

A MEMORABLE LIFE:
A Glimpse into the Complex Mind of
BOBBY FISCHER

JULY 24, 2014—JUNE 7, 2015

Boyhood Career

1. ***Chess Review* Vol. 24, No. 12**

December 1956

Periodical

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame,
gift of John Donaldson

Young Bobby studies the game position prior to his daring queen sacrifice with **17. ...Be6!!** in his game against Donald Byrne at the Third Lessing J. Rosenwald Trophy Tournament. Shortly after the game ended, International Master Hans Kmoch annotated the game for the December 1956 issue of *Chess Review*. The noted chess journalist dubbed it the “Game of the Century,” writing, “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.”

2. ***Chess Review* Vol. 26, No. 2**

February 1958

Periodical

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame,
gift of John Donaldson

The youngest-ever winner of the U.S. Chess Championship at age 14, Bobby Fischer is featured on the cover of *Chess Review* for his victory in the 1957/58 event. This qualified him to play in the Interzonal Tournament in Portoroz, Yugoslavia. More than half a century later Fischer still holds the record as youngest champion.

3. ***Chess Review* Vol. 26, No. 5**

May 1958

Periodical

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame,
gift of John Donaldson

On the cover of this issue of *Chess Review*, a young Fischer beams after winning two round-trip plane tickets to Europe during his March 26, 1958, appearance on the CBS-TV

program *I've Got a Secret*. During the show, he appeared before a panel of judges including Dick Clark, who was tasked with guessing Fischer's secret based on the headline “Teen-ager’s Strategy Defeats All Comers.” Clark did not discover Bobby’s secret (he was the U.S. Chess Champion), and he earned transportation to Europe, enabling him and his sister Joan to visit Moscow and travel to Yugoslavia for the Portoroz Interzonal Tournament. On the show Fischer mentioned that he learned to play the game at six, but only took it up seriously when he was nine.

4. Unknown photographer

Young Bobby Fischer and Jack Collins playing chess in his home

c 1956-58

Photograph

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame

In his book *My Seven Chess Prodigies*, Jack Collins wrote that Bobby was a constant presence at his home at 91 Lenox Road in Brooklyn from the summer of 1956 to the summer of 1958. During this time, Fischer went from being rated 2200 to one of the best players in the world. While not a teacher in a formal sense, Collins was a valuable mentor who studied and played chess constantly with Bobby. The Hawthorne Chess Club, which was based in Collins’ home, attracted not only Fischer, but also other strong junior players including William Lombardy and Raymond Weinstein, who would soon be ranked among the best in the United States.

5. ***Chess Life* Vol. 16, No. 1**

January 20, 1961

Periodical

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame

Fischer’s fourth straight win in the U.S. Chess Championship earned him a photo on the cover of the first issue of *Chess Life* to be published as a magazine. The storied chess

publication had previously appeared in a newspaper format from 1946-1960. Fischer would eventually win all eight U.S. Chess Championships in which he competed, an accomplishment he would later describe as his proudest to Icelandic grandmaster and good friend Helgi Olafsson. In the 1963/64 event, Fischer had a historic 11-0 performance. His overall score of 74/90 in the U.S. Chess Championships (61 wins, 26 draws, 3 losses) is another record accomplishment that is unlikely to be matched.

6. *Manhattan Chess Club Sign-in Sheet*

c 1955

Manuscript

Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefeld

Showing the signatures of Fischer and his early chess teacher Carmine Nigro, this 1955 sign-in sheet from the Manhattan Chess Club bears witness to Bobby's early entry into the New York chess scene. International Master Walter Shipman, one of the best chess players in the country in the mid-1950s, remembers that the two first visited the Manhattan Chess Club together in August of 1955. Shipman played against the 12-year-old Bobby in a series of blitz games at one second a move. Though he won two-thirds of them, he quickly realized that Fischer was quite a special talent.

The Manhattan, unlike the other great New York chess club, the Marshall, had no junior players as young as Bobby at the time. Club President Maurice Kasper made an exception for the prodigy and gave him a free membership as further encouragement at this early point of his career.

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Fischer – Reshevsky Match

1. *Letter from Harry Borocho to Walter Fried*
August 14, 1961
Manuscript
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame,
gift of the family of Jacqueline Piatigorsky

National Master Harry Borocho served as the substitute referee for the adjourned portion of the 11th game of the Bobby Fischer–Samuel Reshevsky match. Here, he writes about the abrupt ending of the contest, and offers criticism of Fischer’s behavior. He supported the position of the organizers, believing that Fischer should have played at the rescheduled time for the 12th game. He states that Fischer had been informed in advance that the schedule had been changed.

2. *Bobby Fischer–Samuel Reshevsky, Round 11 Scoresheet*
August 10, 1961
Manuscript
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame,
gift of the family of Jacqueline Piatigorsky

This score sheet records the eleventh, and what would become the final, game of the Fischer–Reshevsky match. This score sheet only shows the moves up to the adjourned position; the game actually went to move 57. Fischer would later include this as game 28 in *My 60 Memorable Games*.

Game 11 represented one more lost opportunity for Fischer, who, with a stronger performance, could have been up by two points by this point in the match. Games 3, 4, 6, 9, and 10 were relatively quiet draws. Bobby won game 2 cleanly, while the fifth game was closely fought. He lost game 7 on a one-move blunder, but Reshevsky was clearly better. These eight games leave Bobby one up, and in the remaining three he missed opportunities to improve his standing in the event.

