

= Bobby Fischer =

Robert James " Bobby " Fischer (March 9 , 1943 ? January 17 , 2008) was an American chess grandmaster , the eleventh World Chess Champion . Many consider him the greatest chess player of all time . In 1972 , he captured the World Chess Championship from Boris Spassky of the USSR in a match held in Reykjavík , Iceland , publicized as a Cold War confrontation which attracted more worldwide interest than any chess championship before or since . In 1975 , Fischer refused to defend his title when an agreement could not be reached with FIDE , the game 's international governing body , over one of the conditions for the match . This allowed Soviet GM Anatoly Karpov , who had won the qualifying Candidates ' cycle , to become the new world champion by default under FIDE rules .

Fischer showed skill at an early age . At age 13 he won a " brilliancy " that became known as " The Game of the Century " . Starting at age 14 , Fischer played in eight United States Championships , winning each by at least a one @-@ point margin . At age 15 , Fischer became both the youngest grandmaster up to that time and the youngest candidate for the World Championship .

At age 20 , Fischer won the 1963 ? 64 U.S. Championship with 11 / 11 , the only perfect score in the history of the tournament . His book My 60 Memorable Games (published 1969) became an icon of American chess literature and is regarded a masterwork . Fischer won the 1970 Interzonal Tournament by a record 3 ½ -point margin and won 20 consecutive games , including two unprecedented 6 ? 0 sweeps in the Candidates Matches . In July 1971 , he became the first official FIDE number @-@ one @-@ rated player .

After losing his title as World Chess Champion , Fischer became reclusive and sometimes erratic , disappearing from both competitive chess and the public eye . In 1992 he reemerged to win an unofficial rematch against Spassky . It was held in Yugoslavia , which was under a United Nations embargo at the time . His participation led to a conflict with the U.S. government , which sought income tax on Fischer 's match winnings , and ultimately issued a warrant for his arrest . After that , he lived his life as an émigré . In the 1990s , Fischer patented a modified chess timing system that added a time increment after each move , now a standard practice in top tournament and match play . He also invented a new variant of chess named Fischerandom Chess . Fischer made many additional contributions to chess .

= = Early years = =

Bobby Fischer was born at Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago , Illinois , on March 9 , 1943 . His birth certificate listed his father as Hans @-@ Gerhardt Fischer , also known as Gerardo Liebscher , a German biophysicist . His mother , Regina Wender Fischer , was a U.S. citizen ; Regina was born in Switzerland , to Jewish parents from Poland and Russia . Raised in St. Louis , Missouri , Regina became a teacher , registered nurse , and later a physician .

After graduating from college in her teens , Regina traveled to Germany to visit her brother . It was there she met geneticist and future Nobel Prize winner , Hermann Joseph Muller , who persuaded Regina to move to Moscow to study medicine . She enrolled at I.M. Sechenov First Moscow State Medical University , where she met Hans @-@ Gerhardt , whom she married in November 1933 . In 1938 , Hans and Regina had a daughter , Joan Fischer . The reemergence of anti @-@ Semitism under Joseph Stalin prompted Regina to go with Joan to Paris , France , where Regina became an English teacher . The threat of a German invasion led her and Joan to go to the United States in 1939 . Hans @-@ Gerhardt attempted to follow the pair but his German citizenship barred him from entering the United States . Regina and Hans @-@ Gerhardt had separated in Moscow , although they did not officially divorce until 1945 .

At the time of her son 's birth , Regina was " homeless " and shuttled to different jobs and schools around the country to support her family . She engaged in political activism , and raised both Bobby and Joan as a single parent .

In 1949 , the family moved to Brooklyn , New York , where she studied for her master 's degree in nursing and subsequently began working in that field .

== = Paul Nemenyi as Fischer 's father = = =

Sources implying that Paul Nemenyi , a Hungarian Jewish physicist and an expert in fluid and applied mechanics , may have been Fischer 's biological father were first made public in a 2002 investigation by Peter Nicholas and Clea Benson of The Philadelphia Inquirer . Throughout the 1950s , the FBI investigated Regina and her circle for her alleged communist sympathies , as well as her previous life in Moscow . The FBI files identify Paul Nemenyi as Bobby Fischer 's biological father , showing that Hans @-@ Gerhardt Fischer never entered the United States , having been refused admission by U.S. immigration officials due to his alleged Communist sympathies . Not only were Regina and Nemenyi reported to have had an affair in 1942 , but Nemenyi made monthly child support payments to Regina and paid for Bobby 's schooling until his own death in 1952 . Nemenyi had lodged complaints with social workers , saying he was concerned about the way that Regina was raising Bobby , to the point that , on at least one occasion , Nemenyi broke down in tears . Later on Bobby told the Hungarian chess player Zita Rajcsányi that Paul Nemenyi would sometimes show up at the family 's Brooklyn apartment and take him on outings . After Paul Nemenyi died in 1952 , Regina Fischer wrote a letter to Paul Nemenyi 's first son (Peter) , asking if Paul had left money for Bobby in his will :

Bobby was sick 2 days with fever and sore throat and of course a doctor or medicine was out of the question . I don 't think Paul would have wanted to leave Bobby this way and would ask you most urgently to let me know if Paul left anything for Bobby .

On one occasion , Regina told a social worker that the last time she had ever seen Hans @-@ Gerhardt Fischer was in 1939 , four years before Bobby was born . On another occasion , she told the same social worker she had traveled to Mexico to see Hans @-@ Gerhardt in June 1942 and that Bobby was conceived during that meeting . According to Bobby Fischer 's brother @-@ in @-@ law , Russell Targ , who was married to Bobby 's half @-@ sister , Joan , for 40 years , Regina concealed the fact that Nemenyi was Bobby 's father because she wanted to avoid the stigma of an out @-@ of @-@ wedlock birth .

== = Chess beginnings = = =

== = = Impoverished childhood = = = =

In March 1949 , 6 @-@ year @-@ old Bobby and his sister Joan learned how to play chess using the instructions from a set bought at a candy store . When Joan lost interest in chess and Regina did not have time to play , it left Fischer to play many of his first games against himself . When the family vacationed at Patchogue , Long Island that summer , Bobby found a book of old chess games and studied it intensely . Fischer biographer Frank Brady describes the family 's move from Manhattan to Brooklyn in 1950 :

In the fall of 1950 , Regina moved the family out of Manhattan and across the bridge to Brooklyn , where she rented an inexpensive apartment near the intersection of Union and Franklin streets . It was only temporary : She was trying to get closer to a better neighborhood . Robbed of her medical degree in Russia because of the war , she was now determined to acquire a nursing diploma . As soon as she enrolled in the Prospect Heights School of Nursing , the peripatetic Fischer family , citizens of nowhere , moved once again ? its tenth transit in six years ? to a \$ 52 @-@ a @-@ month two @-@ bedroom flat at 560 Lincoln Place in Brooklyn .

The family resided in apartment Q , a " small , basic , but habitable " apartment . It was there that " Fischer soon became so engrossed in the game that Regina feared he was spending too much time alone " . As a result , on November 14 , 1950 , Regina sent a postcard to the Brooklyn Eagle newspaper , seeking to place an ad inquiring whether other children of Bobby 's age might be interested in playing chess with him . The paper rejected her ad because no one could figure out how to classify it , but forwarded her inquiry to Hermann Helms , the " Dean of American Chess " ,

who told her that Master Max Pavey , former Scottish champion , would be giving a simultaneous exhibition on January 17 , 1951 . Fischer played in the exhibition . Although he held on for 15 minutes , even drawing a crowd of onlookers , he eventually lost to the chess master .

One of the spectators was Brooklyn Chess Club President , Carmine Nigro , an American chess expert of near master strength and an instructor . Nigro was so impressed with Fischer 's play that he introduced him to the club and began teaching him . Fischer noted of his time with Nigro : " Mr. Nigro was possibly not the best player in the world , but he was a very good teacher . Meeting him was probably a decisive factor in my going ahead with chess . "

Nigro hosted Fischer 's first chess tournament at his home in 1952 . In the summer of 1955 , Fischer , then 12 years old , joined the Manhattan Chess Club , the strongest chess club in the country . Fischer 's relationship with Nigro lasted until 1956 , when Nigro moved away .

= = = Mentorship from Lombardy = = =

Nigro introduced Fischer to future grandmaster William Lombardy , and , starting in September 1954 , Lombardy began coaching Fischer in private . " We spent hours in our sessions , simply playing over quality games , " said Lombardy . " I tried to instill in Bobby the secret of my own speedy rise . Eidetic Imagery and Total Immersion . " Based on a 1956 game Lombardy played against Povilas Vaitonis (in which he agreed to a draw offer after only 13 moves) , Lombardy told Fischer : " Do not accept draw offers . For an ambitious and talented player , accepting a draw is death to a top result . Opponents fear an uncompromising opponent and thus make more mistakes . Act as I advise and do not copy my timidity . " Lombardy played a key part in Fischer 's becoming World Champion . He was Fischer 's aide at Portoro? where they analyzed Fischer 's games . He was Bobby 's second in Reykjavik , where he analyzed with Fischer , and helped keep Fischer in the match .

= = = The Hawthorne Chess Club = = =

In June 1956 , Fischer began attending the Hawthorne Chess Club , based in master John " Jack " W. Collins ' home . For years it was believed that Collins was Fischer 's teacher and coach , even though Collins stated that he did not teach Fischer . It is now believed that Collins was Fischer 's mentor , not his teacher or coach . A mentor and a friend , Fischer played thousands of blitz and offhand games with Collins and other strong players , studied the books in Collins ' large chess library , and ate almost as many dinners at Collins ' home as his own .

Future grandmaster Arnold Denker was also a mentor to young Bobby , often taking him to watch the New York Rangers play hockey at Madison Square Garden . Bobby enjoyed those treats and never forgot them ; the two became lifelong friends .

= = Young champion = =

In 1956 , Fischer experienced a " meteoric rise " in his playing strength . On the tenth national rating list of the United States Chess Federation (USCF) , published on May 20 , 1956 , Fischer 's rating was 1726 , more than 900 points below top @-@ rated Samuel Reshevsky (2663) .

In March 1956 , the Log Cabin Chess Club of Orange , New Jersey , took Fischer on a tour to Cuba , where he gave a 12 @-@ board simultaneous exhibition at Havana 's Capablanca Chess Club , winning ten games and drawing two . On this tour the club played a series of matches against other clubs . Fischer played second board , behind International Master Norman Whitaker . Whitaker and Fischer were the leading scorers for the club , each scoring 5 ½ points out of 7 games .

In July 1956 , Fischer won the U.S. Junior Chess Championship , scoring 8 ½ / 10 at Philadelphia to become the youngest @-@ ever Junior Champion at age 13 . At the 1956 U.S. Open Chess Championship in Oklahoma City , Bobby scored 8 ½ / 12 to tie for 4 ? 8th places , with Arthur Bisguier winning . In the first Canadian Open Chess Championship at Montreal 1956 , Bobby scored 7 / 10 to tie for 8 ? 12th places , with Larry Evans winning . In November , Fischer played in the

1956 Eastern States Open Championship in Washington , D.C. , tying for second with William Lombardy , Nicholas Rossolimo , and Arthur Feuerstein , with Hans Berliner taking first by a half @-@ point .

