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What we're into

CHESS

At the height of the “Queen’s Gambit” craze on Netflix, I was drawn into the world of chess. I watched video after video. I learned the names of famous players such as Paul Morphy, Alexander Alekhine and Anatoly Karpov. I watched their famous games played out on a smartphone. It was near the end of 2020, and a long, long pandemic year.

Chess, a game that you could play online and not feel as if you’re wasting your time, or being unproductive, seemed like a perfect suitor to the hours spent at home due to pandemic closures.

To be sure, I had very little understanding of the game when I first started. The last time I played chess was in high school, over a decade ago, with my former science teacher Steven Finacle — the price for admission into that match with him was your soul, he would joke. I accepted. I lost my soul.

I didn’t know what an opening was, what a pin, x-ray or fork meant. Stalemates when I was out for blood were com-



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

These are pieces from a Soviet-era Grossmeister set. The USSR, being extremely secular, did not have kings with the cross on their crown.

mon. Analysis of recent games I had played showed a smattering of blunders, inaccuracies or missed wins. Lichess, a free chess app, was a great tool for learning. In a few months, after obsessively studying openings, tactics and using the free puzzles, I had climbed back

up to an ELO rating of 1500 on Lichess.

I sent a rematch offer to my former science teacher. He ac-

cepted, but we haven’t yet set a date for the showdown.

— ALEX WITTWER,
MULTIMEDIA JOURNALIST,
THE OBSERVER

STALKING
IS NOT
ROMANTIC!



January 2022 marks the
eighteenth annual
National Stalking
Awareness Month
(NSAM)



PENDLETON
CENTER
for the ARTS

CommUNITY

We’re looking forward to a 2022 full of art & music classes, enticing exhibits, and cool, new creations from local makers.

Check out opportunities for creative expression & community connection at PendletonArts.org

