



Bulletin #23

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▣ Riding ❁ Collecting ❁ Restoring ❁ Research ❁ History ▣

Topical World Stamps - Cycling

An important peripheral collection venue related to bicycles is the collection of postage stamps featuring or showing bicycles. Through the efforts of the authors and members of the Bicycle Stamps Club, a comprehensive listing of worldwide stamps dealing with bicycles and cycling has been prepared. This list is computer-based and is updated with new issues on an annual basis.

While the master list has been extensively researched by collectors in many countries around the world new finds are occasionally unearthed amongst back issues, although these have become rare events. It is felt that the known list does an excellent job in total coverage of the subject.

The master list is by country or by year of issue. It names each country, the date-of-issue, the Scott and Michel catalog numbers of the issues, the quantity in the set, plus accompanying souvenir sheets. In addition, information is shown as to perforate and imperforate varieties, and contains a brief description of the subject or purpose of the issue. A single line is devoted to each separate officially issued postal item.

For a stamp to be considered bicycle related and to be listed, it must show at least one of the following:

- A bicycle or group of bicycles,
- Quadricycle, tricycle, monocyte, etc.
- A portion of any of the above, such as bicycle handlebars or wheels,
- A bicycle racer or racers,
- The name of a bicycle racer,
- The word 'bicycle', 'tricycle', etc.,
- A velodrome.

Additionally, exercycles are included, but wheelchair devices and scooters are not. The bicycle subject depiction can be a major portion of the stamp design, but also can be very small. An occasional bike stamp has the bicycle image as such a minor portion of the design that a magnifier may be required to identify it.

The total collecting scope covers a broad range of years and countries. Regular postally valid government issues were prepared as follows:

<i>Year of Issue</i>	<i>Number of Different Issues</i>
1899-1950	77
1951-1960	138
1961-1970	230
1971-1980	416
1981-1990	481
1991-1993	<u>192</u>
Total issues	1,534 (including souvenir sheets that are postally usable.)

ISSUING COUNTRIES

A total of 206 different countries from around the world, with 72 of these having issued 10 or more bicycle stamps. East Germany was the major source, with 60 different regular issues. The United States has had 16. A number of listed countries have issued only one or two.

PERIPHERAL SUBJECTS

Other subjects represented on stamps that include a bicycle are:

Sports, transportation, scouting, safety, animals, circus, manufacturing, export, mail delivery, cartoons, scenery and buildings, military, and bicycle history.

The sporting theme is the largest by far, with bicycles shown in many worldwide events, such as the Tour de France, Balkan Games, Bolivian Games, the Peace Race,

SEAP Games, and most important of all, the Olympic Games. The number of bicycle related issues are markedly higher during the years of the Olympic summer games.

STAMP VALUES

Collectors interested in the broader scope of stamp collecting, particularly in reference to future enhanced values, should take the following varieties into account:

Single used issues - the least expensive by far,

Single mint (unused) issues - best for displays and albums,

Mint singles with their sets - best for future values,

Plate number blocks and sheets - these are collected only by the more serious, and greatly increase the cost of collecting,

First day covers - the stamps actually went through the mails on envelopes on the initial day that the stamp is issued. Dealers provide attractively designed envelopes for this purpose.

TOPICAL STAMP ISSUES

There are a number of dealers who are devoted to topical stamp issues, and these are the best sources for interested collectors. The average dealer no longer acquires new issues, but many of these are good sources for the older varieties.

OTHER TOPICS

For the dedicated collectors, other postally related stamp items include:

1. Postal Stationary with stamps - Regular issues printed on envelopes and post cards. Approximately 50 different items from 14 countries.

2. Postal Stationary bike related - Officially issued envelopes and post cards with printed bicycle depiction. Approximately 275 different items from 32 countries.
3. Local Issues - Private non-government issues in specific areas at specific times. Approximately 300 of these have been issued by at least 16 countries.
4. Labels and non-postal issues - Printed to be used with or for mailing, but with doubtful postal significance. Collectors recognize approximately 175 different items from 18 countries.
5. Trucial States - In the early 1970's, the United Arab Emirate countries, such as Ajman, Sharjah, Manama, Fujiera; a total of nine countries issued huge quantities and varieties. These were designed for sale to collectors only, with no meaningful postal use in these Third World countries.

COMPUTER LISTING

The computer listing is available at cost from:

Mr. Norman Batho
358 Iverson Place
E. Windsor, NJ 08520-5314

Prices of the stamps identified on the computer listing range from a few cents to many dollars, with most single items being only a dollar or two. Most dealers will not break up sets, so the cost of collecting the individual stamps is increased. However, in the event of resale at some future date, the value would be enhanced by having the entire set available.

References:

Scotts Standard Postage Stamp Catalog
Wheelmen Magazines - Numbers 33 and 41