Fischer accepted an invitation to play in the Third Lessing J. Rosenwald Trophy Tournament in New York City (1956) , a premier tournament limited to the 12 players considered the best in the country . Although Fischer 's rating was not among the top 12 in the country , he received entry by special consideration . Playing against top opposition , the 13 @-@ year @-@ old Fischer could only score 4 ½ / 11 , tying for 8 ? 9th place . Yet , Bobby won the brilliancy prize for his ' " immortal " ' game against International Master Donald Byrne , in which Bobby sacrificed his queen to unleash an unstoppable attack . Hans Kmoch called it " The Game of the Century " . Wrote Kmoch , " The following game , a stunning masterpiece of combination play performed by a boy of 13 against a formidable opponent , matches the finest on record in the history of chess prodigies " . " ' The Game of the Century ' has been talked about , analyzed , and admired for more than fifty years , and it will probably be a part of the canon of chess for many years to come . " " In reflecting on his game a while after it occurred , Bobby was refreshingly modest : ' I just made the moves I thought were best . I was just lucky . ' "

In 1957 , Fischer played a two @-@ game match against former World Champion Max Euwe at New York , losing ½ ? 1 ½ . On the USCF 's eleventh national rating list , published on May 5 , 1957 , Fischer was rated 2231 ? over 500 points higher than his rating a year before . This made him the country 's youngest ever chess master , up to that point . In July , Bobby successfully defended his U.S. Junior title , scoring 8 ½ / 9 at San Francisco . As a result of his strong tournament results , Fischer 's rating went up to 2298 , " making him among the top ten active players in the country " . In August , Fischer scored 10 / 12 at the U.S. Open Chess Championship in Cleveland , winning on tie @-@ breaking points over Arthur Bisguier . This made Bobby the youngest ever U.S. Open Champion . Bobby won the New Jersey Open Championship , scoring 6 ½ / 7 . He then defeated the young Filipino master Rodolfo Tan Cardoso 6 ? 2 in a New York match sponsored by Pepsi @-@ Cola .

= = = Wins first U.S. title = = =

Based on Fischer 's rating and strong results , the USCF invited him to play in the 1957 ? 58 U.S. Championship . The tournament included such luminaries as six @-@ time U.S. champion Samuel Reshevsky , defending U.S. champion Arthur Bisguier , and William Lombardy , who in August had won the World Junior Championship with the only perfect score (11 ? 0) in the history of the event . Bisguier predicted that Fischer would " finish slightly over the center mark " . Despite all the predictions to the contrary , Fischer scored eight wins and five draws to win the tournament by a one @-@ point margin , with 10 ½ / 13 . Still two months shy of his 15th birthday , Fischer became the youngest ever U.S. Champion . Since the championship that year was also the U.S. Zonal Championship , Fischer 's victory earned him the title of International Master . Fischer 's victory in the U.S. Championship sent his rating up to 2626 , making him the second highest rated player in the United States , behind only Reshevsky (2713) , and qualified him to participate in the 1958 Portoro? Interzonal , the next step toward challenging the World Champion .

= = Grandmaster , candidate , author = =

Bobby wanted to go to Moscow . At his pleading , " Regina wrote directly to the Soviet leader , Nikita Khrushchev , requesting an invitation for Bobby to participate in the World Youth and Student Festival . The reply ? affirmative ? came too late for him to go . " Regina did not have the money to pay the airfare , but in the following year Fischer was invited onto the game show I 've Got a Secret , where , thanks to Regina 's efforts , the producers of the show arranged two round @-@ trip tickets to Russia .

Once in Russia , Fischer was invited by the Soviet Union to Moscow , where International Master Lev Abramov would serve as a guide to Bobby and his sister , Joan . Upon arrival , Fischer

immediately demanded that he be taken to the Moscow Central Chess Club , where he played speed chess with " two young Soviet masters " , Evgeni Vasiukov and Alexander Nikitin , winning every game . Chess author V. I. Linder writes about the impression Fischer gave grandmaster Vladimir Alatortsev when he played blitz against the Soviet masters : " Back in 1958 , in the Central Chess Club , Vladimir Alatortsev saw a tall , angular 15 @-@ year @-@ old youth , who in blitz games , crushed almost everyone who crossed his path ... Alatortsev was no exception , losing all three games . He was astonished by the play of the young American Robert Fischer , his fantastic self @-@ confidence , amazing chess erudition and simply brilliant play ! On arriving home , Vladimir said in admiration to his wife : ' This is the future world champion ! ' "

Fischer demanded to play against Mikhail Botvinnik , the reigning World Champion . When told that this was impossible , Fischer asked to play Keres . " Finally , Tigran Petrosian was , on a semi @-@ official basis , summoned to the club ... " where he played speed games with Fischer , winning the majority . " When Bobby discovered that he wasn 't going to play any formal games ... he went into a not @-@ so @-@ silent rage " , saying he was fed up " with these Russian pigs " , which angered the Soviets who saw Fischer as their honored guest . It was then that the Yugoslavian chess officials offered to take in Fischer and Joan as early guests to the Interzonal . Fischer took them up on the offer , arriving in Yugoslavia to play two short training matches against masters Dragoljub Jano?evi? and Milan Matulovi? . Fischer drew both games against Jano?evi? and then defeated Matulovi? in Belgrade by 2 ½ ? 1 ½ .

The top six finishers in the Interzonal would qualify for the Candidates Tournament . Most observers doubted that a 15 @-@ year @-@ old with no international experience could finish among the six qualifiers at the Interzonal , but Fischer told journalist Miro Radoicic , " I can draw with the grandmasters , and there are half @-@ a @-@ dozen patzers in the tournament I reckon to beat . " Despite some bumps in the road and a problematic start , Fischer succeeded in his plan : after a strong finish , he ended up with 12 / 20 (+ 6 ? 2 = 12) to tie for 5 ? 6th . The Soviet grandmaster Yuri Averbakh observed ,

In the struggle at the board this youth , almost still a child , showed himself to be a full @-@ fledged fighter , demonstrating amazing composure , precise calculation and devilish resourcefulness . I was especially struck not even by his extensive opening knowledge , but his striving everywhere to seek new paths . In Fischer 's play an enormous talent was noticeable , and in addition one sensed an enormous amount of work on the study of chess .

Soviet grandmaster David Bronstein said of Fischer 's time in Portoro? : " It was interesting for me to observe Fischer , but for a long time I couldn 't understand why this 15 @-@ year @-@ old boy played chess so well " . Fischer became the youngest person ever to qualify for the Candidates and the youngest ever grandmaster at 15 years , 6 months , 1 day . " By then everyone knew we had a genius on our hands . "

Before the Candidates ' Tournament , Fischer won the 1958 ? 59 U.S. Championship (scoring 8 ½ / 11) . He tied for third (with Borislav Ivkov) in Mar del Plata (scoring 10 / 14) , a half @-@ point behind Ludek Pachman and Miguel Najdorf . He tied for 4 ? 6th in Santiago (scoring 7 ½ / 12) behind Ivkov , Pachman , and Herman Pilnik .

At the Zürich International Tournament , spring 1959 , Fischer finished a point behind future World Champion Mikhail Tal and a half @-@ point behind Yugoslavian grandmaster Svetozar Gligori? . Tal recalled Fischer 's uncompromising style : " In his game with the oldest competitor , the Hungarian grandmaster Gedeon Barcza , Fischer had no advantage , but , not wishing to let his opponent go in peace , played on to the 103rd move . The game was adjourned three times and the contestants used up two score sheets , but even when there were only the kings left on the board , Fischer made two more moves ! Draw ! Stunned by such a fanatical onslaught , Barcza could barely get up from his chair , but Bobby nonchalantly suggested : ' Let 's have a look at the game from the beginning ... ' Barcza then began pleading : ' Look , I have a wife and children . Who 's going to support them in the event of my untimely death ! ' "

Although Fischer had ended his formal education at age 16 , dropping out of Erasmus Hall High School in Brooklyn , he subsequently taught himself several foreign languages so he could read foreign chess periodicals . According to Latvian chess master Alexander Koblencs , even he and Tal

could not match the commitment that Fischer had made to chess . Recalling a conversation from the tournament : " ' Tell me , Bobby , ' Tal continued , ' what do you think of the playing style of Larissa Volpert ? ' ' She 's too cautious . But you have another girl , Dmitrieva . Her games do appeal to me ! ' Here we were left literally open @-@ mouthed in astonishment . Misha and I have looked at thousands of games , but it never even occurred to us to study the games of our women players . How could we find the time for this ? ! Yet Bobby , it turns out , had found the time ! ' "

Until late 1959 , Fischer " had dressed atrociously for a champion , appearing at the most august and distinguished national and international events in sweaters and corduroys . " A director of the Manhattan Chess Club had once banned Fischer for not being " properly accoutered " , forcing Denker to intercede to get him reinstated . Now , encouraged by Pal Benko to dress more smartly , Fischer " began buying suits from all over the world , hand @-@ tailored and made to order . " He told journalist Ralph Ginzburg that he had 17 hand @-@ tailored suits and that all of his shirts and shoes were handmade .

At the age of 16 , Fischer finished equal fifth out of eight (the top non @-@ Soviet player) at the 1959 Candidates Tournament in Bled / Zagreb / Belgrade , Yugoslavia , scoring 12 ½ / 28 . He was outclassed by tournament winner Tal , who won all four of their individual games . That year , Fischer released his first book of collected games : Bobby Fischer 's Games of Chess , published by Simon & Schuster .

= = Drops out of school = =

Bobby 's interest in chess became more important than schoolwork , to the point that " by the time he reached the fourth grade , he 'd been in and out of six schools . " In 1952 , Regina got Bobby a scholarship (based on his chess talent and " astronomically high IQ ") to Brooklyn Community Woodward . Fischer later attended Erasmus Hall High School at the same time as Barbra Streisand and Neil Diamond . In 1959 , its student council awarded him a gold medal for his chess achievements . The same year , Fischer dropped out of high school when he turned age 16 , the earliest he could legally do so . He later explained to Ralph Ginzburg , " You don 't learn anything in school . "

When Fischer was 16 , his mother moved out of their apartment to pursue medical training . Her friend Joan Rodker , who had met Regina when the two were " idealistic communists " living in Moscow in the 1930s , believes that Fischer resented his mother for being mostly absent as a mother , a communist activist and an admirer of the Soviet Union and that this led to his hatred for the Soviet Union . In letters to Rodker , Fischer 's mother states her desire to pursue her own " obsession " of training in medicine and writes that her son would have to live in their Brooklyn apartment without her : " It sounds terrible to leave a 16 @-@ year @-@ old to his own devices , but he is probably happier that way " . The apartment was on the edge of Bedford @-@ Stuyvesant , a neighborhood that had one of the highest homicide and general crime rates in New York City . Despite the alienation from her son , Regina , in 1960 , protested the practices of the American Chess Foundation and staged a five @-@ hour protest in front of the White House , urging President Dwight Eisenhower to send an American team to that year 's chess Olympiad (set for Leipzig , East Germany , behind the Iron Curtain) and to help support the team financially .

= = U.S. Championships = =

Fischer played in eight U.S. Championships , winning all of them , by at least a one @-@ point margin . His results were :

Fischer missed the 1961 ? 62 Championship (he was preparing for the 1962 Interzonal) , and there was no 1964 ? 65 event . Out of eight U.S. Chess Championships , Fischer lost only three games ; to Edmar Mednis in the 1962 ? 63 event , and in consecutive rounds to Samuel Reshevsky , and Robert Byrne in the 1965 championship , culminating in a total score of 74 / 90 (61 wins , 26 draws , 3 losses) .

