

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT NEW ISSUES

by JOSEPH FARRUGIA

CHESS OLYMPIAD ISSUE

Date of Issue	20th November, 1980.
Values	2c5, 8c and 30c.
Stamp Size	2c5 and 8c — 38mm x 20mm. 30c — 20mm x 38mm.
Designer	Harry Borg.
Printers	Printex Limited Malta.
Process	Lithography.
Perforation	2c5 and 8c — 13.5 x 13.9. 30c — 13.9 x 13.5.
Watermark	Maltese Crosses pointing upright on 2c5 and 8c values, and pointing sideways on 30c value.
Paper	Chalk surfaced.
Gum	P.V.A.

Colour

The colour of these stamps was produced by patchwork using multicolours.

Designs

The issue of this set commemorated the holding of the 1980 F.I.D.E. Congress and Chess Olympiads in Malta, from the 20th November to 8th December.

The first recorded Maltese chess enthusiast, Leone Benjacar, started to organise games of chess locally in 1880, so this set also commemorates the centenary of the organised game in Malta. Such an important event as the holding of the 1980 Chess Olympiads, is a most fitting occasion, to mark this centenary.

Malta became a member of the F.I.D.E. in 1959 and first took part in a Chess Olympiad in Leipzig in 1960. Although one of the smallest member nations of F.I.D.E., Malta has now been honoured with the holding of the Olympiads, thanks to the help and support of the Malta Government and the unstinted efforts of local and foreign chess enthusiasts.

The Olympiads were held in the Exhibition Hall of the Mediterranean Conference Centre, Valletta, which was made available by the Malta Government. This hall is 161 metres in length, and is believed to be one of the longest halls in Europe. It can host under one roof, for the first time ever, all the male and female participants in the Chess Olympiads. Teams from more than 100 member nations of F.I.D.E. took part in this Chess Olympiad.

Congratulations also to Mr. Harry Borg, the designer of this beautiful set, to commemorate such a unique occasion.

The 2c5 and 30c value stamps show 2 and 3 chess pieces respectively with bastions as background. The 8c value stamp shows 2 chess pieces with the Mediterranean Conference Centre as background.

Colour checks in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter are seen in the right hand margin of each Pane, next to the last stamp of the bottom row in the 30c value and next to the last stamps of the two bottom rows in the 2c5 and 8c values. As the Printed Sheets of the three values are not all made up in the same way, it is useful to remind again that a Pane of stamps is looked at in such a way, that the Plate/Pane number are at the left of the bottom margin. In this issue the colour checks from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers from right to left in the 2c5 and 8c values and from left to right in the 30c value.

Cumulative totals of progressive columns of stamps are seen in top and bottom margins of all Panes. Figures are 2.5mm high and printed in black.

The Printed Sheets of all three values consisted of four Panes, "A", "B", "C" and "D". Each Pane has 50 stamps made up of ten rows of five stamps in the 30c value and five rows of ten stamps in the 2c5 and 8c values. The 30c stamp is of the vertical format whilst the 2c5 and 8c stamps are of the horizontal format.

Plate/Pane Numbers

These are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row, in all Panes, of all values.

2c5 = 1A x 5, 1B x 5, 1C x 5, 1D x 5.





8c = 1A x 6, 1B x 6, 1C x 6, 1D x 6.





30c = 1A x 5, 1B x 5, 1C x 5, 1D x 5.

Perforation of Margins

In the 2c5 and 8c values, the left hand margin of Panes "A", "B", "C" and "D" are imperforate, whilst the top, bottom and right hand margins of these same Panes are fully perforated.

In the 30c value, the top margin of Panes "A", "B", "C" and "D" are imperforate, whilst the left hand, right hand and bottom margins of these same Panes, are fully perforated.

PANE "A"	WMK	
PANE "B"	WMK	
PANE "C"	WMK	
PANE "D"	WMK	

PANE "A"	PANE "B"	PANE "C"	PANE "D"
WMK 	WMK 	WMK 	WMK 

From a study of the details given, the Printed Sheets, before cutting into Panes, would look as shown above left, for the 2c5 and 8c values, and above right for the 30c value. In this way, stamps of all values, would be seen the right way up, hence why watermark is upright on the 2c5 and 8c values, and sideways on the 30c value.

Imprint Blocks

"PRINTEX LIMITED MALTA" is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row on the 2c5 and 8c values, and under the last two stamps of the bottom row on the 30c value. Letters are 1mm high and printed in Black. An Imprint Block of four will also include the colour checks. A special hand-postmark was used for cancellation of philatelic mail on the first day of issue. The postmark inscribed, "L-Ewwel Jum tal-Hruġ — Malta — 20 Nov. 1980", also included the name of the respective locality and the 1980 Chess Olympiad's emblem.

This set will remain on sale up to Saturday, 27th June, 1981, unless stocks are previously exhausted.

Sale of stamps from this set, by 12.45 p.m. on the first day of issue, realized the sum of £M52,881.

