

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Bobby Fischer, Eldrick “Tiger” Woods, Pete David Weber, Steven Strasburg, their names will echo throughout time as legends in their specific disciplines. There is one connecting thread that dominates these individuals and their arts, it is one word: Prodigy.

The Encarta Dictionary defines a Prodigy as “somebody who shows an exceptional talent at an early age.”

If we accept this definition as true, as it is certainly true for the legends listed above, do we define unrealized talent of this level the same way? Yes, I would argue that we must. Throughout the course of our lives events push and pull us in many directions, we are allowed to turn left, turn right or maintain the path we are on. For many people out there certain levels of skill can seem like flicker in the corner of our eye. Maybe we and those around us see it and appreciate it for what it is, nurture and develop it. For others, unique skill can get lost in the everyday confusion that is life. Maybe those around us at those critical early years simply are ignorant as to what has presented itself, maybe they are blinded by their own twists and turns of life or maybe they are simply unsure about what to do next as opportunities fade from view.

My own story falls somewhere into the latter. Not perhaps as through a lack of vision from those around me, but more so from lack of vision by myself. Some of the strongest memories from my childhood are echoes from the bowling alley. My parents were strong bowlers and had me on the lanes early in life. The sport came easy to me, first on my team to develop a hook, first to a two hundred game and numerous weekly accolades in my league all before age thirteen. Unfortunately as quickly as that flicker had appeared I turned off the path I was on and chose another turning my back on what had appeared in the corner of my eye, but those images of youth bowling and certain accomplishments were never far from my conscience thinking.

All but for a very few countable times I did not pick up a bowling ball for twenty ones years. This year looking for something to do together with my wife we joined a league. I picked up a Storm Reign and attempted to see what was left from my youth. To my surprise under twenty years of rust there was the foundation that existed so many years ago.

My own life has pushed and pulled me left and right, across this country, and abroad. I turned my back on bowling but my interest, that spark never left me. Now as I rediscover what was always there I turn my attention to the future. Not to put the ball down once again but to see just where I can go. Competing on an ever-increasing skill level and larger tournaments are where my attention will be put. Does the word prodigy also apply to unrealized talent? Certainly it does, as long as that talent does not go wasted. Will my name be among those listed above, only time will tell but for me I have already penciled my name in.