3. *Chess Review Vol. 29, No. 9*
September 1961
Periodical
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame,
gift of John Donaldson

4. *Chess Life Vol. 16, No. 8*
August 1961
Periodical
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame,
gift of John Donaldson

Writers for the two national magazines, *Chess Life* and *Chess Review*, weighed in on the termination of the match, some taking the side of Fischer, while others supported that of the organizers. The former publication, the house organ of the U.S. Chess Federation, saw its young editor (and future Fischer biographer) Frank Brady try to stay officially neutral, but his article would ultimately be seen as endorsing Fischer’s opinion. Brady stressed the fact that the official announcement for the match had game 12 listed at 7:30 p.m. on August 12, and though Reshevsky’s requests for modifications in the playing schedule had been accommodated, Fischer’s opposition to playing the following morning instead had not been considered. Al Horowitz, founder of the independent periodical *Chess Review*, had a more nuanced approach. He examined Brady’s points, but also stressed that Fischer had been told of the time change for game 12 on August 3, and Fischer only objected a week later. By then the new schedule had already been published in the *Los Angeles Times*, and it would have been difficult to change the schedule again.

5. Photographer unknown
Bobby Fischer in thought after Samuel Reshevsky’s 10...Qa5 in game 6 of their match
1961
Photograph
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame,
gift of the family of Jacqueline Piatigorsky

Never an opening expert, Samuel Reshevsky faced a serious challenge in how to counter Fischer's habitual **1. e4**. Normally Samuel would meet **1. e4** with **1. ...e5**, but Fischer was already a great expert on the Ruy Lopez. As a result, Reshevsky played the Accelerated Dragon opening the five times he played with the black pieces during this match. He lost the second game, but it was Bobby who varied in games 4, 6, 8, and 10. All of these games ended in draws, and Reshevsky could consider his experiment a success.

6. Photographer unknown
Bobby Fischer and Samuel Reshevsky in Game 6 of their 1961 Match
1961
Photograph
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of the family of Jacqueline Piatigorsky

For the only time in the match, Fischer won game 5 with the black pieces. He would later include the dramatic, closely-fought battle in his book, *My 60 Memorable Games*. Going into game 6 and leading 3-2, Fischer was eager to win, but the game ultimately ended in a draw.
7. Photographer unknown
Bobby Fischer and Samuel Reshevsky Compete in their 1961 Match
1961
Photograph
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of the family of Jacqueline Piatigorsky
8. Photographer unknown
Irving Rivise acting as the Referee, Commentator, and Wallboy at the Bobby Fischer–Samuel Reshevsky Match
1961
Photograph
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of the family of Jacqueline Piatigorsky

9. Photographer unknown
Jacqueline Piatigorsky and Bobby Fischer at the Herman Steiner Chess Club
1961
10. Photographer unknown
Samuel Reshevsky Ponders the Position after 12. Qg4 in Game 6 of the 1961 Bobby Fischer–Samuel Reshevsky Match
1961
11. Photographer unknown
The Audience at the 1961 Bobby Fischer–Samuel Reshevsky Match Sponsored by Jacqueline Piatigorsky and the American Chess Federation
1961
12. Photographer unknown
The 1961 Bobby Fischer–Samuel Reshevsky Match Sponsored by Jacqueline Piatigorsky and the American Chess Federation
1961

These four photos, taken at the newly opened home of the Herman Steiner Chess Club in Los Angeles, capture the excitement elicited by the Fischer–Reshevsky match among West Coast chess fans. The first depicts 18-year-old Bobby with Jacqueline Piatigorsky, a skilled chess player herself, who was making her debut as a chess organizer and patron during the match.
13. *Letter from Al Bisno to Morris Kasper and Walter Fried*
August 21, 1961
Letter
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of the family of Jacqueline Piatigorsky

Al Bisno, a president of the Manhattan Chess Club in the 1950s, expresses his disappointment in Fischer in this letter written after the end of the Fischer–Reshevsky match. Bisno had worked to secure

financial backing and publicity for the match. Here, in a letter written during the peak of the controversy following the match, he condemns Fischer. Bisno suggests that Bobby receive no share of the cash prize and even goes so far as to demand he seek psychiatric help. Curiously, three years later Bobby and Bisno were again on good terms and the latter tried to arrange a match between Fischer and a top Soviet player.

14. **“Chess, The Junior Chamber & Hollywood Glamour”**

Unknown Publication

August 21, 1961

Magazine Article

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of the family of Jacqueline Piatigorsky

15. Herbert Dallinger

Samuel Reshevsky and Bobby Fischer at the 1961 Match

1961

Photograph

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of the family of Jacqueline Piatigorsky

Hosted by actor José Ferrer, the opening game of the Los Angeles half of the Fischer–Reshevsky match took place at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. Here the two players pose before the opening of the fifth game. The first four games of the match were held at the Empire Hotel in New York, under the auspices of the American Chess Foundation, and the next eight were scheduled to be held in Los Angeles, at the Beverly Hilton and the newly-opened Herman Steiner Chess Club, which was housed in a building designed by noted architect Frank Lloyd Wright, Jr.

Though separated by decades in age, Fischer and Reshevsky were both prodigies known for their unconventional childhoods as well as their chess skills. Fischer sometimes experienced a lack of supervision from his

mother as a young child; however, Reshevsky supported his family through an endless series of simultaneous exhibitions in Europe and the United States. He did not attend school, and at one point his parents were forced to appear in District Court in Manhattan facing charges of improper guardianship.