BIRDS ISSUE

Date of Issue	20th January 1981.
Values	3c, 8c, 12c and 23c.
Stamp Size	26.43mm x 35.016mm.
Designer	Maurice Tanti Burlò.
Printers	Printex Limited Malta.
Process	Lithography.
Perforation	13.4 x 13.5.
Watermark	Maltese Crosses pointing sideways.
Paper	Chalked surfaced.
Gum	P.V.A.

Colour

The colour of these stamps was produced by printing in multicolour.

Designs

The four birds selected for this issue by the Malta Postal Administration all breed in Malta. They are also protected under the bird protection regulations and as such they cannot be shot or have their nests disturbed. Recent Maltese legislation for the protection of birds and other game will benefit both local and international bird conservation. The declaration of Ghadira Pool as a National Nature Reserve, together with the establishment of the new local bird sanctuaries, show that Malta is now playing its full part in wildlife conservation.

The four birds depicted on this set are:

3c — TYTO ALBA ("Barbagann" — Barn Owl — 34cm.) has a striking heart shaped facial disc. It has white underparts and pale golden buff upperparts with large pale grey markings. Its long feathered legs, with strong claws, enable it to catch and secure its prey which consists mainly of rats and mice.

8c — SYLVIA MELANOCEPHALA ("Bufula Sewda" — Sardinian Warbler — 13cm) is one of the commonest warblers found breeding in the Maltese Islands. The greyish male has a jet-black head, whilst the female is browner and has a grey head. Both have a white throat, a reddish eye ring and a broad rounded tail with white outer feathers. Around mid-February a nest is built in a low shrub and two to five eggs are laid. Both birds take part in incubation and two, sometimes three, broods are reared in a season.

12c — LANIUS SENATOR — ("Kaččamendula" — Woodchat Strike — 17cm) has a chestnut crown and nape, with black forehead, cheeks, back, wings and tail. It has white shoulder patches, wing bars, rump and outer tail feathers. The throat and breast are also white. The few pairs which stay to breed build their nest in a leafy tree top. Five eggs are laid in May or June.

23c — HYDROBATES PELAGICUS ("Kangu ta' Filfla" — Storm Petrel — 15cm) is the smallest European seabird. It is black all over including the bill and webbed feet, having only a white rump. The Storm Petrel is seen near the mainland only at night and during the breeding season. It breeds in large colonies, and in the Maltese Islands, the only colony is confined to the islet of Filfla. A single egg is laid between mid-May and the end of June on bare ground in holes, crevices or burrows.

Colour checks in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter are seen in the right hand margin, next to the last stamp of the bottom row. The colours from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers, from left to right on all Panes of all values.

Cumulative totals of progressive columns of stamps are seen in top and bottom margins. The colour in the case of the 3c, 8c and 12c values, is that of the bottom colour of the colour checks, and on the 23c value, it is that of the bottom colour but one. In each case however, it is the fifth colour from the top of the colour checks.

The Printed Sheet of each value consisted of three Panes, A, B and C. Each Pane has fifty stamps, made up of ten rows of five stamps. All stamps are of the vertical format.

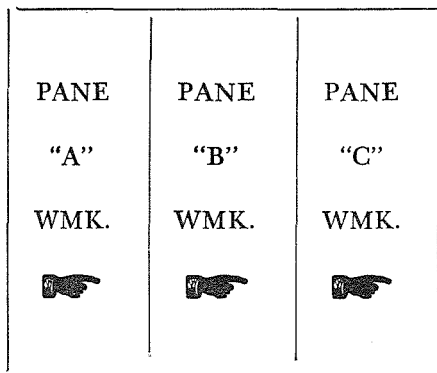
Plate/Pane Numbers

These are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row and also extending on the left hand margin, in all Panes of all values.

$3c = 1A \times 5, 1B \times 5, 1C \times 5.$
 $8c = 1A \times 5, 1B \times 5, 1C \times 5.$
 $12c = 1A \times 5, 1B \times 5, 1C \times 5.$
 $23c = 1A \times 6, 1B \times 6, 1C \times 6.$

Perforation of Margins

The top margins of Panes A, B and C of all values are imperforate. The left hand, right hand and bottom margins of these same Panes are fully perforated. In some "A" Panes of different value, registration lines could be seen in the top left hand corner, whilst the same could be seen on some "C" Panes, but in the top right hand corner.



From a study of all the details given, the Printed Sheet of each value, before cutting into Panes, would look as shown on left. Looking at the Printed Sheet as shown, stamps would be seen the right way up, hence why watermark is sideways in individual stamps.

Imprint Blocks

"PRINTEX LIMITED MALTA" is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row and also extending on the right hand margin in all Panes of all values. Letters are 1mm high and printed in the same colours as those for the progressive cumulative totals of columns of stamps. An Imprint Block of four will also include the colour checks.

A special handstamp, which also incorporates the line drawing of a bird, was used for cancellation on the first day of issue. By 12.45 p.m. on the first day of issue, sales amounted to £M57,344. This set will remain on sale up to Thursday, 16th July, 1981, unless stocks are previously exhausted.