournament.

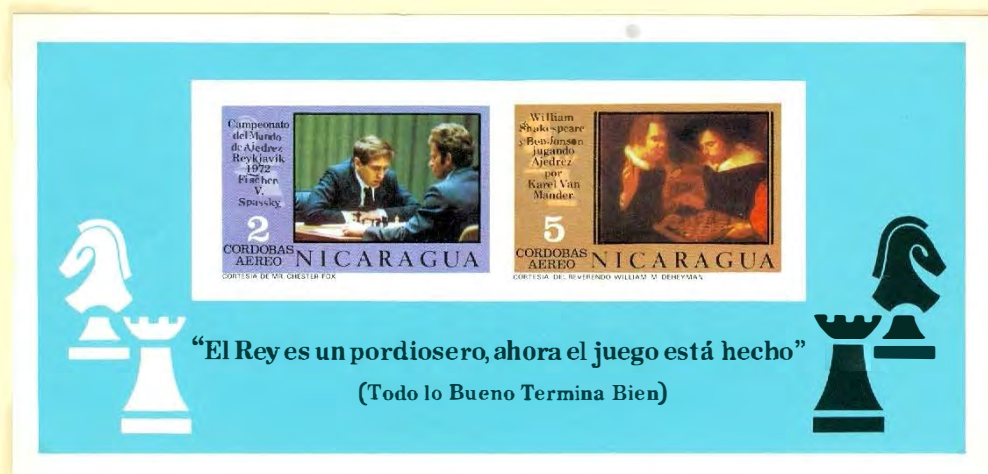


Shown here is an event cover from the 1972 World Chess Championship, which was played in Reykjavík, Iceland. Bobby was known for having a rather "interesting" handwriting, as some of his game records will attest -- it is really difficult to read most of his game notes as well. This cover is an excellent example of Bobby's handwriting. He signed this cover during the world chess match in 1972, while in Reykjavík.

Bobby Fisher passed away on January 17, 2008 in Reykjavik, Iceland. Many nations have commemorated his life and chess talents – especially since his death. Bobby was only 64 years old when he died. Below is a brief summary of Bobby's chess career --

- Robert James Fischer was born on March 9, 1943 in Chicago, Illinois. Bobby learned to play chess in 1949 when he was 6 years old.
- Won the US Junior Chess Championship in 1956 at age 13.
- Was the youngest member of the Manhattan Chess Club at age 12.
- Achieved chess master status at 13 years of age.
- Was the youngest person to ever win the US Chess Championship at 13.
- Was US Chess Champion for eight years in a row from 1957 to 1966.
- Became an International Grandmaster in 1958 at 14 years of age.
- Defeated Boris Spassky of Russia (USSR) and became world chess champion in 1972 -- a title he held until 1975.
- First person inducted in the US Chess Hall of Fame in 1985.
- Inducted into the World Chess Hall of Fame in 2001.
- Bobby passed away on January 17, 2008 at age 64.

Robert James (Bobby) Fischer changed the game of chess forever. His talent over the chessboard will be greatly missed.



A tribute to Bobby from Nicaragua. Rough translation, -- “The King is a beggar, now play this fact. All Good Things finish well.” Interesting to find Bobby and Shakespeare shown on the same souvenir sheet!



A stamp and post card from Yugoslavia, 1992 honoring Bobby.

Guinea-Bissau, 2008 in remembrance of Bobby and his match with Spassky in 1972. However, it is a bit strange to see Apollo XVII shown as well! Bobby -- 1943 to 2008.



Guinea-Bissau, 2008. Shown are Bobby and several other Chess Grandmasters.

Again Guinea-Bissau, 2008. Bobby had tremendous “presence” over the chessboard!