16. **“Chess Champ Forfeits by Failing to Appear”**

Los Angeles Times

Newspaper article

August 14, 1961

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of the family of Jacqueline Piatigorsky

The chess world was a small and insular place in 1961. Jacqueline Piatigorsky’s good friend and fellow U.S. Womens Chess Championship competitor Lina Grumette used her skills as a public relations expert to ensure that the Los Angeles section of the match was well-covered in both the local and national press. Grumette, herself a strong women’s chess player, would also later gain fame as a friend and caretaker of Fischer, providing him housing when he moved to California and encouraging him in his run for the 1972 World Chess Championship.

17. **“Chess Champ Is in a Tizzy”**

Unknown Publication

c 1961

Newspaper article

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of the family of Jacqueline Piatigorsky

The fallout of the premature ending of the Fischer–Reshevsky match was covered in the mainstream press as well as in chess publications. In this article Fischer declared that he and Reshevsky had previously agreed that there would be no forfeits in the match. Of the decision to declare game 12 a forfeit, he said, “It’s just a little joke they’re [the organizers] trying to play on me.” Though the end of the match was acrimonious, both

Jacqueline Piatigorsky and Al Bisno, two of the key organizers of the match, would go on to invite him to later competitions they held.

18. *Memorandum of Information on Scheduled Chess Match Between Robert Fischer, Present U.S. Chess Champion and Samuel Reshevsky, Former U.S. Chess Champion*

June 28, 1961

Manuscript

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of the family of Jacqueline Piatigorsky

Billed as a battle between two players representing the past and future of American chess, the Fischer–Reshevsky match pitted “the chess prodigy of today...against the chess prodigy of yesterday.” Chess players around the world greeted the announcement that Samuel Reshevsky and Bobby Fischer would play a match with great interest. The 18-year-old Fischer had age and recent results on his side, but most grandmasters expected the 49-year-old Reshevsky to win for one simple reason—he had played many matches and never lost a single one. Prior to this contest, Fischer and Reshevsky had met six times with four draws and a win each. Reshevsky led the match at its termination.

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Manuscripts of My 60 Memorable Games

1. Bobby Fischer and Larry Evans
**Draft of *My 60 Memorable Games*
with Editing Notes**
March 23, 1966
Manuscript
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield

This early draft of what would later become *My 60 Memorable Games* ends at game 52, Fischer's victory over fellow Grandmaster Nicolas Rossolimo at the 1965 U.S. Chess Championship. In the years to come, Bobby would update the book and add eight additional games, bringing the total to 60. Fischer's brilliant win over Soviet grandmaster Leonid Stein at the Sousse Interzonal Tournament in Tunisia, which ended in November 1967, is the last game in the final version of the book.

2. Bobby Fischer and Larry Evans
**Draft of *My 60 Memorable Games*
with Editing Notes**
January 14, 1967
Manuscript
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield

When *My 60 Memorable Games* was finally published in 1969, it immediately won acclaim as one of the greatest games collections of all time. Combining fantastic games and brilliant analysis, the book is also distinguished by its lively prose. Though Fischer would annotate a few games after the publication of *My 60 Memorable Games*, including light notes to most of his encounters in a famous blitz tournament in Yugoslavia in 1970, he would never again undertake such a massive project.

Best games collections published prior to *My 60 Memorable Games* followed a strict template, offering only wins by the author against elite opponents in serious tournaments. However, Fischer deviated from this pattern, including many great victories, but also nine draws and three losses. Most are from

major events, but Fischer played one in a simultaneous exhibition and another is a skittles game (a casual game played for fun). Fischer's competition ranges from world champions to amateurs. Rather than simply recording his most notable wins, the publication is a collection of games that were most meaningful to Fischer.

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1971-1972 Study Materials

1. Robert Wade
Black: Spassky 1 d4 v...
1972
Handwritten Study Journal
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield

Fischer's comments about this game between Viktor Korchnoi and Boris Spassky from the 1960 U.S.S.R. Chess Championship suggest Bobby may have considered surprising Boris with **1. d4** during the World Chess Championship match. This note indicates Fischer may have prepared many novelties for the World Chess Championship that he was ultimately never able to use.

**1. d4 d5 2. c4 dxc4 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. e3 Bg4
5. Bxc4 e6 6. 0-0 a6 7. Qe2 Nc6 8. Rd1 Bd6
9. h3 Bh5 10. e4**

Here Fischer gives **10. Nc3! 0-0 (or 10...Qe7
11. e4 e5 12. Bg5!) 11. g4 Bg6 12. e4 Bb4
13. d5!**.

Unlike the material Robert Wade prepared about Tigran Petrosian, whom Fischer faced in the 1971 Candidates Match, there were almost no written comments in the booklets of Spassky's games. By the time Wade had finished compiling these notebooks, Fischer may have already received an advance copy of the "red book," containing 355 of Spassky's games in one volume, a more convenient format for study.

2. Robert Wade
**Taimanov as Black: v English, v Birds,
v King's Indian for White**
1971
Handwritten Study Journal
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield

The University of British Columbia hosted the Candidates Match through the efforts of Canada's Zonal President John Prentice. American chess has had several great sponsors

including Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield and Jacqueline and Gregor Piatigorsky, but Canada has had only one—John Prentice. Affectionately known as "Plywood Prentice" for the timber business he founded in British Columbia after he left his native Austria shortly before World War II, Prentice sponsored Fischer's first Candidates Match.