= = Olympiads = =

Fischer refused to play in the 1958 Munich Olympiad when his demand to play first board ahead of Samuel Reshevsky was rejected . Some sources claim that 15 @-@ year @-@ old Fischer was unable to arrange leave from attending high school . Fischer would later represent the United States on first board at four Men 's Chess Olympiads , winning two individual Silver and one individual Bronze medals :

Out of four Men 's Chess Olympiads , Fischer scored $+ 40 ? 7 = 18$, for $49 / 65 : 75 @. @ 4 \%$. In 1966 , Fischer narrowly missed the individual gold medal , scoring $88 @. @ 23 \%$ to World Champion Tigran Petrosian 's $88 @. @ 46 \%$, even though he played four games more than Petrosian , faced stiffer opposition , and would have won the gold if he had accepted Florin Gheorghiu 's draw offer , rather than declining it and suffering his only loss .

At the 1962 Varna Olympiad , Fischer predicted that he would defeat Argentinian GM Miguel Najdorf in 25 moves . Fischer actually did it in 24 , becoming the only player to beat Najdorf in the tournament . Ironically , Najdorf lost the game whilst employing the very opening variation named after him : the Sicilian Najdorf .

Fischer had planned to play for the U.S. at the 1968 Lugano Olympiad , but backed out when he saw the poor playing conditions . Both former World Champion Tigran Petrosian and Belgian @-@ American International Master George Koltanowski , the " leader of the American team " that year , felt that Fischer was " justified " in not participating in the Olympiad . According to Lombardy , Fischer 's non @-@ participation was due to Reshevsky 's refusal to " yield first board " .

= = 1960 ? 61 = =

In 1960 , Fischer tied for first place with Soviet star Boris Spassky at the strong Mar del Plata Tournament in Argentina , winning by a two @-@ point margin , scoring $13 \frac{1}{2} / 15 (+ 13 ? 1 = 1)$, ahead of David Bronstein . Fischer lost only to Spassky ; this was the start of their lifelong friendship .

Fischer experienced the only failure in his competitive career at the Buenos Aires Tournament (1960) , finishing with $8 \frac{1}{2} / 19 (+ 3 ? 5 = 11)$, far behind winners Viktor Korchnoi and Samuel Reshevsky with $13 / 19$. According to Larry Evans , Fischer 's first sexual experience was with a girl to whom Evans introduced him during the tournament . Pal Benko says that Fischer did horribly in the tournament " because he got caught up in women and sex . Afterwards , Fischer said he 'd never mix women and chess together , and kept the promise . " Fischer concluded 1960 by winning a small tournament in Reykjavík with $4 \frac{1}{2} / 5$, and defeating Klaus Darga in an exhibition game in West Berlin .

In 1961 , Fischer started a 16 @-@ game match with Reshevsky , split between New York and Los Angeles . Reshevsky , 32 years Fischer 's senior , was considered the favorite , since he had far more match experience and had never lost a set match . After 11 games and a tie score (two wins apiece with seven draws) , the match ended prematurely due to a scheduling dispute between Fischer and match organizer and sponsor Jacqueline Piatigorsky . Reshevsky was declared the winner , by default , and received the winner 's share of the prize fund .

Fischer was second in a super @-@ class field , behind only former World Champion Tal , at Bled , 1961 . Yet , Fischer defeated Tal head @-@ to @-@ head for the first time in their individual game , scored $3 \frac{1}{2} / 4$ against the Soviet contingent , and finished as the only unbeaten player , with $13 \frac{1}{2} / 19 (+ 8 ? 0 = 11)$.

= = 1962 : success , setback , accusations of collusion = =

Fischer won the 1962 Stockholm Interzonal by a $2 \frac{1}{2}$ -point margin , going undefeated , with $17 \frac{1}{2} / 22 (+ 13 ? 0 = 9)$. He was the first non @-@ Soviet player to win an Interzonal since FIDE instituted the tournament in 1948 . Russian grandmaster Alexander Kotov said of Fischer :

I have discussed Fischer 's play with Max Euwe and Gideon Stahlberg . All of us , experienced '

tournament old @-@ timers ' , were surprised by Fischer 's endgame expertise . When a young player is good at attacking or at combinations , this is understandable , but a faultless endgame technique at the age of 19 is something rare . I can recall only one other player who at that age was equally skillful at endgames ? Vasily Smyslov .

Fischer 's victory made him a favorite for the Candidates Tournament in Curaçao . Yet , despite his result in the Interzonal , Fischer only finished fourth out of eight with 14 / 27 (+ 8 ? 7 = 12) , far behind Tigran Petrosian (17 ½ / 27) , Efim Geller , and Paul Keres (both 17 / 27) . Tal fell very ill during the tournament , and had to withdraw before completion . Fischer , a friend of Tal , was the only contestant who visited him in the hospital .

= = = Accuses Soviets of collusion = = =

Following his failure in the 1962 Candidates , Fischer asserted , in an August 20 , 1962 Sports Illustrated article , entitled " The Russians Have Fixed World Chess " , that three of the five Soviet players (Tigran Petrosian , Paul Keres , and Efim Geller) had a prearranged agreement to quickly draw their games against each other in order to conserve their energy for playing against Fischer . It is generally thought that this accusation is correct . Fischer stated that he would never again participate in a Candidates ' tournament , since the format , combined with the alleged collusion , made it impossible for a non @-@ Soviet player to win . Following Fischer 's article , FIDE , in late 1962 , voted to implement a radical reform of the playoff system , replacing the Candidates ' tournament with a format of one @-@ on @-@ one knockout matches ; the format that Fischer would dominate in 1971 .

Fischer defeated Bent Larsen in a summer 1962 exhibition game in Copenhagen for Danish TV . Later that year , Fischer beat Bogdan ?liwa in a team match against Poland in Warsaw .

In the 1962 ? 63 U.S. Championship , Fischer experienced his first single @-@ game loss (to Edmar Mednis) in round one . Bisguier was in excellent form , and Fischer caught up to him only at the end . Tied at 7 ? 3 , the two met in the final round . Bisguier stood well in the middlegame , but blundered , handing Fischer his fifth consecutive U.S. championship .

= = Semi @-@ retirement in the mid @-@ 1960s = =

Influenced by ill will over the aborted 1961 match against Reshevsky , Fischer declined an invitation to play in the 1963 Piatigorsky Cup tournament in Los Angeles , which had a world @-@ class field . He instead played in the Western Open in Bay City , Michigan , which he won with 7 ½ / 8 . In August ? September 1963 , Fischer won the New York State Championship at Poughkeepsie , with 7 / 7 , his first perfect score , " ahead of Bisguier and Sherwin " .

In the 1963 ? 64 U.S. Championship , Fischer achieved his second perfect score , this time against the top @-@ ranked chess players in the country : " This tournament became , as they say , the stuff of legend . The fact that Fischer won his sixth U.S. title was no surprise . The way he did it was spectacular . " " One by one Fischer mowed down the opposition as he cut an 11 ? 0 swathe through the field , to demonstrate convincingly to the opposition that he was now in a class by himself . " This result brought Fischer heightened fame , including a profile in Life magazine . Sports Illustrated diagrammed each of the 11 games in its article , " The Amazing Victory Streak of Bobby Fischer " . Such extensive chess coverage was groundbreaking for the top American sports ' magazine . His 11 ? 0 win in the 1963 ? 64 Championship is the only perfect score in the history of the tournament , and one of about ten perfect scores in high @-@ level chess tournaments ever . David Hooper and Kenneth Whyld called it " the most remarkable achievement of this kind " . Fischer recalls : " Motivated by my lopsided result (11 ? 0 !) , Dr. [Hans] Kmoch congratulated [Larry] Evans (the runner up) on ' winning ' the tournament ... and then he congratulated me on ' winning the exhibition ' . "

International Master Anthony Saidy recalled his last round encounter with the undefeated Fischer :
Going into the final game I certainly did not expect to upset Fischer . I hardly knew the opening but played simply , and he went along with the scenario , opting for a N @-@ v @-@ B [i.e. , Knight vs.

Bishop] endgame with a minimal edge . In the corridor , Evans said to me , ' Good . Show him we 're not all children.'

At adjournment , Saidy saw a way to force a draw , yet " sealed a different , wrong move " , and lost . " The rest is history . " " Chess publications around the world wrote of the unparalleled achievement . Only Bent Larsen , always a Fischer detractor , was unimpressed : ' Fischer was playing against children ' " .

Fischer , eligible as U.S. Champion , decided against his participation in the 1964 Amsterdam Interzonal , taking himself out of the 1966 World Championship cycle , even after FIDE changed the format of the eight @-@ player Candidates Tournament from a round @-@ robin to a series of knockout matches , which eliminated the possibility of collusion . Instead , Fischer embarked on a tour of the United States and Canada from February through May , playing a simultaneous exhibition , and giving a lecture in each of more than 40 cities . His 94 % winning percentage over more than 2 @,@ 000 games is one of the best ever achieved . Fischer declined an invitation to play for the U.S. in the 1964 Olympiad in Tel Aviv .

= = Successful return = =

Fischer wanted to play in the Capablanca Memorial Tournament , Havana in August and September 1965 . Since the State Department refused to endorse Fischer 's passport as valid for visiting Cuba , he proposed , and the tournament officials and players accepted , a unique arrangement : Fischer played his moves from a room at the Marshall Chess Club , which were then transmitted by teleprinter to Cuba . Lud?k Pachman observed that Fischer " was handicapped by the longer playing session resulting from the time wasted in transmitting the moves , and that is one reason why he lost to three of his chief rivals . " The tournament was an " ordeal " for Fischer , who had to endure eight @-@ hour and sometimes even twelve @-@ hour playing sessions . Despite the handicap , Fischer tied for second through fourth places , with 15 / 21 (+ 12 ? 3 = 6) , behind former World Champion Vasily Smyslov , whom Fischer defeated in their individual game . The tournament received extensive media coverage .

In December , Fischer won his seventh U.S. Championship (1965) , with the score of 8 ½ / 11 (+ 8 ? 2 = 1) , despite losing to Robert Byrne and Reshevsky in the eighth and ninth rounds . Fischer also reconciled with Mrs. Piatigorsky , accepting an invitation to the very strong second Piatigorsky Cup (1966) tournament in Santa Monica . Fischer began disastrously and after eight rounds was tied for last with 3 / 8 . He then staged " the most sensational comeback in the history of grandmaster chess " , scoring 7 / 8 in the next eight rounds . In the end , World Chess Championship finalist Boris Spassky edged him out by a half point , scoring 11 ½ / 18 to Fischer 's 11 / 18 (+ 7 ? 3 = 8) . Now aged 23 , Fischer would win every match or tournament he completed for the rest of his life .

Fischer won the U.S. Championship (1966 ? 67) for the eighth and final time , ceding only three draws (+ 8 ? 0 = 3) , In March ? April and August ? September , Fischer won strong tournaments at Monte Carlo , with 7 / 9 (+ 6 ? 1 = 2) , and Skopje , with 13 ½ / 17 (+ 12 ? 2 = 3) . In the Philippines , Fischer played nine exhibition games against master opponents , scoring 8 ½ / 9 .