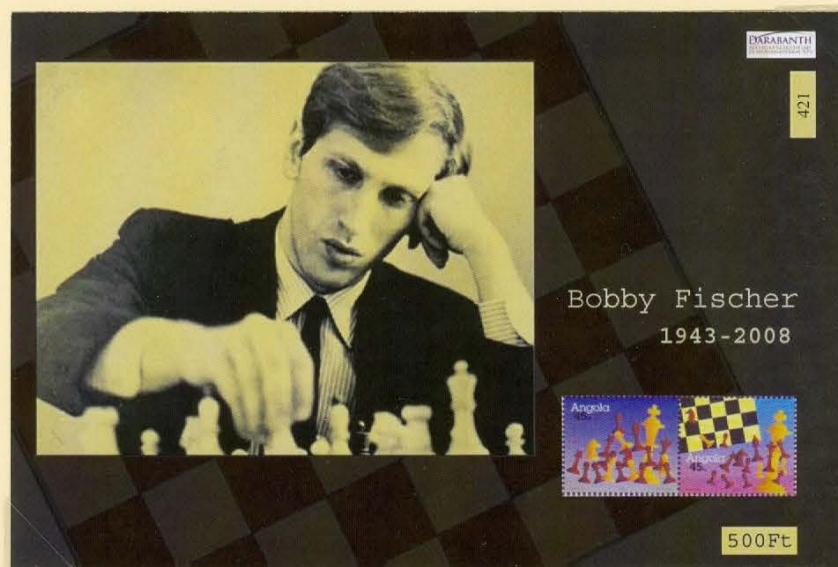
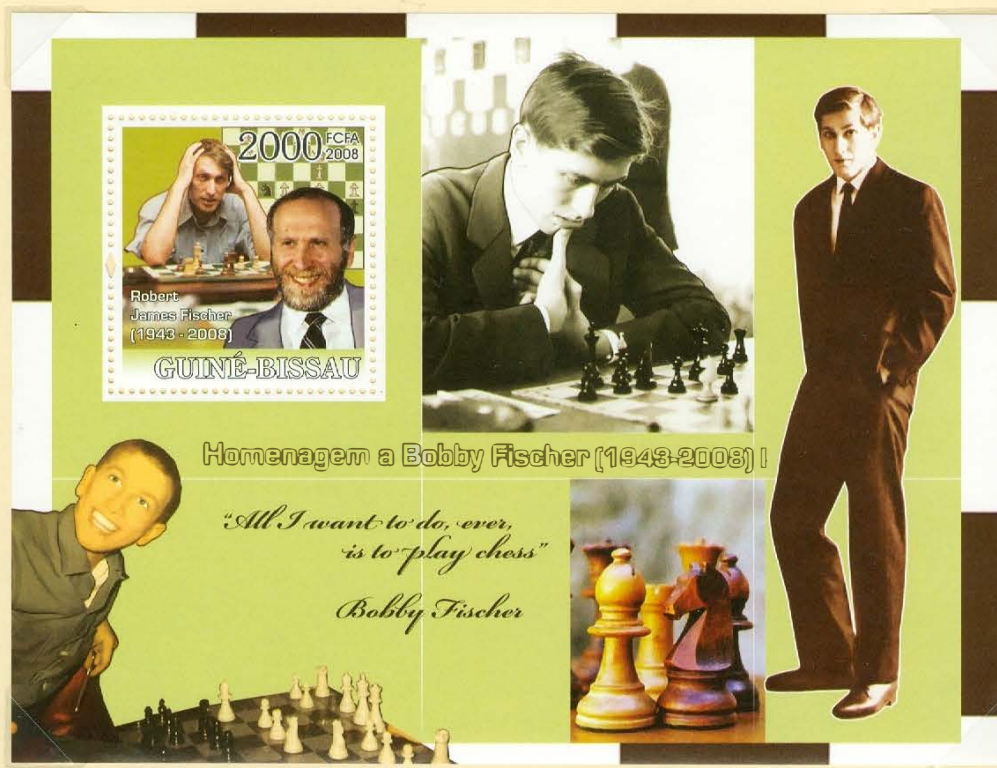


Photo of Bobby – Angola, 2008. This may be a proof for a future issue?

Robert James "Bobby" Fischer



1943 – 2008



In memoriam



"Was an American-born chess Grandmaster, an Icelandic citizen. Became famous as a teenager for his chess-playing ability. In 1972, he became the first, and so far only, American to win the official World Chess Championship"



Post cards from Romania, 2008 in remembrance of Bobby. Quite a world-wide tribute was given to Bobby at his death, despite some of the political problems that plagued him.

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In memoriam



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Wohlfahrtsmarken 1972

Ersttagsbrief



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There are a great many examples of postal usage of chess-related stamps. Chess has remained a very popular game and is actually considered a sport in some countries. These covers from Germany are typical examples and show the beauty and simplicity of chess stamps.



Cover and stamps
from Hungary, 1974.
Issued to commemorate
the 21st Chess Olympiad
held in Nice, June 6-30.

There are many "fancy cancels" to be found in the world of stamps. These were quite popular with local Postmasters, until the use of machine cancels made them obsolete, or quite "out of date"!