3. Robert Wade
Taimanov as Black: 1 e4 e6, 1 e4 e5, 1 d4...
1971
Handwritten Study Journal
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield

4. Robert Wade
**Taimanov as Black: Nimzo-Indian, Queen's
Indian Defence, Bogoljow's**
1971
Handwritten Study Journal
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield

Evgeni Vasiukov was one of the Soviets that Fischer played blitz with during Bobby's only visit to the Soviet Union in 1958. Although already a strong player, Vasiukov was not well-known outside the U.S.S.R. at the time. It would have been reasonable to expect that Bobby wouldn't remember him, but this was not the case. Fischer later not only recalled playing Vasiukov in blitz games, he started rattling off the moves of several of them.

5. Robert Wade
Taimanov as Black: Sicilian
1971
Handwritten Study Journal
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield

The venue for the Fischer-Taimanov match was unsettled for some time, as Bobby hoped to play in the United States and Taimanov the Soviet Union. Finally, Vancouver was chosen as neutral ground. The Fischer mania that was to strike the United States in 1972 did not exist a year earlier. While the crowds

were respectable for this match, there were never more than 100 spectators. Among them was the future grandmaster Peter Biyiasas who served as a wall boy for one game and who would host Fischer in San Francisco ten years later.

6. Robert Wade

Taimanov as Black: Sicilians, 2 Nf3 Nc6, 2 Nf3 d6, 2 Nf3 a6, Odd 2nd/3rd/4th Moves
1971

Handwritten Study Journal
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

In a 2012 interview with the Russian website *Chess News*, Grandmaster Evgeni Vasiukov, Taimanov's second for the match, blamed malnutrition for the lopsided score in the 1971 Candidates Match. According to Vasiukov, Taimanov didn't eat properly during the competition, preferring to save his meal money to buy Western goods unavailable in the Soviet Union. Vasiukov acknowledges Fischer was the stronger player, but argues that the final score should have been closer, a belief Fischer supported.

7. Robert Wade

Volume Three Spassky as White
1972

Handwritten Study Journal
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

8. Robert Wade

Petrosian White: W12–W20
1971

Handwritten Study Journal
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

In this page from a study notebook, Bobby notes the improvement **7. ...Nxc3!** after **1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 b6 4. Nc3 Bb7 5. a3 d5 6. cxd5 Nxd5 7. e3**. Petrosian never got a chance to employ his favorite anti-Queen's Indian system, but something analogous to Fischer's suggested improvement (**7. ...Nxc3!**)

occurred in game 8 where after **1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 d5 4. Nc3 c5 5. e3 Nc6 6. a3 Ne4 7. Qc3** Black played **7. ...Nxc3**.

Fischer exhibited a strong preference for flexible, dynamic pawn structures to static ones and liked playing against hanging pawns.

9. Robert Wade

Petrosian Black: B21–B26
1971

Handwritten Study Journal
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

10. Robert Wade

Petrosian Black: B14–B20
1971

Handwritten Study Journal
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

11. Robert Wade

Petrosian Black: B27–B31
1971

Handwritten Study Journal
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

This game opens **1. c4 c5 2. Nc3 Nc6 3. g3 g6 4. Bg2 Bg7 5. e3 e5 6. Nge2 Nge7 7. b3 d6 8. Bb2 0–0 9. 0–0 Rb8 10. Nd5 Nxd5 11. cxd5 Nb4 12. d3 b6 13. a3 Na6 14. Qd2 Nc7 15. d4 exd4**

In this notebook, Fischer comments that Petrosian employs an “interesting system for Black.” Indeed, after the more or less forced sequence **16. exd4 Ba6 17. Rfe1 Bxe2 18. Rxe2 Nb5 19. dxc5 Bxb2 20. Qxb2 bxc5**, Petrosian, playing as Black, had a clear positional advantage due to the superiority of his knight over White's bishop.

Fischer (as Black) had defeated Petrosian in the 1970 U.S.S.R. vs. the World match with the variation starting with **5. ...e6**. Fischer was fond of meeting **1. c4** with **1...c5** at this stage of his career, and he may have been looking for a line that stayed close to home

yet sidestepped any improvements Petrosian planned after 5. ...e6. The chance to play one of Petrosian's weapons against him would have supplied an extra psychological benefit. This line did not appear in the match as Petrosian opened 1. d4 in game 2, 1. Nf3 and 2. b3 in game 6 and again 1. d4 in game 6. The closest it came to occurring was game 4 which opened 1. c4 c5, but Petrosian varied with 2. Nf3.

12. Robert Wade

Spassky as Black v. 1 d4 (volume 1)

1972

Handwritten Study Journal

Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

13. Robert Wade

Taimanov as White: English, 1 e4

1971

Handwritten Study Journal

Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

14. Robert Wade

Taimanov as White: Queen's Gambit Accepted, Catalan, QGD, QP

1972

Handwritten Study Journal

Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

International Master Robert Wade was a perfect researcher for Fischer. Born on a farm in Dunedin, New Zealand, Wade won three national titles before moving to England in the late 1940s. A European base was a necessity for a budding chess professional at the time. He won several national championships in his adopted homeland and played on its Olympiad team on six occasions. However, he is best known for his role as the chess editor at Batsford Publishing in the 1960 and 70s. The firm produced several groundbreaking books on different openings that set new standards and the high quality was in part due to diligent research. Wade's tremendous library of

books, periodicals, and tournament bulletins made this possible. It was the latter two that were particularly useful in building up the notebooks on Bobby's opponents.