= = Withdrawal while leading Interzonal = =

Fischer 's win in the 1966 ? 67 U.S. Championship qualified him for the next World Championship cycle .

At the 1967 Interzonal , held at Sousse , Tunisia , Fischer scored 8 ½ points in the first 10 games , to lead the field . His observance of the Worldwide Church of God 's seventh @-@ day Sabbath was honored by the organizers , but deprived Fischer of several rest days , which led to a scheduling dispute , causing Fischer to forfeit two games in protest and later withdraw , eliminating himself from the 1969 World Championship cycle . Communications difficulties with the highly inexperienced local organizers were also a significant factor , since Fischer knew no French and the organizers had very limited English . No one in Tunisian chess had previous experience running an event of this stature .

Since Fischer had completed less than half of his scheduled games , all of his results were annulled , meaning players who had played Fischer had those games cancelled , and the scores nullified from the official tournament record .

= = = Second semi @-@ retirement = = =

In 1968 , Fischer won tournaments at Netanya , with $11 \frac{1}{2} / 13$ (+ 10 ? 0 = 3) , and Vinkovci , with $11 / 13$ (+ 9 ? 0 = 4) , by large margins . Fischer then stopped playing for the next 18 months , except for a win against Anthony Saidy in a 1969 New York Metropolitan League team match . That year , Fischer (assisted by grandmaster Larry Evans) released his second book of collected games : My 60 Memorable Games , published by Simon & Schuster . The book " was an immediate success " .

= = World Champion = =

In 1970 , Fischer began a new effort to become World Champion . His dramatic march toward the title made him a household name and made chess front @-@ page news for a time . He won the title in 1972 , but forfeited it three years later .

= = = Road to the World Championship = = =

The 1969 U.S. Championship was also a zonal qualifier , with the top three finishers advancing to the Interzonal . Fischer , however , had sat out the U.S. Championship because of disagreements about the tournament 's format and prize fund . Benko , one of the three qualifiers , agreed to give up his spot in the Interzonal in order to give Fischer another shot at the World Championship . " When it was suggested to Fischer that Benko was considering the gesture based on a large sum of money to be paid to him , Bobby replied that Benko would not give up his berth for money alone . It was a matter of honor " . " Lombardy , who was next in line with the right to participate , was queried as to whether he would also step aside . ' I would like to play , ' he answered , ' but Fischer should have the chance . ' "

In 1970 and 1971 , Fischer " dominated his contemporaries to an extent never seen before or since " .

Before the Interzonal , in March and April 1970 , the world 's best players competed in the USSR vs. Rest of the World match in Belgrade , Yugoslavia , often referred to as " the Match of the Century " . There was much surprise when Fischer decided to participate :

Fischer had not played competitive chess for eighteen months , and many thought he would never return . Then , to general surprise and delight , he agreed to participate in the Soviet Union vs. the Rest of the World in 1970 in Belgrade .

With Evans as his second , Fischer flew to Belgrade with the intention of playing board one for the rest of the world . Danish grandmaster Bent Larsen , however , (due to his recent tournament victories) demanded to play first board instead of Fischer , even though Fischer had the higher Elo rating . To the surprise of everyone , Fischer agreed . Although the USSR team eked out a $20 \frac{1}{2} ? 19 \frac{1}{2}$ victory , " On the top four boards , the Soviets managed to win only one game out of a possible sixteen . Bobby Fischer was the high scorer for his team , with a 3 ? 1 score against Petrosian (two wins and two draws) " . " Fischer left no doubt in anyone 's mind that he had put his temporary break from the tournament circuit to good use . Petrosian was almost unrecognizable in the first two games , and by the time he had collected himself , although pressing his opponent , he could do no more than draw the last two games of the four @-@ game set " .

After the USSR versus the Rest of the World Match , the unofficial World Championship of Lightning Chess (5 @-@ minute games) was held at Herceg Novi . " [The Russians] figured on teaching Fischer a lesson and on bringing him down a peg or two " . Petrosian and Tal were considered the favorites , but Fischer overwhelmed the super @-@ class field with $19 / 22$ (+ 17 ? 1

= 4) , far ahead of Tal (14 ½) , Korchnoi (14) , Petrosian (13 ½) , and Bronstein (13) . Fischer lost only one game (to Korchnoi , who was also the only player to achieve an even score against him in the double round robin tournament) . Fischer " crushed such blitz kings as Tal , Petrosian and Vasily Smyslov by a clean score " . Tal marveled that , " During the entire tournament he didn 't leave a single pawn en prise ! " , while the other players " blundered knights and bishops galore " . For Lombardy , who had played many blitz games with Fischer , Fischer 's 4 ½ -point margin of victory " came as a pleasant surprise " .

In April ? May 1970 , Fischer won at Rovinj / Zagreb with 13 / 17 (+ 10 ? 1 = 6) , by a two @-@ point margin , ahead of Gligori? , Hort , Korchnoi , Smyslov , and Petrosian . In July ? August , Fischer crushed the mostly grandmaster field at Buenos Aires , winning by a 3 ½ -point margin , scoring 15 / 17 (+ 13 ? 0 = 4) . Fischer then played first board for the U.S. Team in the 19th Chess Olympiad in Siegen , where he won an individual Silver medal , scoring 10 / 13 (+ 8 ? 1 = 4) , with his only loss being to World Champion Boris Spassky . Right after the Olympiad , Fischer defeated Ulf Andersson in an exhibition game for the Swedish newspaper Expressen . Fischer had taken his game to a new level .

Fischer won the Interzonal (held in Palma de Mallorca in November and December 1970) with 18 ½ / 23 (+ 15 ? 1 = 7) , far ahead of Larsen , Efim Geller , and Robert Hübner , with 15 / 23 . Fischer finished the tournament with seven consecutive wins . Setting aside the Sousse Interzonal (which Fischer withdrew from while leading) , Fischer 's victory gave him a string of eight consecutive first prizes in tournaments . Former World Champion Mikhail Botvinnik was not , however , impressed by Fischer 's results , stating : " Fischer has been declared a genius . I do not agree with this ... In order to rightly be declared a genius in chess , you have to defeat equal opponents by a big margin . As yet he has not done this " . Despite Botvinnik 's remarks , " Fischer began a miraculous year in the history of chess " .

In the 1971 Candidates matches , Fischer was set to play against Soviet grandmaster and concert pianist Mark Taimanov in the quarter @-@ finals . " Their match was to begin in May 1971 in Vancouver , Canada , on the beautiful campus of the University of British Columbia " . " Analysts and players alike predicted that Fischer would win the Candidates , but not without a struggle . Tal predicted that Fischer would win 5 ½ ? 4 ½ against Taimanov " . " [Fischer] saw himself as the firm favorite in the Taimanov match . He was not alone ; the noncommunist press was of the same mind . Only Taimanov insisted that he could win , dismissing Fischer as a mere computer " . Taimanov had reason to be confident . He was backed by the firm guidance of Botvinnik , who " had thoroughly analysed Fischer 's record and put together a ' dossier ' on him " , from when he was in talks to play Fischer in a match " a couple of years earlier " . After Fischer defeated Taimanov in the second game of the match , Taimanov asked Fischer how he managed to come up with the move 12 . N1c3 , to which Fischer replied " that the idea was not his ? he had come across it in the monograph by the Soviet master Alexander Nikitin in a footnote " . Taimanov said of this : " It is staggering that I , an expert on the Sicilian , should have missed this theoretically significant idea by my compatriot , while Fischer had uncovered it in a book in a foreign language ! " With the score at 4 ? 0 , in Fischer 's favor , the fifth game adjournment was a sight to behold . Schonberg explains the scene :

Taimanov came to Vancouver with two seconds , both grandmasters . Fischer was alone . He thought that the sight of Taimanov and his seconds was the funniest thing he had ever seen . There Taimanov and his seconds would sit , six hands flying , pocket sets waving in the air , while variations were being spouted all over the place . And there sat Taimanov with a confused look on his face . Just before resuming play [in the fifth game] the seconds were giving Taimanov some last @-@ minute advice . When poor Taimanov entered the playing room and sat down to confront Fischer , his head was so full of conflicting continuations that he became rattled , left a Rook en prise and immediately resigned .

Fischer beat Taimanov by the score of 6 ? 0 . " The record books showed that the only comparable achievement to the 6 ? 0 score against Taimanov was Wilhelm Steinitz 's 7 ? 0 win against Joseph Henry Blackburne in 1876 in an era of more primitive defensive technique . " " Who would have imagined that any challenger 's match would ever have been decided by a perfect score , when the

participants are all to be ranked among the strongest players in the world ? " " It is difficult to portray to non @-@ chess players the magnitude of such a shutout . A typical result between well @-@ matched players might be , say , six wins to four , with nine draws " . Taimanov later recalled , " When Grand Masters play , they see the logic of their opponent 's moves . One 's moves may be so powerful that the other may not be able to stop him , but the plan behind the moves will be clear . Not so with Fischer . His moves did not make sense ... "

Upon losing the final game of the match , Taimanov shrugged his shoulders , saying sadly to Fischer : " Well , I still have my music . " As a result of his performance , Taimanov " was thrown out of the USSR team and forbidden to travel for two years . He was banned from writing articles , was deprived of his monthly stipend ... [and] the authorities prohibited him from performing on the concert platform . " " The crushing loss virtually ended Taimanov 's chess career . "

Fischer was next scheduled to play against Danish grandmaster Bent Larsen . " Spassky predicted a tight struggle : ' Larsen is a little stronger in spirit . ' " Before the match , Botvinnik had told a Soviet television audience :

It is hard to say how their match will end , but it is clear that such an easy victory as in Vancouver [against Taimanov] will not be given to Fischer . I think Larsen has unpleasant surprises in store for [Fischer] , all the more since having dealt with Taimanov thus , Fischer will want to do just the same to Larsen and this is impossible .

Fischer beat Larsen by the score of 6 ? 0 . Robert Byrne writes : " To a certain extent I could grasp the Taimanov match as a kind of curiosity ? almost a freak , a strange chess occurrence that would never occur again . But now I am at a loss for anything whatever to say ... So , it is out of the question for me to explain how Bobby , how anyone , could win six games in a row from such a genius of the game as Bent Larsen " . Just a year before , Larsen had played first board for the Rest of the World team ahead of Fischer , and had handed Fischer his only loss at the Interzonal . Garry Kasparov later wrote that no player had ever shown a superiority over his rivals comparable to Fischer 's " incredible " 12 ? 0 score in the two matches . Chess statistician Jeff Sonas concludes that the victory over Larsen gave Fischer the " highest single @-@ match performance rating ever " .

On August 8 , 1971 , while preparing for his last Candidates match with former World Champion Tigran Petrosian , Fischer played in the Manhattan Chess Club Rapid Tournament , winning with 21 ½ / 22 against a strong field .