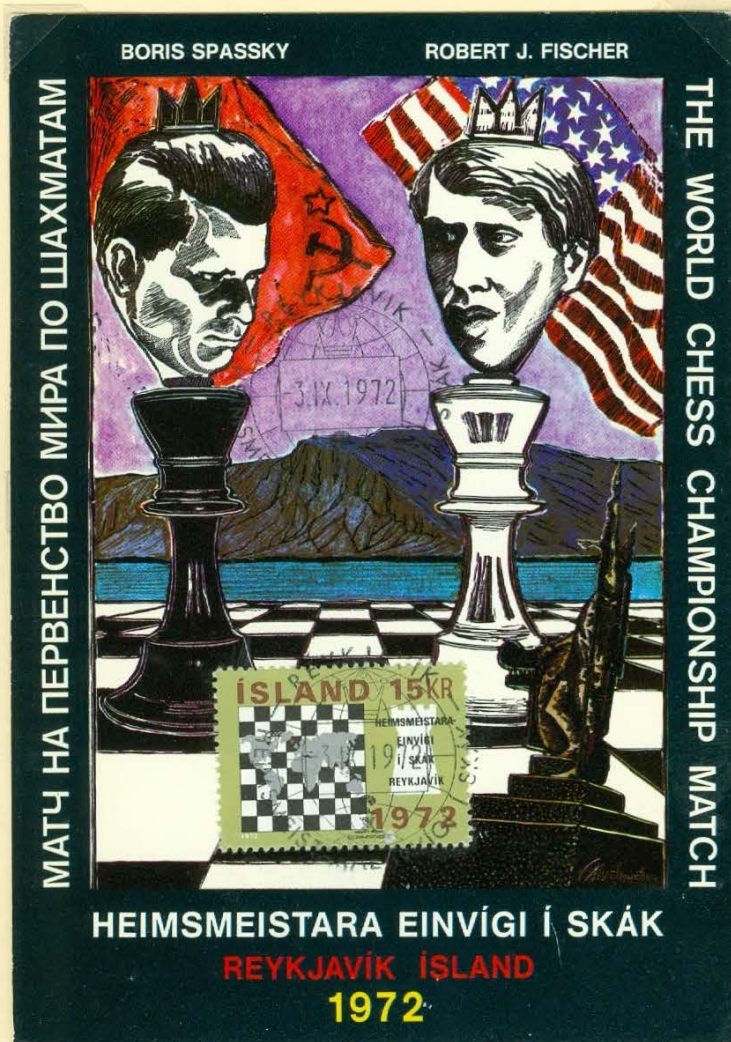
Below are two registered envelopes from 1929 showing examples of some fancy cancellations depicting stylized chessboards. (The dates were found along with registration cancels on the back of the covers.)



Cover and stamps from Israel, 1964, commemorating the 16th Chess Olympiad.



Chess has truly “gone to the dogs” on this souvenir sheet from the Republic of Benin! Benin is a small country in Western Africa. Until 1975 it was known as Dahomey.



Boris Spassky, Bobby's opponent at the World match in 1972, also received considerable world-wide recognition as well, as shown on this rather garish postcard.

Below is a first day cover for the Icelandic stamp issued in 1972.



A man with dark hair, wearing a white dress shirt and a blue tie with a red and white geometric pattern, is looking intently at the camera while playing chess. His right hand is positioned over a chessboard, with his fingers hovering over a dark wooden piece. The chessboard is in the foreground, showing several pieces including a king, queen, and pawns. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor setting.

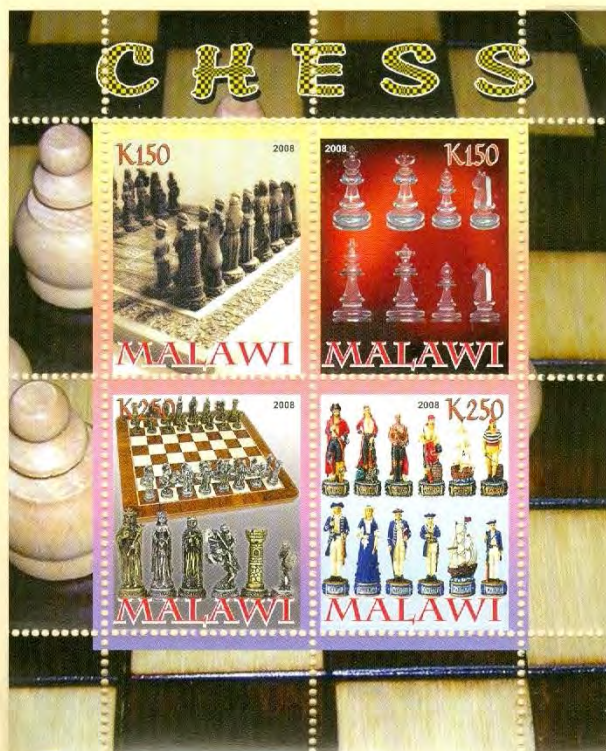
The Deadly Gamesman

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NOVEMBER

The Republic of Malawi is a small nation in South-Eastern Africa.

Malawi, 2008 showing
Chess Sets and Boards.



First day of issue cover from Reykjavik, Iceland, 1972. This was the location of the World Chess Championships, when Bobby defeated Boris Spassky of the USSR.