15. Robert Wade

Taimanov as White: Nimzo-Indians, Queen's Indian, Bogo-Indian

1971

Handwritten Study Journal

Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

Organized by opening, each notebook contains hundreds of games, representing an incredible amount of time expended. The material proved helpful to Fischer, who made the notebooks his own by personalizing them with written observations and analytical notes. Nevertheless, some were more useful than others; during the match with Taimanov only three openings were played. Bobby opened 1. e4 each time he was White and all three games entered into the Taimanov variation of the Sicilian. Mark Taimanov also stuck to his guns, opening 1. d4 each time he was White. The first two times Bobby answered with the King's Indian, but in both games White reached promising positions so he switched to the Grunfeld for the final game. This meant that much of the work Wade did was not particularly helpful for this match, but some of it might have proved inspirational later in the World Chess Championship cycle.

16. Robert Wade

Taimanov as White: Grunfelds

1971

Handwritten Study Journal

Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

Near the end of the Palma de Mallorca Interzonal in 1970, Fischer and International Master Robert Wade made an agreement whereby the latter would be hired to research the games of Bobby's opponents in

the Candidates Matches and World Chess Championship. Ed Edmondson, the United States Chess Federation executive director at the time and Fischer's de facto manager in 1970-1971, took care of the arrangements.

Mark Taimanov, the Russian grandmaster and his first opponent in the matches, was, like Fischer, a qualifier from the 1970 Interzonal. A former Soviet champion, he was considered to be an underdog against Fischer in the first round of the Candidates Matches. Nevertheless, the final score of 6-0 was unexpected. It masks the fact that Taimanov consistently got decent positions out of the opening and early middlegame only to get outplayed or blunder later in the games.

17. Robert Wade
Spassky as White
1972
Handwritten Study Journal
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

18. Robert Wade
Petrosian White: W1-W3
1971
Handwritten Study Journal
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

19. Robert Wade
Petrosian White: W4-W11
1971
Handwritten Study Journal
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

Here, Fischer makes a note that Robert Wade has inadvertently transposed the names of the players. This was a rare slip by the English International Master, who made few mistakes while preparing these study materials. Today a computer database would produce the information instantly, but Wade recorded the games by hand, consulting hundreds, if not thousands of periodicals, bulletins, and books.

20. Robert Wade
Petrosian Black: B1-B13
1971
Handwritten Study Journal
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

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1972 World Chess Championship

1. ***Chess Pieces from Game 3 of the 1972 World Chess Championship***
1972
Wood
King size: 3 5/8 inches
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

These chess pieces, created in the familiar Staunton style, bear witness to one of the most important games in the most famous World Chess Championship match. Fischer demanded that a Staunton set from Jaques of London be used for the game. Jaques of London is a well-known manufacturer of chess equipment. When the Staunton set, named for mid-nineteenth century chess great Howard Staunton, was first manufactured, Jaques of London maintained exclusive manufacturing rights. Eventually the set would become the standard for elite tournament play. Each of the pieces in the set on display is hand carved and lead weighted.

With them, Fischer defeated Spassky for the first time in his career, turning the momentum of the match. Had Fischer, trailing 0-2, lost game 3 of the World Chess Championship, he may have quit the match entirely. Prior to this game Fischer had not beaten Spassky and his lifetime score, excluding the second game forfeit, was four losses and two draws in six games. Bobby played to win as evidenced by his use of the double-edged Modern Benoni opening and adoption of the seldom seen (before or since) **11. ...Nh5!?**. Fischer's unconventional strategy worked, and he ultimately won the game, turning the tide of the match. The pieces are set to display a position from the third game of the match, when Fischer played this surprising move.

2. ***Chess Board Signed by Bobby Fischer and Boris Spassky***
1972
Wood
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

Signed by Boris Spassky and Bobby Fischer, this is one of ten wooden boards created for their 1972 World Chess Championship match. Originally, organizers commissioned a mahogany chess table with inlaid marble squares for the two competitors to use in the match. However, the squares were not regulation size. This displeased Fischer, who was very particular about the equipment he used in play. Organizers commissioned ten handmade wooden boards, from which Bobby would pick one for use in play. Icelandic chess officials expected Fischer to sign the remainder, which they then hoped to sell to offset some of the expenses of the match. Fischer initially balked, unwilling to sign anything that could be sold and unhappy with the width of the border of the chess board. He ultimately signed this board, which was not used in the match.

3. Eduard Wildhagen
Weltgeschichte des Schachs Lieferung 27, Boris Spassky: 355 Partien
History of Chess Part 27, Boris Spassky: 355 Matches
1972
Book
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

Bobby Fischer is said to have memorized each of the 355 games in this volume, which totaled over 14,000 moves. The last volume in a series of books produced by the German publisher Eduard Wildhagen on great players of the world, it contains unannotated games by Spassky, with a diagram illustrating the progress of the game every five moves. This copy includes handwritten notes from Fischer, analyzing Spassky's games. The book

was a key aid in his preparations for the World Chess Championship match against Boris Spassky.