Despite Fischer 's results against Taimanov and Larsen , his upcoming match against Petrosian seemed a daunting task . Nevertheless , the Soviet government was concerned about Fischer . " Reporters asked Petrosian whether the match would last the full twelve games ... ' It might be possible that I win it earlier , ' Petrosian replied " , and then stated : " Fischer 's [nineteen consecutive] wins do not impress me . He is a great chess player but no genius " . Petrosian played a strong theoretical novelty in the first game , gaining the advantage , but Fischer eventually won the game after Petrosian faltered . This gave Fischer a run of 20 consecutive wins against the world 's top players (in the Interzonal and Candidates matches) , a winning streak topped only by Steinitz 's 25 straight wins in 1873 ? 82 . Petrosian won the second game , finally snapping Fischer 's streak . After three consecutive draws , Fischer swept the next four games to win the match 6 ½ ? 2 ½ (+ 5 ? 1 = 3) . Sports Illustrated ran an article on the match , highlighting Fischer 's domination of Petrosian as being due to Petrosian 's outdated system of preparation :

Fischer 's recent record raises the distinct possibility that he has made a breakthrough in modern chess theory . His response to Petrosian 's elaborately plotted 11th move in the first game is an example : Russian experts had worked on the variation for weeks , yet when it was thrown at Fischer suddenly , he faced its consequences alone and won by applying simple , classic principles .

Upon completion of the match , Petrosian remarked : " After the sixth game Fischer really did become a genius . I on the other hand , either had a breakdown or was tired , or something else happened , but the last three games were no longer chess . " " Some experts kept insisting that Petrosian was off form , and that he should have had a plus score at the end of the sixth game ... " to which Fischer replied , " People have been playing against me below strength for fifteen years . "

Fischer's match results befuddled Botvinnik : " It is hard to talk about Fischer's matches . Since the time that he has been playing them , miracles have begun . " " When Petrosian played like Petrosian , Fischer played like a very strong grandmaster , but when Petrosian began making mistakes , Fischer was transformed into a genius . "

Fischer gained a far higher rating than any player in history up to that time . On the July 1972 FIDE rating list , his Elo rating of 2785 was 125 points above (World No. 2) Spassky's rating of 2660 . His results put him on the cover of Life magazine , and allowed him to challenge World Champion Boris Spassky , whom he had never beaten (+ 0 ? 3 = 2) .

= = = World Championship match = = =

Fischer's career @-@ long stubbornness about match and tournament conditions was again seen in the run @-@ up to his match with Spassky . Of the possible sites , Fischer's first choice was Belgrade , Yugoslavia , while Spassky's was Reykjavík , Iceland . For a time it appeared that the dispute would be resolved by splitting the match between the two locations , but that arrangement failed . After that issue was resolved , Fischer refused to appear in Iceland until the prize fund was increased . London financier Jim Slater donated an additional US \$ 125 @,@ 000 , bringing the prize fund up to an unprecedented \$ 250 @,@ 000 (equivalent to \$ 1 @,@ 414 @,@ 000 in 2015) , and Fischer finally agreed to play .

Before and during the match , Fischer paid special attention to his physical training and fitness , which was a relatively novel approach for top chess players at that time . He had developed his tennis skills to a good level , and played frequently during off @-@ days in Reykjavík . He had also arranged for exclusive use of his hotel's swimming pool during specified hours , and swam for extended periods , usually late at night . According to Soviet grandmaster Nikolai Krogius , Fischer " was paying great attention to sport , and that he was swimming and even boxing ... "

The match took place in Reykjavík from July to September 1972 and was the first to receive an American broadcast in prime time . Fischer lost the first two games in strange fashion : the first when he played a risky pawn @-@ grab in a drawn endgame , the second by forfeit when he refused to play the game in a dispute over playing conditions . Fischer would likely have forfeited the entire match , but Spassky , not wanting to win by default , yielded to Fischer's demands to move the next game to a back room , away from the cameras whose presence had upset Fischer . After that game , the match was moved back to the stage and proceeded without further serious incident . Fischer won seven of the next 19 games , losing only one and drawing eleven , to win the match 12 ½ ? 8 ½ and become the 11th World Chess Champion .

The Cold War trappings made the match a media sensation . It was called " The Match of the Century " , and received front @-@ page media coverage in the United States and around the world . Fischer's win was an American victory in a field that Soviet players had dominated for the previous quarter @-@ century ; players closely identified with , and subsidized by , the Soviet state . Kasparov remarked , " Fischer fits ideologically into the context of the Cold War era : a lone American genius challenges the Soviet chess machine and defeats it " . Dutch grandmaster Jan Timman calls Fischer's victory " the story of a lonely hero who overcomes an entire empire " . Fischer's sister observed , " Bobby did all this in a country almost totally without a chess culture . It was as if an Eskimo had cleared a tennis court in the snow and gone on to win the world championship " .

Upon Fischer's return to New York , a Bobby Fischer Day was held . He was offered numerous product endorsement offers worth " at least \$ 5 million " (all of which he declined) . He appeared on the cover of Sports Illustrated with American Olympic swimming champion Mark Spitz . Fischer also made an appearance on a Bob Hope TV special . Membership in the U.S. Chess Federation doubled in 1972 , and peaked in 1974 ; in American chess , these years are commonly referred to as the " Fischer Boom " . Fischer won the ' Chess Oscar ' (an award , started in 1967 , given to the best chess player , determined through votes from chess media and leading players) for 1970 , 1971 , and 1972 . This match attracted more worldwide interest than any chess championship before or since .

= = = Forfeiture of title = = =

Fischer was scheduled to defend his title in 1975 against Anatoly Karpov , who emerged as his challenger . Fischer , who had played no competitive games since his World Championship match with Spassky , laid out a proposal for the match in September 1973 , in consultation with FIDE official Fred Cramer . He made three principal (non @-@ negotiable) demands :

The match continues until one player wins 10 games , draws not counting .

No limit to the total number of games played .

In case of a 9 ? 9 score , the champion (Fischer) retains the title , and the prize fund is split equally .

A FIDE Congress was held in 1974 during the Nice Olympiad . The delegates voted in favor of Fischer 's 10 @-@ win proposal , but rejected his other two proposals , and limited the number of games in the match to 36 . In response to FIDE 's ruling , Fischer sent a cable to Euwe on June 27 , 1974 .

As I made clear in my telegram to the FIDE delegates , the match conditions I proposed were non @-@ negotiable . Mr. Cramer informs me that the rules of the winner being the first player to win ten games , draws not counting , unlimited number of games and if nine wins to nine match is drawn with champion regaining title and prize fund split equally were rejected by the FIDE delegates . By so doing FIDE has decided against my participation in the 1975 World Chess Championship . Therefore , I resign my FIDE World Chess Championship title . Sincerely , Bobby Fischer .

The delegates responded by reaffirming their prior decisions , but did not accept Fischer 's resignation and requested that he reconsider . Many observers considered Fischer 's requested 9 ? 9 clause unfair because it would require the challenger to win by at least two games (10 ? 8) . Botvinnik called the 9 ? 9 clause " unsporting " . Korchnoi , David Bronstein , and Lev Alburt considered the 9 ? 9 clause reasonable .

Due to the continued efforts of U.S. Chess Federation officials , a special FIDE Congress was held in March 1975 in Bergen , Netherlands in which it was accepted that the match should be of unlimited duration , but the 9 ? 9 clause was once again rejected , by a narrow margin of 35 votes to 32 . FIDE set a deadline of April 1 , 1975 , for Fischer and Karpov to confirm their participation in the match . No reply was received from Fischer by April 3 . Thus , by default , Karpov officially became World Champion . In his 1991 autobiography , Karpov professed regret that the match had not taken place , and claimed that the lost opportunity to challenge Fischer held back his own chess development . Karpov met with Fischer several times after 1975 , in friendly but ultimately unsuccessful attempts to arrange a match since Karpov would never agree to play to 10 .

Brian Carney opined in The Wall Street Journal that Fischer 's victory over Spassky in 1972 left him nothing to prove , except that perhaps someone could someday beat him , and he was not interested in the risk of losing . And that Fischer 's refusal to recognize peers also allowed his paranoia to flower : " The world championship he won ... validated his view of himself as a chess player , but it also insulated him from the humanizing influences of the world around him . He descended into what can only be considered a kind of madness " .

Bronstein felt that Fischer " had the right to play the match with Karpov on his own conditions " . Korchnoi stated :

Was Fischer right in demanding that the world title be protected by a two point handicap ? that the challenger would be considered the winner with a 10 ? 8 score and that the champion would retain his title in the event of a 9 ? 9 draw ? Yes , this was quite natural : the champion deserves this , not to mention the fact that further play to the first win in the event of an even score would be nothing short of a lottery ? the winner in that case could not claim to have won a convincing victory .

Soviet grandmaster Lev Alburt felt that the decision to not concede to Fischer 's demands rested on Karpov 's " sober view of what he was capable of " . Years later , in his 1992 match against Spassky , Fischer said that Karpov " refused to play against [him] under [his] conditions " .

= = Sudden obscurity = =

After the 1972 World Chess Championship , Fischer did not play a competitive game in public for nearly 20 years . In 1977 in Cambridge , Massachusetts , he played three games against the MIT Greenblatt computer program , winning them all .

On May 26 , 1981 , while walking in Pasadena , Fischer was arrested by a police patrolman , allegedly because Fischer matched the description of a man who had just committed a bank robbery in the area . Fischer , who alleged that he was slightly injured during the arrest , said that he was held for two days , subjected to assault and various types of mistreatment , and released on \$ 1 @, @ 000 bail . Fischer published a 14 @-@ page pamphlet detailing his alleged experiences and saying that his arrest had been " a frame up and set up " .

In 1981 , Fischer stayed at the home of grandmaster Peter Biyiasas , where , over a period of four months , he beat Biyiasas seventeen times in a series of speed games . In an interview with Sports Illustrated reporter William Nack , Biyiasas assessed Fischer 's play :

He was too good . There was no use in playing him . It wasn 't interesting . I was getting beaten , and it wasn 't clear to me why . It wasn 't like I made this mistake or that mistake . It was like I was being gradually outplayed , from the start . He wasn 't taking any time to think . The most depressing thing about it is that I wasn 't even getting out of the middle game to an endgame . I don 't ever remember an endgame . He honestly believes there is no one for him to play , no one worthy of him . I played him , and I can attest to that .

= = 1992 Spassky rematch = =

Fischer emerged after twenty years of isolation to play Spassky (then tied for 96th ? 102nd on the FIDE rating list) in a " Revenge Match of the 20th century " in 1992 . This match took place in Sveti Stefan and Belgrade , Yugoslavia , in spite of a United Nations embargo that included sanctions on commercial activities . Fischer demanded that the organizers bill the match as " The World Chess Championship " , although Garry Kasparov was the recognized FIDE World Champion . Fischer insisted he was still the true World Champion , and that for all the games in the FIDE @-@ sanctioned World Championship matches , involving Karpov , Korchnoi , and Kasparov , the outcomes had been prearranged . The purse for the rematch was US \$ 5 million , with \$ 3 @. @ 35 million of the purse to go to the winner .

According to grandmaster Andrew Soltis :

[The match games] were of a fairly high quality , particularly when compared with Kasparov 's championship matches of 1993 , 1995 and 2000 , for example . Yet the games also reminded many fans of how out of place Fischer was in 1992 . He was still playing the openings of a previous generation . He was , moreover , the only strong player in the world who didn 't trust computers and wasn 't surrounded by seconds and supplicants .

Fischer won the match with 10 wins , 5 losses , and 15 draws . Kasparov stated , " Bobby is playing OK , nothing more . Maybe his strength is 2600 or 2650 . It wouldn 't be close between us " . Yasser Seirawan believed that the match proved that Fischer 's playing strength was " somewhere in the top ten in the world " .