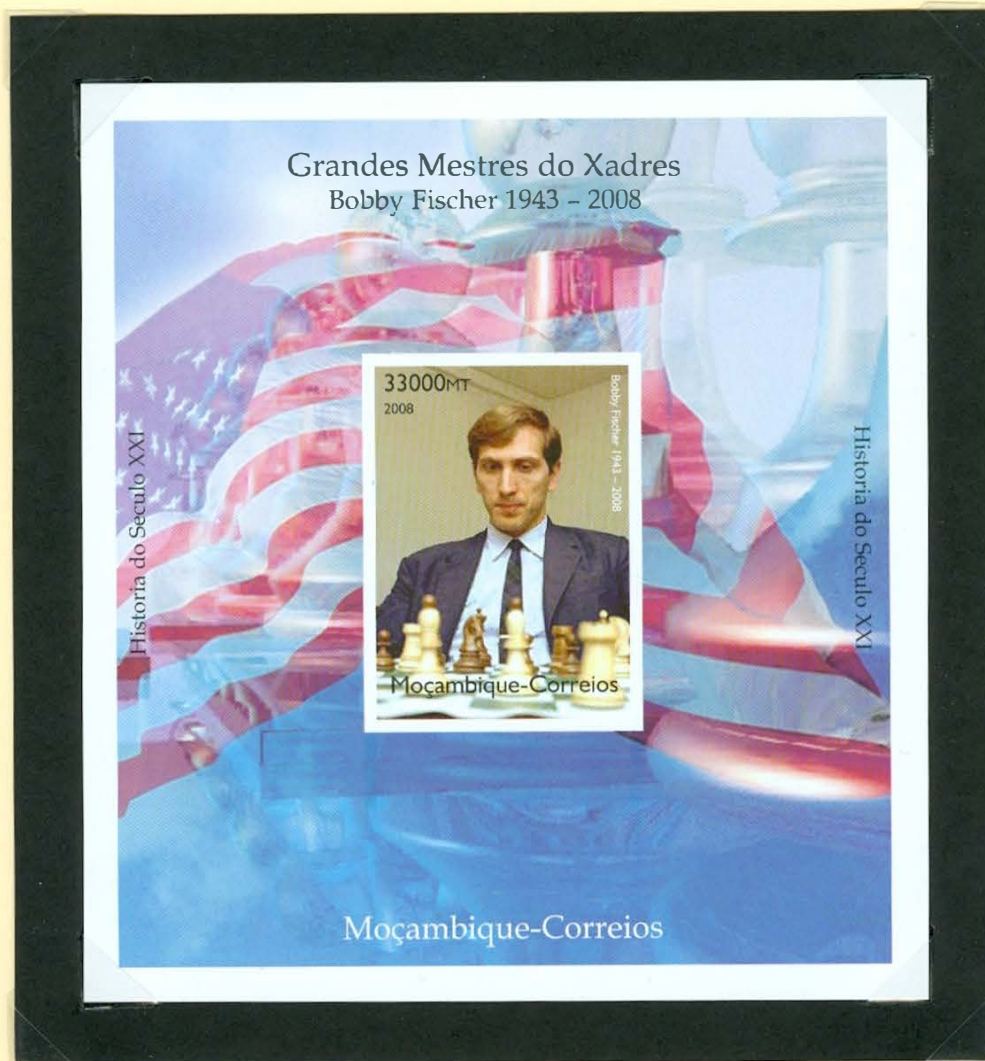
This souvenir sheet from the Republic of Chad depicts Grandmasters and chess positions from their games.



Shown are Bobby Fischer with Mikhail Tal (1961), Boris Spassky with Tigran Petrosian (1969) and Gary Kasparov with Anatoly Karpov (1990). The chess positions are from chess matches they played against each other. Can you tell who has the winning position?



In 1992, Bobby challenged Boris Spassky to a chess match in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. This in spite of a United Nations embargo that included sanctions on sporting events. It was also against a US Department of the Treasury edict, and violated President George H.W. Bush's Executive Order 12810 as well. Bobby won the match against Spassky 10 wins, 5 losses with 15 drawn games. Bobby remained wanted by the US government for the rest of his life and never returned to the United States again. Bobby did not play competitive chess after this "final victory" over his Russian opponent. Following this match, Fischer slid into relative obscurity. This maxi card commemorates the 1992 event.



Bobby was not only a genius over the chessboard, but he did much to improve the quality of tournament chess. Playing conditions such as lighting, crowd control, noise issues, etc., were all his concern. He also did much to improve the prize amounts being offered by the various chess promoters. Bobby will be missed, his games played over and analyzed for decades to come. His equal likely will never be found.

Good-bye Robert James (Bobby) Fischer.