Fischer received an advance copy of the book from the publisher in December 1971. In a *New York Times* article detailing Fischer's preparations for competing against Spassky published on March 31, 1971, Martin Arnold made a joking reference to it being referred to as the "big red book" to distinguish it from *Quotations from Chairman Mao*, which was known as the "little red book" of the time. Arnold further wrote that "training for the 6-foot, 2-inch, 29-year-old challenger consists of studying the Spassky red book, which he takes with him to the Grossinger [resort] dining room. He normally eats alone at a table while studying the book or playing with a chess set."

4. ***Program: The World Chess Championship Match, Iceland***

1972

Icelandic Chess Federation

Pamphlet

Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield

Attendance for Fischer's first two matches in Vancouver and Denver was modest, but the turnout for the final Candidates Match in Buenos Aires was enormous. The World Chess Championship attracted a previously-unmatched level of enthusiasm among the American public that has not been bested since. Television, magazines, and newspapers made it the leading news story of the summer of 1972. Displayed here is Fischer's own copy of the program for the historic match.

A MEMORABLE LIFE:
A Glimpse into the Complex Mind of
BOBBY FISCHER

JULY 24, 2014—JUNE 7, 2015

Commemorative 1972 World Chess Championship Artifacts

1. ***1972 World Chess Championship
Commemorative Envelope with Caricatures of
Bobby Fischer and Boris Spassky***

1972

Envelope

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame

2. ***World Chess Championship
Commemorative Medal***

1972

Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquiefield

3. ***1972 World Chess Championship
Commemorative Envelope***

1972

Envelope

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame

Fischer's participation in the World Chess Championship created a demand for souvenirs, both for American and international fans. Though most American fans could not afford to travel to Iceland, they could purchase charming artifacts like these to feel a connection to the storied match. These artifacts speak to the democratic nature of chess, which has a wide appeal for both collectors and players. The first chess stamp was printed in Bulgaria in 1947. Today most major countries in the world have issued stamps devoted to chess, though one notable exception is the United States.

4. ***World Chess Championship Match Ticket–
Match 13***

1972

Ephemera

Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquiefield

Many American chess players made the pilgrimage to Reykjavik to see the match and for most non-New Yorkers it was their first chance to see Bobby Fischer in the flesh, as he had played only a handful of tournaments outside New York since 1957 (two events in 1963 and the 1966 Piatigorsky Cup).

Considering what a spectacle this match was, admission was modest—\$5, or the equivalent of \$28 today adjusted for inflation.

5. ***Fischer vs. Spassky Champion Chessmate Game***

1972

Hoi Polloi Inc.

Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquiefield

Created in 1972, this learning tool featured all 20 games of the 1972 World Championship. It was designed to to double as a teaching device and a souvenir of the Championship.

6. ***1972 World Chess Championship Match
Commemorative Postcard***

1972

Postcard

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame

7. ***Icelandic Chess Federation's Official
Commemorative Program***

1972

Manuscript

Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquiefield

8. ***Time Vol. 100, No. 5***

July 31, 1972

Periodical

Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquiefield

Fischer's larger-than-life personality, as well as Cold War tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, heightened interest in the match between Fischer and Spassky. Here the two players appear as chess pieces, perhaps an allusion to how chess is often used as a metaphor in discussions of war and politics.

9. ***Sports Illustrated Vol. 37, No. 7***

August 14, 1972

Periodical

Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquiefield

This magazine, containing an article entitled "How to Cook a Russian Goose," discusses the

World Chess Championship match following game 11 of the best-of-24 series. Additionally, it discusses the controversy Fischer's demands caused before and throughout the match. The article states, "While the chess proceeded sporadically, the Icelanders grew increasingly annoyed by Fischer's early *dyntir*, meaning nonsense. Attendance dropped from some 2,500 at the first game to around 900 or less in the last two. A newspaper letter writer had referred to Fischer as the most hated man in Iceland." Though the match began in controversy, Fischer's win would earn him acclaim in his home country and abroad.

10. ***Chess Digest Magazine* Vol. 5, No. 10**

October 1972

Periodical

Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield

Throughout the United States, chess publications eagerly recounted each of the exciting events of the 1972 World Chess Championship. Among them was the American publication *Chess Digest*. Founded in 1968 by the Dallas National Master Ken Smith, it unabashedly supported Fischer's career. Smith ran a construction company to support himself, but his passion was the magazine and the book and equipment business he ran alongside it. During Bobby's World Chess Championship run, Smith supplied him with an endless stream of books and magazines, all for free.

This issue of *Chess Digest* covers the match from games 8 to 21, and typically for this magazine, borrows liberally from other sources. The game annotations are translated from Soviet publications and the caricatures that appear throughout this issue were produced by an Icelandic artist, Halldór Pétursson.

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1. James Mason
*The Art of Chess Fourth Edition,
Revised and Enlarged*
1914
David McKay
Manuscript
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield

2. James Mason
*The Principles of Chess in Theory and Practice,
Fourth Edition, Revised and Enlarged*
1914
David McKay
Manuscript
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield

Fischer's love for old-time chess is evident in his ownership of these two books by James Mason, an Irish-born player prominent in the 1880s. Fischer explained his attraction to this material in a letter to Larry Evans dated September 15, 1963. He stated, "I am mainly occupying my time by studying old opening books and believe it or not I'm learning a lot! They don't waste space on the Catalan, Reti, King's Indian reversed and other rotten openings."