Fischer and Spassky gave ten press conferences during the match . Seirawan attended the match and met with Fischer on several occasions ; the two analyzed some match games and had personal discourse . Seirawan later wrote : " After September 23 [1992] , I threw most of what I 'd ever read about Bobby out of my head . Sheer garbage . Bobby is the most misunderstood , misquoted celebrity walking the face of the earth . " He further wrote that Fischer was not camera shy , smiled and laughed easily , was " a fine wit " and " wholly enjoyable conversationalist " .

The U.S. Department of the Treasury warned Fischer before the start of the match that his participation was illegal , that it would violate President George H. W. Bush 's Executive Order 12810 imposing United Nations Security Council Resolution 757 sanctions against engaging in economic activities in Yugoslavia . In response , during the first scheduled press conference on September 1 , in front of the international press , Fischer spat on the U.S. order , saying " this is my reply " . His violation of the order led U.S. Federal officials to initiate a warrant for his arrest upon

completion of the match , citing , in pertinent part , " Title 50 USC § § 1701 , 1702 , and 1705 and Executive Order 12810 " .

Prior to the rematch against Spassky , Fischer had won a training match against Svetozar Gligori? in Sveti Stefan with six wins , one loss and three draws .

= = Life as an émigré = =

After the 1992 match with Spassky , Fischer , now a fugitive , slid back into relative obscurity , taking up residence in Budapest , Hungary , and allegedly having a relationship with young Hungarian chess master Zita Rajcsányi .

Fischer claimed that standard chess was stale and that he now played blitz games of chess variants , such as Chess960 . He visited with the Polgár family in Budapest and analyzed many games with Judit , Zsuzsa , and Zsófia Polgár .

From 2000 to 2002 , Fischer lived in Baguio City in the Philippines , residing in the same compound as the Filipino grandmaster Eugenio Torre , a close friend who acted as his second during his 1992 match with Spassky . Torre introduced Fischer to a 22 @-@ year @-@ old woman named Marilyn Young . On May 21 , 2001 Marilyn Young gave birth to a daughter named Jinky Young . Her mother claimed that Jinky was Fischer 's daughter , citing as evidence Jinky 's birth and baptismal certificates , photographs , a transaction record dated December 4 , 2007 of a bank remittance by Fischer to Jinky , and Jinky 's DNA through her blood samples . On the other hand , Magnús Skúlason , a friend of Fischer 's , said that he was certain that Fischer was not the girl 's father . On August 17 , 2010 , it was reported that a DNA test revealed that Jinky Young was not the daughter of Bobby Fischer .

= = = Anti @-@ semitic statements = = =

Fischer made numerous anti @-@ Jewish statements and professed a general hatred for Jews since at least the early 1960s . Jan Hein Donner wrote that at the time of Bled 1961 , " He idolized Hitler and read everything about him that he could lay his hands on . He also championed a brand of anti @-@ semitism that could only be thought up by a mind completely cut off from reality " . Donner took Fischer to a war museum , which " left a great impression , since [Fischer] is not an evil person , and afterwards he was more restrained in his remarks ? to me , at least . "

Although Fischer described his mother as Jewish in a 1962 interview , he later denied his Jewish ancestry . In 1984 , Fischer denied being a Jew in a letter to the Encyclopaedia Judaica , insisting that they remove his name and accusing them of " fraudulently misrepresenting me to be a Jew [...] to promote your religion " .

From the 1980s on , Fischer 's comments about Jews were a major theme in his public and private remarks . He openly denied the Holocaust , and called the United States " a farce controlled by dirty , hook @-@ nosed , circumcised Jew bastards " . Between 1999 and 2006 , Fischer 's primary means of communicating with the public was radio interviews . He participated in at least 34 such broadcasts , mostly with radio stations in the Philippines , but also in Hungary , Iceland , Colombia , and Russia . In 1999 , he gave a radio call @-@ in interview to a station in Budapest , Hungary , during which he described himself as the " victim of an international Jewish conspiracy " . In another radio interview , Fischer said that it became clear to him in 1977 , after reading The Secret World Government by Count Cherep @-@ Spiridovich , that Jewish agencies were targeting him . Fischer 's sudden reemergence was apparently triggered when some of his belongings , which had been stored in a Pasadena , California storage unit , were sold by the landlord who claimed it was in response to nonpayment of rent .

Fischer 's library contained anti @-@ semitic and racist literature such as Mein Kampf , The Protocols of the Elders of Zion , and The White Man 's Bible and Nature 's Eternal Religion by Ben Klassen , founder of the World Church of the Creator . A notebook written by Fischer contains sentiments such as " 8 / 24 / 99 Death to the Jews . Just kill the Motherfuckers ! " and " 12 / 13 / 99 It 's time to start randomly killing Jews " . Despite his views , Fischer remained on good terms with

Jewish chess players .

= = = Anti @-@ American and anti @-@ Israel statements = = =

Shortly after midnight on September 12 , 2001 , Philippines local time (approximately four hours after the September 11 , 2001 attacks in the U.S.) , Fischer was interviewed live by Pablo Mercado on the Baguio City station of the Bombo Radyo network . Fischer stated that he was happy that the airliner attacks had happened , while expressing his view on U.S. and Israeli foreign policy , saying " I applaud the act . Look , nobody gets ... that the U.S. and Israel have been slaughtering the Palestinians ... for years . " He also said " The horrible behavior that the U.S. is committing all over the world ... This just shows you , that what goes around , comes around even for the United States . " Fischer also referenced the movie Seven Days in May and said he hoped for a military coup d'état in the U.S. , " [I hope] the country will be taken over by the military , they 'll close down all the synagogues , arrest all the Jews , execute hundreds of thousands of Jewish ringleaders . " In response to Fischer 's statements about 9 / 11 , the U.S. Chess Federation passed a motion to cancel his right to membership in the organization . Fischer 's right to become a member was reinstated in 2007 .

= = = Detention in Japan = = =

Fischer lived for a time in Japan . On July 13 , 2004 , acting in response to a letter from U.S. officials , he was arrested by Japanese immigration authorities at Narita International Airport near Tokyo for allegedly using a revoked U.S. passport while trying to board a Japan Airlines flight to Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila , Philippines . Fischer resisted arrest , claiming to have sustained bruises , cuts and a broken tooth in the process . At the time , Fischer had a passport (originally issued in 1997 and updated in 2003 to add more pages) that , according to U.S. officials , had been revoked in November 2003 due to his outstanding arrest warrant for the Yugoslavia sanctions violation . Despite the outstanding arrest warrant in the U.S. , Fischer said that he believed the passport was still valid . The authorities held Fischer at a custody center for 16 days before transferring him to another facility . Fischer claimed that his cell was windowless and he had not seen the light of day during that period , and that the staff had ignored his complaints about constant tobacco smoke in his cell .

Tokyo @-@ based Canadian journalist and consultant John Bosnitch set up the " Committee to Free Bobby Fischer " after meeting Fischer at Narita Airport and offering to assist him . Boris Spassky wrote a letter to U.S. President George H. W. Bush , asking " For mercy , charity " , and , if that was not possible , " to put [him] in the same cell with Bobby Fischer " and " to give [them] a chess set " . It was reported that Fischer and Miyoko Watai , the President of the Japanese Chess Association (with whom he had reportedly been living since 2000) wanted to become legally married . (It was also reported that Fischer had been living in the Philippines with Marilyn Young during the same period .) Fischer applied for German citizenship on the grounds that his father was German . Fischer stated that he wanted to renounce his U.S. citizenship , and appealed to U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell to help him do so , though to no effect . Japan 's Justice Minister rejected Fischer 's request for asylum and ordered him deported .

= = = Asylum in Iceland = = =

Seeking ways to evade deportation to the United States , Fischer wrote a letter to the government of Iceland in early January 2005 , requesting Icelandic citizenship . Sympathetic to Fischer 's plight , but reluctant to grant him the full benefits of citizenship , Icelandic authorities granted him an alien 's passport . When this proved insufficient for the Japanese authorities , Althing (the Icelandic Parliament) , at the behest of William Lombardy , agreed unanimously to grant Fischer full citizenship in late March for humanitarian reasons , as they felt he was being unjustly treated by the U.S. and Japanese governments , and also in recognition of his 1972 match , which had " put

Iceland on the map " .

After arriving in Reykjavík , Fischer gave a press conference . Fischer lived a reclusive life in Iceland , avoiding entrepreneurs and others who approached him with various proposals . Fischer moved into an apartment in the same building as his close friend and spokesman , Garðar Sverrisson . Garðar 's wife , Kristín Þórarinsdóttir , was a nurse and later looked after Fischer as a terminally ill patient . Garðar 's two children , especially his son , were very close to Fischer . Fischer also developed a friendship with Magnús Skúlason , a psychiatrist and chess player who later recalled long discussions with Fischer on a wide variety of subjects .

On December 10 , 2006 , Fischer telephoned an Icelandic television station and pointed out a winning combination , missed by the players and commentators . In 2005 , some of Fischer 's belongings were auctioned on eBay . Fischer claimed , in 2006 , that those belongings were worth millions of U.S. dollars .

= = Personal life = =

Fischer was eccentric . He made a large number of demands for the playing conditions at his 1972 World Championship match with Spassky . He became more erratic in his years after losing his World Championship title .

= = Religious affiliation = =

Although Fischer 's mother was Jewish , Fischer disavowed having Jewish roots . In an interview in the January 1962 issue of Harper 's , Fischer was quoted as saying , " I read a book lately by Nietzsche and he says religion is just to dull the senses of the people . I agree . "

Fischer joined the Worldwide Church of God in the mid @-@ 1960s . The church prescribed Saturday Sabbath , and forbade work (and competitive chess) on Sabbath . According to his friend and colleague Larry Evans , in 1968 Fischer felt philosophically that " the world was coming to an end " and he might as well make some money by publishing My 60 Memorable Games ; Fischer thought that the Rapture was coming soon . During the mid 1970s Fischer contributed significant money to the Worldwide Church of God . In 1972 one journalist stated that " Fischer is almost as serious about religion as he is about chess " , and the champion credited his faith with greatly improving his chess . Yet , prophecies by Herbert W. Armstrong went unfulfilled , and the church was rocked by revelations of a series of sex scandals involving Garner Ted Armstrong . Fischer eventually left the church in 1977 , " accusing it of being ' Satanic ' , and vigorously attacking its methods and leadership . "

= = Death , estate dispute , and exhumation = =

On January 17 , 2008 , Fischer died from renal failure at the Landspítali Hospital (National University Hospital of Iceland) in Reykjavík . He originally had a urinary tract blockage but refused surgery or medications . Magnús Skúlason reported Fischer 's last words as " Nothing is as healing as the human touch . "

On January 21 , Fischer was buried in the small Christian cemetery of Laugardælir church , outside the town of Selfoss , 60 kilometres (37 mi) southeast of Reykjavík , after a Catholic funeral presided over by Fr . Jakob Rolland of the diocese of Reykjavík . In accordance with Fischer 's wishes , only Miyoko Watai , Garðar Sverrisson , and Garðar 's family were present .

Fischer 's estate was estimated at 140 million ISK (about 1 million GBP , or \$ 2 million USD) . It quickly became the object of a legal battle involving claims from four parties , with Miyoko Watai ultimately inheriting what remained of Fischer 's estate after government claims . The four parties were Fischer 's apparent Japanese wife Miyoko Watai , his alleged Filipino daughter Jinky Young and her mother Marilyn Young , his two American nephews Alexander and Nicholas Targ and their father Russell Targ , and the U.S. government (claiming unpaid taxes) .

