



Yesterday, January 17, 2008, Bobby Fischer expired.

I have provided a few links below that are worth examining.

Allow me to make just a few comments.

It's fairly difficult for me to put into words what Fischer meant to the chess world or even describe his immense skill. I was born 1 year after his match with Spassky in 1972. It is my opinion and also a vast majority of other authorities, that Fischer was most responsible for the popularity of chess in this country and what we have today in scholastic chess. He was even more important and influential than the USCF (United States Chess Federation). Without Fischer, I probably would not be making a living teaching chess right now. The only book he ever authored "My 60 Most Memorable Games" is perhaps the most expensive rare chess book. It's a collector's item. I used to own a paperback copy and sold it back when it held no value.

They haven't released anything about the cause of death. The number one and two reasons for renal failure are diabetes and hypertension, respectively. I suspect it was one of those. Typically throughout the years, Fischer was in excellent shape and rail thin. Even when he came out of retirement in 1992 when he was 50, he still looked in fine condition. As you can tell in recent photos and videos his health appeared to be in terrible condition.

Anyways, chess players are not without a sense of irony. Fischer was 64 when he died. There are 64 squares on a chessboard. This is a well known trivia question. I am going to guess that his demise was crafted a little bit. Fischer's birthday is I believe March 9th. Numerous studies have been done that people in poor condition will try and hold on as long as they can to reach an important date, even living longer then medical science says is possible.

Here is another little piece of trivia for you:

The victory made Fischer the first U.S.-born world champion. Paul Morphy, an American, was regarded as the world's best player from 1858 to 1862, and William Steinitz, an Austrian immigrant to the United States, was an official champion from 1886 to 1894.

You might see this on Jeopardy! one day.

Well, Fischer was considered the best player in history. This was even said by Kasparov (will eventually be considered the best player ever). Kasparov said that the best way to determine if he was the best is by comparing him to his peers. How much separation was there between his peers? According to Kasparov, the largest difference in history occurred in Fischer's era.

<http://db.chessmetrics.com/CM2/Summary.asp?Params=196540SSSS1S00000000000111000000000000010100>

This graph illustrates this perfectly. Fischer is yellow. By the way, most of these graphs are based on adjusted ratings. The ratings here have been adjusted for inflation and other factors.

Related links about his performances

<http://db.chessmetrics.com/CM2/PlayerProfile.asp?Params=199510SSSS3S03817800000011100000000000010100>

There are five radio buttons at the top that take you to different variations of all his statistics. He was the top rated player (statistically) while he was 14, 15, & 28 of all time. The past 10 years of chess will be noted as the golden age of prodigies. More prodigies came out of this most recent generation of players than any other.

Here are some articles:

<http://sports.espn.go.com/espn/news/story?id=3202460>

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22724870/>

<http://susanpolgar.blogspot.com/>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/7195840.stm>

<http://www.bcmchess.co.uk/>

<http://www.chessbase.com/>

Please remember the chain. Chess is taught from father (or grandfather) to son, in virtually every country. This is the main conduit. Chess playing fathers...you want your children to learn the game. I would bet 90% of these fathers started playing chess because of Fischer. And so the chain continues, and Fischer began the chain.

Tim



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