3. David Bronstein
200 ОТКРЫТЫХ ПАРТИЙ
200 Open Games
1970
Physical Culture and Sport
Manuscript
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield

Though Fischer hated the Soviet chess establishment, claiming that teams from the U.S.S.R. had colluded to defeat him in the 1962 Candidates Tournament, he had good relations with some of the individual players, among them David Bronstein. Here, Bronstein has inscribed his book *200 Open Games* to Fischer.

4. Editor William Steinitz
The International Chess Magazine
Vol. V, No. 1-12
January-December 1889
Manuscript
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield

Jack Collins introduced Bobby to the work of William Steinitz, the first world champion. Collins and Fischer shared many hours playing through games from Steinitz's *The International Chess Magazine*, which was published in the 19th century. Collins, writing in *My Seven Chess Prodigies*, noted that this journal "provided us with grand old games and insights into the frightening intellect and acid pen of the 'Father of Modern Chess.'" Steinitz was a profound opening analyst, as was Bobby, and the latter adopted several of his pet lines including **9. Nh3** in the Two Knights Defense, **3. d4** followed by **4. e5** and **5. Qe2** in the Petroff as well as **5. d3** in the Ruy Lopez. Steinitz, like Bobby Fischer, is an inductee of both the U.S. and World Chess Halls of Fame.

5. Dr. Hermann von Gottschall
*Adolf Anderssen der Altmeister deutscher
Schachspielkunst*
*Adolf Anderssen Great German Chess Player
of the Past*
1912
Veit & Comp.
Manuscript
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield

Unlike other 20th-century world chess champions, Fischer was intimately acquainted with the games of Adolf Anderssen, a renowned player of the mid-19th century, but little-studied in the 20th. As Collins wrote in his book *My Seven Chess Prodigies*, "I once lent a brand-new copy of *Adolf Anderssen*, by Dr. Hermann von Gottschall, to him. Some weeks or months later he returned it, and I had good reason to believe he had worked

over every game and note in it—all 751 games in the main section, plus 80 problems by Anderssen in another section!”

6. ***Sahovski Informator 12***
Chess Informant Vol. 12
1972
Periodical
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield
7. ***Sahovski Informator 15***
Chess Informant Vol. 15
1973
Periodical
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield
8. ***Sahovski Informator 14***
Chess Informant Vol. 14
1973
Periodical
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield
9. ***Sahovski Informator 27***
Chess Informant Vol. 27
1979
Periodical
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

The Yugoslav publication *Sahovski Informator* or *Chess Informant*, as it is known in North America, first appeared in 1966. Bobby Fischer was among its first Champions. He held such a high opinion of it that when analyzing with participants in a U.S. Junior Closed Chess Championship around 1970, he advocated they buy it before his own book *My 60 Memorable Games*. Fischer also annotated ten of his games for *Chess Informant* between 1968 and 1970, further evidencing the esteem in which he held this publication. The wear on these volumes shows the frequency with which he used them for study.

10. Johannes Kohtz, C. Kockelkorn
Das Indische Problem: Eine Schach-Studie
The Indian Problem: A Chess Study
1903
Stein
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield
11. J. Minckwitz
Das ABC des Schachspiels: Anleitung zur Raschen Erlernung der Schachspielkunst und Einführung in die Problemkomposition
The ABCs of Chess: Rapid Guide to Learning the Art of Chess and Introduction to Composition Problems
1897
Veit & Comp.
Manuscript
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

Though many serious chess players do not study chess problems, Bobby was eclectic in his reading habits and was known to enjoy solving them. However, more often he contemplated endgame studies put to him by his lifelong friend Pal Benko. While these volumes are rather obscure, they are not surprising to find in Fischer’s library.

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1970 Tournaments and 1971 Candidates Matches

1. *Fine, Fischer, Petrosian Advertisement Chess Life & Review, Vol. XXVII No. 4*
April 1972
United States Chess Federation
Periodical
Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield

This classic advertisement for Reuben Fine's booklet exploring the Bobby Fischer–Tigran Petrosian Candidates Match features images of each of the competitors, as well as the author. While the description of Fine as the man who should have been champion is exaggerated, (he did tie for first at AVRO 1938 with Keres but chose not to play in the World Championship tournament in 1948), Fischer and Petrosian's descriptions were accurate.

2. Reuben Fine
The Final Candidates Match: Buenos Aires, 1971
1971
Hostel Chess Association
Periodical
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of John Donaldson

This publication, advertised in the pages of *Chess Life & Review*, is Grandmaster Reuben Fine's last serious work. He would later go on to write a book about Fischer's 1972 World Chess Championship match that received universally negative reviews. Fine, an inductee to the U.S. Chess Hall of Fame, is remembered for not only being a great player but also for writing several excellent books including *Basic Chess Endings*, *The Ideas Behind the Chess Openings*, and his best games collection *A Passion for Chess*.

3. *Jaque: Campeonato del Mundo Match Final de Candidatos Fischer–Petrosian, Buenos Aires, October 1971*
Check: World Championship Final Candidates Match Fischer–Petrosian, Buenos Aires, October 1971
1971

Periodical
Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of John Donaldson

Tigran Petrosian represented Fischer's most difficult opponent in the 1971 Candidates cycle. Aben Rudy, a friend of Fischer's and interviewee for the audio tour for this exhibition, remembers a meal he shared with Bobby and his old mentor Jack Collins shortly before the Petrosian match. Rudy expected Bobby to be brimming with confidence, as he had just defeated Mark Taimanov and Bent Larsen by a combined score of 12-0, while Petrosian had barely gotten past Robert Hubner and Viktor Korchnoi. However, Bobby explained that Petrosian was a much tougher opponent. For the first five games of the Candidates Match, Fischer and Petrosian were tied. Later Fischer would win four games in a row.