According to a press release issued by Samuel Estimo , an attorney representing Jinky Young , the

Supreme Court of Iceland ruled , in December 2009 , that Watai 's claim of marriage to Fischer was invalidated because of her failure to present the original copy of their alleged marriage certificate . On June 16 , 2010 , the Court ruled in favor of a petition on behalf of Jinky Young to have Bobby Fischer 's remains exhumed . The exhumation was performed on July 5 , 2010 , in the presence of a doctor , a priest , and other officials . A DNA sample was taken and Fischer 's body was then reburied . On August 17 , 2010 , the Court announced that based on the DNA sample it was determined that Fischer was not the father of Jinky Young . On March 3 , 2011 , an Icelandic district court ruled that Miyoko Watai and Fischer had married on September 6 , 2004 , and that , as Fischer 's widow and heir , Watai was therefore entitled to inherit Fischer 's estate . Fischer 's nephews were ordered to pay Watai 's legal costs , amounting to ISK 6 @. @ 6 million (approximately \$ 57 @, @ 000) .

= = = Psychology = = =

Fischer 's views and behavior attracted widespread comment Reuben Fine , psychologist and chess player , who met Fischer many times , said that " Some of Bobby 's behavior is so strange , unpredictable , odd and bizarre that even his most ardent apologists have had a hard time explaining what makes him tick . " and described him as " a troubled human being " with " obvious personal problems " .

Valery Krylov , advisor to Anatoly Karpov and a specialist in the " psycho @-@ physiological rehabilitation of sportsmen " , believed Bobby suffered from schizophrenia . Psychologist Joseph G Ponteretto , from second @-@ hand sources , concludes that " Bobby did not meet all the necessary criteria to reach diagnoses of schizophrenia or Asperger 's Disorder . The evidence is stronger for paranoid personality disorder . "

= = Contributions to chess = =

= = = Opening theory = = =

For most of his career , Fischer was predictable in his use of openings and variations of those openings . Despite this seeming disadvantage , it was very difficult for opponents to exploit this limitation , because Fischer 's knowledge of the openings and variations that he used was extensive .

As Black , Fischer would usually play the Najdorf Sicilian against 1.e4 , and the King 's Indian Defense against 1.d4 , only rarely venturing into the Nimzo @-@ Indian (1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4) , Benoni , Grünfeld or Neo @-@ Grünfeld . As White , Fischer almost exclusively played 1.e4 throughout his career .

Fischer was a master of playing with , and against , the Sicilian Defense . The next most common defense against Fischer 's 1.e4 was the Caro @-@ Kann Defense (1.e4 c6) , against which Fischer had a good record . Fischer 's worst record was against the French Defense (1.e4 e6) , especially the Winawer Variation (1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4) . Fischer maintained that the Winawer was unsound because it exposed Black 's kingside , and that , in his view , " Black was trading off his good bishop with 3 ... Bb4 and ... Bxc3 . " Later on Fischer said : " I may yet be forced to admit that the Winawer is sound . But I doubt it ! The defense is anti @-@ positional and weakens the K @-@ side . "

Fischer was renowned for his opening preparation and made numerous contributions to chess opening theory . He was one of the foremost experts on the Ruy Lopez . A line of the Exchange Variation (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Bxc6 dxc6 5 @. @ 0 @-@ 0) is sometimes called the " Fischer Variation " after he successfully resurrected it at the 1966 Havana Olympiad . Fischer 's lifetime score with the move 5 @. @ 0 @-@ 0 in tournament and match games was eight wins , three draws , and no losses : (86 @. @ 36 %) .

Fischer was a recognized expert in the black side of the Najdorf Sicilian and the King 's Indian

Defense . He used the Grünfeld Defense and Neo @-@ Grünfeld Defense to win his celebrated games against Donald and Robert Byrne , and played a theoretical novelty in the Grünfeld against reigning World Champion Mikhail Botvinnik , refuting Botvinnik 's prepared analysis over @-@ the @-@ board . In the Nimzo @-@ Indian Defense , the line beginning with 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 b6 5.Ne2 Ba6 was named after him .

Fischer established the viability of the so @-@ called Poisoned Pawn Variation of the Najdorf Sicilian (1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Bg5 e6 7.f4 Qb6) . This bold queen sortie , to snatch a pawn at the expense of development , had been considered dubious , but Fischer succeeded in proving its soundness . Out of ten tournament and match games as Black in the Poisoned Pawn , Fischer scored 70 % , winning five , drawing four , and losing only one : the 11th game of his 1972 match against Spassky . Following Fischer 's use , the Poisoned Pawn Variation became a respected line , utilized by many of the world 's leading players .

On the white side of the Sicilian , Fischer made advances to the theory of the line beginning 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 (or e6) 6.Bc4 , which has sometimes been named after him . In 1961 , prompted by a loss the year before to Spassky , Fischer wrote an article entitled " A Bust to the King 's Gambit " for the first issue of the American Chess Quarterly , in which he stated , " In my opinion , the King 's Gambit is busted . It loses by force . " Fischer recommended 1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Nf3 d6 , which has since become known as the Fischer Defense , as a refutation to the King 's Gambit . Fischer later played the King 's Gambit as White in three tournament games , winning them all .

= = = Endgame = = =

Fischer had excellent endgame technique . International Master Jeremy Silman listed him as one of the five best endgame players (along with Emanuel Lasker , Akiba Rubinstein , José Capablanca , and Vasily Smyslov) , calling Fischer a " master of bishop endings " . The endgame of a rook , bishop , and pawns against a rook , knight , and pawns has sometimes been called the " Fischer Endgame " because of several instructive wins by Fischer (with the bishop) , including three against Mark Taimanov in 1970 and 1971 .

= = = Fischer clock = = =

In 1988 , Fischer filed for U.S. Patent 4 @,@ 884 @,@ 255 for a new type of chess clock , which gave each player a fixed period at the start of the game and then added a small increment after each completed move . Used in the 1992 rematch between Fischer and Spassky , the " Fischer clock " soon became standard in most major chess tournaments .

= = = Fischerandom Chess = = =

Fischer heavily disparaged chess as it was currently being played (at the highest levels) . As a result , on June 19 , 1996 , in Buenos Aires , Argentina , Fischer announced and advocated a variant of chess called Fischerandom Chess (later known as Chess960) . The goal of Fischerandom Chess was to ensure that a game between two players is a contest between their understandings of chess , rather than their abilities to memorize opening lines or prepare opening strategies .

In a 2006 Icelandic Radio interview , Fischer explained his reasons for advocating Fischerandom Chess :

In chess so much depends on opening theory , so the champions before the last century did not know as much as I do and other players do about opening theory . So if you just brought them back from the dead they wouldn't do well . They'd get bad openings . You cannot compare the playing strength , you can only talk about natural ability . Memorisation is enormously powerful . Some kid of fourteen today , or even younger , could get an opening advantage against Capablanca , and especially against the players of the previous century , like Morphy and Steinitz . Maybe they

would still be able to outplay the young kid of today . Or maybe not , because nowadays when you get the opening advantage not only do you get the opening advantage , you know how to play , they have so many examples of what to do from this position ... and that is why I don't like chess any more ... It is all just memorization and prearrangement ...

= = = Legacy = = =

Kasparov calls Fischer " perhaps the most mythologically shrouded figure in chess " . Some leading players and some of Fischer 's biographers have ranked him as the greatest player who ever lived . Other writers have said that he was arguably the greatest player ever , without reaching a definitive conclusion . Leonard Barden wrote , " Most experts place him the second or third best ever , behind Kasparov but probably ahead of Karpov . "

Some grandmasters compared Fischer 's play to that of a computer ; a player without noticeable weaknesses .

Although international ratings were just introduced in 1970 , Chessmetrics (a website that uses algorithms to rank performances retrospectively and uniformly throughout chess history) determined that Fischer 's peak rating was 2895 in October 1971 ? the highest in history . His one @-@ year peak (1971) average was 2881 , the highest of all time . His three @-@ year peak average was 2867 , from January 1971 to December 1973 ? the second highest ever , just behind Garry Kasparov . Fischer was ranked as the number one player in the world for a total of 109 different months , running (not consecutively) from February 1964 until July 1974 .

Fischer 's great rival Mikhail Tal praised him as " the greatest genius to have descended from the chess heavens " . American grandmaster Arthur Bisguier wrote " Robert James Fischer is one of the few people in any sphere of endeavour who has been accorded the accolade of being called a legend in his own time . " Former World Champion Tigran Petrosian stated that Fischer put more time into chess than the entire Soviet team .

Biographers David Edmonds and John Eidinow wrote :

Faced with Fischer 's extraordinary coolness , his opponents [sic] assurance would begin to disintegrate . A Fischer move , which at first glances looked weak , would be reassessed . It must have a deep master plan behind it , undetectable by mere mortals (more often than not they were right , it did) . The U.S. grandmaster Robert Byrne labeled the phenomenon " Fischer @-@ fear " . Grandmasters would wilt , their suits would crumple , sweat would glisten on their brows , panic would overwhelm their nervous systems . Errors would creep in . Calculations would go awry . There was talk among grandmasters that Fischer hypnotized his opponents , that he undermined their intellectual powers with a dark , mystic , insidious force .

Kasparov wrote that Fischer " became the detonator of an avalanche of new chess ideas , a revolutionary whose revolution is still in progress " . In January 2009 , reigning World Champion Viswanathan Anand described him as " the greatest chess player who ever lived " . Serbian grandmaster Ljubomir Ljubojević called Fischer , " A man without frontiers . He didn't divide the East and the West , he brought them together in their admiration of him . "

German grandmaster Karsten Müller wrote :

Fischer , who had taken the highest crown almost singlehandedly from the mighty , almost invincible Soviet chess empire , shook the whole world , not only the chess world , to its core . He started a chess boom not only in the United States and in the Western hemisphere , but worldwide . Teaching chess or playing chess as a career had truly become a respectable profession . After Bobby , the game was simply not the same .

Fischer was a charter inductee into the U.S. Chess Hall of Fame in Washington , D.C. in 1985 . After routing Taimanov , Larsen , and Petrosian in 1971 , Fischer achieved a then @-@ record Elo rating of 2785 . After beating Spassky by the score 12 ½ ? 8 ½ in their 1972 match , his rating dropped to 2780 .

St. Louis philanthropist Rex Sinquefeld offered a \$ 64 @,@ 000 Fischer Memorial Prize for any player who could win all nine of their games at the 2009 U.S. Chess Championship . By the fifth day of the championship , all 24 participants became ineligible for the prize , having drawn or lost at least

one game .

== Head @-@ to @-@ head record versus selected grandmasters ==

(Rapid , blitz and blindfold games not included ; listed as + wins ? losses = draws .) Players who have been World Champions in boldface

== Internet Bobby Fischer theory ==

In 2001 , Nigel Short wrote in The Sunday Telegraph chess column that he believed he had been secretly playing Fischer on ICC in speed chess matches . Fischer denied ownership of the account .

National Masters R.O. Mitchell and Lionel Davis both claimed to have played Fischer on ICC , with Mitchell providing his alleged conversation with the supposed Fischer . Chessbase.com did a study where they concluded that the user was more likely a hoax , and not the real Bobby Fischer .

== In popular culture ==

The musical Chess , with lyrics by Tim Rice and music by Björn Ulvaeus and Benny Andersson , tells the story of two chess champions , referred to only as " The American " and " The Russian " . The musical is loosely based on the 1972 World Championship match between Fischer and Spassky .

During the 1972 Fischer ? Spassky match , the Soviet bard Vladimir Vysotsky wrote an ironic two @-@ song cycle " Honor of the Chess Crown " . The first song is about a rank @-@ and @-@ file Soviet worker 's preparation for the match with Fischer ; the second is about the game . Many expressions from the songs have become catchphrases in Russian culture .

Bobby Fischer is referred to in the chorus of the song " Cosby Sweater " by Australian hip hop band Hilltop Hoods . Another Australian band , Lazy Susan , released a song " Bobby Fischer " on their 2001 album Long Lost .

Matthew Good , in his song " Invasion 1 " from the 1997 Underdogs album , sings : " Drops off the face of the earth - Bobby is my hero for that " in reference to Fischer 's reclusion .

In 2015 the Comedy Central program Drunk History portrayed Bobby Fischer on Season 3 , Episode 6 .

== In film ==

The 1993 film Searching for Bobby Fischer uses Fischer 's name in the title , even though the film is about the life of chess prodigy Joshua Waitzkin . Outside of the United States , it was released as Innocent Moves . The title refers to the search for Fischer 's successor after his disappearance from competitive chess . The author feels that his son could be that successor . Fischer never saw the film and complained bitterly that it was an invasion of his privacy by using his name without his permission . Fischer never received any compensation from the film , calling it " a monumental swindle " .

In April 2009 , the film Me and Bobby Fischer , about Bobby Fischer 's last years as his old friend Saemundur Palsson gets him out of jail in Japan and helps him settle in Iceland , was premiered in Iceland . The film was produced by Friðrik Guðmundsson with music by Guðlaugur Kristinn Óttarsson , Björk Guðmundsdóttir and Einar Arnaldur Melax .

In October 2009 , the biographical film Bobby Fischer Live was released , with Damien Chapa directing and starring as Fischer .

In 2011 , documentary film @-@ maker Liz Garbus released Bobby Fischer Against the World , which explores the life of Fischer , with interviews from Garry Kasparov , Anthony Saidy , and others .

On September 16 , 2015 the American biographical film Pawn Sacrifice was released , starring

Tobey Maguire as Fischer , Liev Schreiber as Boris Spassky , Lily Rabe as Joan Fischer , and Peter Sarsgaard as William Lombardy .

= = Writings = =

Bobby Fischer 's Games of Chess (Simon and Schuster , New York , 1959) . ISBN 0 @-@ 923891 @-@ 46 @-@ 3 . An early collection of 34 lightly annotated games , including " The Game of the Century " against Donald Byrne .

" A Bust to the King 's Gambit " (American Chess Quarterly , Vol . 1 , No. 1 (Summer 1961) , pp. 3 ? 9) .

" The Russians Have Fixed World Chess " (Sports Illustrated magazine , 20 August 1962) . This is the controversial article in which Fischer asserted that several of the Soviet players in the 1962 Curaçao Candidates ' tournament had colluded with one another to prevent him [Fischer] from winning the tournament .

" The Ten Greatest Masters in History " (Chessworld , Vol . 1 , No. 1 (January ? February 1964) , pp. 56 ? 61) . An article in which Fischer named Paul Morphy , Howard Staunton , Wilhelm Steinitz , Siegbert Tarrasch , Mikhail Chigorin , Alexander Alekhine , José Raúl Capablanca , Boris Spassky , Mikhail Tal , and Samuel Reshevsky as the greatest players of all time . Fischer 's criteria for inclusion on his list was his own subjective appreciation of their games rather than their achievements .

" Checkmate " column from December 1966 to December 1969 in Boys ' Life , later assumed by Larry Evans .

My 60 Memorable Games (Simon and Schuster , New York , 1969 , and Faber and Faber , London , 1969 ; Batsford 2008 (algebraic notation)) . Studied by Kasparov at a young age ; " A classic of painstaking and objective analysis that modestly includes three of his losses . "

I Was Tortured in the Pasadena Jailhouse ! (1982) a self @-@ published " essay in a fourteen @-@ page booklet " on Fischer 's time in a Pasadena jail ? he was " booked for vagrancy " .

= = = Under Fischer 's name = = =

Numerous books list Fischer as a co @-@ author or endorser . One such book is Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess , co @-@ authored by Donn Mosenfelder and Stuart Margulies .

= = Tournament and match summaries = =

= = = Tournaments = = =

= = = Matches = = =

= = = Team events = = =

= = Notable games = =

Donald Byrne ? Fischer , New York 1956 , Grünfeld , 5.Bf4 (D92) , 0 ? 1 " The Game of the Century " . Chess magazine called this " a game of great depth and brilliancy " .

Svetozar Gligoric ? Fischer , Bled 1961 , King 's Indian Defense : Orthodox Variation . Classical System Misc . Lines (E98) , ½ ? ½

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nf3 0 @-@ 0 6.Be2 e5 7 @.@ 0 @-@ 0 Nc6 8.d5 Ne7 9.Ne1 Nd7 10.Nd3 f5 11.exf5 Nxf5 12.f3 Nf6 13.Nf2 Nd4 14.Nfe4 Nh5 15.Bg5 Qd7 16.g3 h6 17.Be3

c5 18.Bxd4 exd4 19.Nb5 a6 20.Nbxd6 d3 21.Qxd3 Bd4 + 22.Kg2 Nxc3 (see diagram) 23.Nxc8 Nxf1 24.Nb6 Qc7 25.Rxf1 Qxb6 26.b4 Qxb4 27.Rb1 Qa5 28.Nxc5 Qxc5 29.Qxg6 + Bg7 30.Rxb7 Qd4 31.Bd3 Rf4 32.Qe6 + Kh8 33.Qg6 ½ ? ½

Robert Byrne ? Fischer , 1963 ? 64 U.S. Championship , Neo @-@ Grünfeld , 0 ? 1 annotated From an almost symmetrical position , Fischer beats a strong grandmaster in just 21 moves ? " a game that was immediately recognized as an all @-@ time classic " .

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 c6 4.Bg2 d5 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.Nc3 Bg7 7.e3 0 @-@ 0 8.Nge2 Nc6 9 @.@ 0 @-@ 0 b6 10.b3 Ba6 11.Ba3 Re8 12.Qd2 e5 13.dxe5 Nxe5 14.Rfd1 Nd3 15.Qc2 Nxf2 16.Kxf2 Ng4 + 17.Kg1 Nxe3 18.Qd2 (see diagram) Nxg2 19.Kxg2 d4 20.Nxd4 Bb7 + 21.Kf1 Qd7 0 ? 1

Fischer ? Svetozar Gligori? , Havana Olympiad 1966 , Spanish Game : Exchange . Gligoric Variation (C69) , 1 @-@ 0 Fischer revived the Exchange Variation of the Ruy Lopez in this tournament and some later events ; it is still important in opening theory .

Fischer ? Mark Taimanov , Vancouver Candidates Final 1971 , 4th match game , Sicilian Defense : Paulsen . Bastrikov Variation (B47) , 1 ? 0 Fischer 's patient and accurate handling of bishop vs. knight , first in the rook and minor piece endgame , and then after rooks were exchanged , has become a staple of endgame instructional literature .

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Qc7 5.Nc3 e6 6.g3 a6 7.Bg2 Nf6 8 @.@ 0 @-@ 0 Nxd4 9.Qxd4 Bc5 10.Bf4 d6 11.Qd2 h6 12.Rad1 e5 13.Be3 Bg4 14.Bxc5 dxc5 15.f3 Be6 16.f4 Rd8 17.Nd5 Bxd5 18.exd5 e4 19.Rfe1 Rxd5 20.Rxe4 + Kd8 21.Qe2 Rxd1 + 22.Qxd1 + Qd7 23.Qxd7 + Kxd7 (see diagram) 24.Re5 b6 25.Bf1 a5 26.Bc4 Rf8 27.Kg2 Kd6 28.Kf3 Nd7 29.Re3 Nb8 30.Rd3 + Kc7 31.c3 Nc6 32.Re3 Kd6 33.a4 Ne7 34.h3 Nc6 35.h4 h5 36.Rd3 + Kc7 37.Rd5 f5 38.Rd2 Rf6 39.Re2 Kd7 40.Re3 g6 41.Bb5 Rd6 42.Ke2 Kd8 43.Rd3 Kc7 44.Rxd6 Kxd6 45.Kd3 Ne7 46.Be8 Kd5 47.Bf7 + Kd6 48.Kc4 Kc6 49.Be8 + Kb7 50.Kb5 Nc8 51.Bc6 + Kc7 52.Bd5 Ne7 53.Bf7 Kb7 54.Bb3 Ka7 55.Bd1 Kb7 56.Bf3 + Kc7 57.Ka6 Ng8 58.Bd5 Ne7 59.Bc4 Nc6 60.Bf7 Ne7 61.Be8 Kd8 62.Bxg6 Nxg6 63.Kxb6 Kd7 64.Kxc5 Ne7 65.b4 axb4 66.cxb4 Nc8 67.a5 Nd6 68.b5 Ne4 + 69.Kb6 Kc8 70.Kc6 Kb8 71.b6 1 ? 0

Fischer ? Tigran Petrosian , Buenos Aires Candidates Final 1971 , 7th match game , Sicilian Defense : Kan . Modern Variation (B42) , 1 ? 0 This game includes " 22.Nxd7 + ! ! " which is " perhaps Fischer 's most famous and instructive move and is still being cited today " .

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6 5.Bd3 Nc6 6.Nxc6 bxc6 7 @.@ 0 @-@ 0 d5 8.c4 Nf6 9.cxd5 cxd5 10.exd5 exd5 11.Nc3 Be7 12.Qa4 + Qd7 13.Re1 Qxa4 14.Nxa4 Be6 15.Be3 0 @-@ 0 16.Bc5 Rfe8 17.Bxe7 Rxe7 18.b4 Kf8 19.Nc5 Bc8 20.f3 Rea7 21.Re5 Bd7 (see diagram) 22.Nxd7 + Rxd7 23.Rc1 Rd6 24.Rc7 Nd7 25.Re2 g6 26.Kf2 h5 27.f4 h4 28.Kf3 f5 29.Ke3 d4 + 30.Kd2 Nb6 31.Ree7 Nd5 32.Rf7 + Ke8 33.Rb7 Nxf4 34.Bc4 1 ? 0

Fischer ? Boris Spassky , World Chess Championship 1972 , 6th match game , Queen 's Gambit Declined , Tartakower (D59) , 1 ? 0 Further analysis on the 1972 match page Saidy called this game " [the] finest artistic achievement of the whole match " .

Boris Spassky ? Fischer , World Chess Championship 1972 , 13th match game , Alekhine Defense : Modern , Albur Variation (B04) , 0 ? 1 Further analysis on the 1972 match page Botvinnik called this game " the highest creative achievement of Fischer " . He resolved a drawish opposite @-@ colored bishops endgame by sacrificing his bishop and trapping his own rook . " Then five passed pawns struggled with the white rook . Nothing similar had been seen before in chess . "

Fischer ? Boris Spassky , 1992 , 1st match game , Spanish Game : Morphy Defense . Breyer Defense Zaitsev Hybrid (C95) , 1 ? 0 Further analysis on the 1992 match page