While the matches with Taimanov and Larsen had relatively modest attendance, the Candidates Final in Buenos Aires, Argentina, at the Teatro San Martin had over a thousand overflow spectators who could only watch from the lobby. The Spanish magazine *Jaque* published a special edition devoted to the Candidates Match between Fischer and Tigran Petrosian, containing not only detailed analysis of the games, but many interesting photographs of Bobby that have never been reproduced elsewhere.

4. *Suplement No. 29 de la Revista AJEDREZ: II Torneo Internacional "Ciudad de Buenos Aires"*
Supplement No. 29 to CHESS Magazine: II International Tournament "City of Buenos Aires"
November 1970

Editorial Sopena Argentina

Periodical

Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Siquefield

Buenos Aires 1970 was one of Fischer's greatest tournament triumphs as he scored 15 out of 17 to finish three and a half points ahead of the field, which included former World Chess Champion Vasily Smyslov. There, Fischer not only took part in the tournament, but also participated in a large open air exhibition match. A special supplement of the Argentine magazine *Revista AJEDREZ* covered both the match and the exhibition.

5. *Chess Life & Review Vol. 26, No. 11*

November 1971

Periodical

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of John Donaldson

Larry Evans, Fischer's good friend, analyzes with him in a pool at Grossinger's Resort in this playful photo on the cover of *Chess Life & Review*. Bobby had a long relationship with Grossinger's Resort in the Catskill Mountains, about 100 miles northwest of New York City. When he won his first U.S. Chess Championship, the resort awarded Bobby a 10-day all-expenses-paid stay. Later Bobby returned to the resort to prepare for his match against Tigran Petrosian in 1971. Fischer did not have a second at his match with Mark Taimanov. The reasons for this are varied. Though the U.S.C.F. was prepared to pay for a second, Fischer wanted Svetozar Gligoric, but the Yugoslav had prior commitments. Larry Evans was another choice for the Taimanov match but couldn't meet Fischer's requirement not to bring his wife or engage in journalism.

Instead Evans helped him prepare beforehand. This was likely more helpful as Bobby never depended on others for opening choices and preferred to work on his adjournments alone.

6. *Chess Life & Review Vol. 26, No. 9*

September 1971

Periodical

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of John Donaldson

Fischer's match with Bent Larsen was held at Temple Buell College in Denver in July of 1971. Fischer defeated the Danish grandmaster by the score of 6-0. While Taimanov was a respected grandmaster, Larsen was considered one of the very best players of the late 1960s and early 1970s. He played ahead of Fischer in the U.S.S.R. vs. the World match and dealt Bobby his only loss at the Palma de Mallorca Interzonal.

7. Dragoslav Andric

Bobby Fischer prepares for his game against Tigran Petrosian in the 1970 U.S.S.R. vs. the rest of the World Match

1970

Photograph

Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame, gift of John Donaldson

In this photo, a pensive Bobby Fischer prepares for his first round game against Tigran Petrosian in the U.S.S.R. vs. the World tournament. Immediately behind Bobby are Svetozar Gligoric and Yefim Geller (standing) with Samuel Reshevsky in the distance.

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Manuscripts of My 60 Memorable Games

1. Bobby Fischer and Larry Evans
**Draft of *My 60 Memorable Games* with
 Editing Notes**
 June 15, 1966
 Simon and Schuster
 Manuscript
 Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield
2. Bobby Fischer and Larry Evans
**Draft of *My 60 Memorable Games* with
 Editing Notes**
 c 1966
 Simon and Schuster
 Manuscript
 Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield
3. Bobby Fischer and Larry Evans
**Draft of *My 60 Memorable Games* with
 Editing Notes**
 c 1966
 Simon and Schuster
 Manuscript
 Collection of Dr. Jeanne and Rex Sinquefield
4. Bobby Fischer and Larry Evans
My 60 Memorable Games
 1969
 Simon and Schuster
 Book
 Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame,
 gift of John Donaldson
5. Bobby Fischer and Larry Evans
My 60 Memorable Games
 1969
 Simon and Schuster
 Book
 Collection of the World Chess Hall of Fame,
 gift of John Donaldson

several times in 1969, and a paperback edition came out later in the year. The paperback version corrected an error in the score of the Bobby Fischer–Milan Matulovic match (the result was 2 ½ - 1 ½ and not 1 ½ - ½). Fisher’s previous book, *Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess*, is the all-time best selling chess book, selling over one million copies.

My 60 Memorable Games was translated into many languages including Russian. The latter irked Bobby because the royalties the Soviets offered were only payable in rubles, which weren’t convertible to U.S. dollars at the time. Published in 1972, the Russian language version is faithful to the original, but also offers a 5-page introduction by Vasily Smyslov and a 37-page analysis of Fischer’s style by Grandmaster Alexey Suetin.

Much anticipated in the chess community, *My 60 Memorable Games* received universally positive reviews. The February 1969 issue of *Chess Life* announced the U.S. Chess Federation would accept orders for the hardback book. The book was reprinted