



# Orindawoods Tennis News

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Orindawoods Tennis Club: 925-254-1065; [www.orindawoodstennis.com](http://www.orindawoodstennis.com)

*"I like this place, and willingly could waste my time in it" – Celia, As You Like It, Act II, Scene IV*

## Were We Are:

### Looking Back ('21), Looking Forward ('22)

A second year of living with COVID-19. In 2021 we learned how to deal with living in the world pandemic, as best we could.

We are happy to say Orindawoods Tennis Club has been a safe haven from most of the troubles of the world. We always attempt to mimic Disneyland, "The happiest place on earth" while adding, "a safe place on earth" as well.

Now we face a new variant, and a new surge in cases, and we work hard to keep Orindawoods a safe place to play tennis, get exercise, experience joy, and carry on with "normal" as much as possible.

Looking back, in 2021 we were able to return to Monday Team Tennis, and Twilight Tennis BBQs, and the Junior Program, all with great success. Members love seeing their friends, playing, learning and socializing. It was great to see people back out, playing again, in full force. We are planning our complete schedule of social events for 2022. Keep the fun going! We'll start with our Tulip Tournament in the spring, and then Monday Team Tennis starting in May. There will be Twilights each month in June, July, August, and September.

In the Fall of 2021, we saw the arrival of pickleball at Orindawoods, with our four new pickleball courts down on Court One. We've run into a bit of winter weather recently, but we will have pickleball events and classes starting up in the spring and hope to have a core group playing each week. Keith is planning to get certified to teach beginning pickleball classes. Pickleball is a lot of fun, and a different game from tennis, though knowing how to play tennis certainly helps with the learning curve. We'd love to get a core group of pickleball players playing every week. If you are interested, please get on our pickleball list. (Contact Keith, [keith@orindawoodstennis.com](mailto:keith@orindawoodstennis.com)).

It's great to have our Junior Program up and running again at full speed. Head Pro Patric Hermanson was able to teach our juniors most of last year and is looking forward to a full year in 2022. Registration for the Winter Program is off to a fast start, as enthusiasm for safe, fun exercise for children has never been higher.

There have been lots of new members join in 2021 (Welcome once again!) and we are expecting more in 2022 as people continue to discover, and rediscover tennis (and pickleball) as fun, safe, and exciting outdoor activities. The club is currently full (142 memberships), but the waiting list is short, and people have been able to join relatively quickly. I have taught more beginners in the past year than ever before in a calendar year. I love teaching beginners and advanced beginners. It is so fun to bring people the joy of tennis, and if you, or someone in your family wants to catch the tennis bug, Patric and I are here to help.

We are back to our full schedule of tennis and exercise classes starting in January 2022, with our Men's and Women's clinics and our Hit and Fit classes. Lots of ways to play tennis, and get out to the Club and exercise, without having to have an organized game. These are also great ways to meet like-minded players, and then forge out on your own to play singles or doubles.

## 2022 Club Rates

### Keith & Patric tennis lessons:

½ hour private	\$45
1 hour private	\$80

**Club Dues:** \$140 / month

**Guests:** \$10 (1 visit / week). Pay Station located by the Pro Shop door.

## Weekly Lessons

**Ladies' clinic:** Tues 9:30

**Men's clinics:** Thurs 9:30

**Cost:** \$10

## Hit and Fit

**Wednesday 11:30-1** 1.5 hours

**Friday 11:30-1** 1.5 hours

The cost is \$20 / class for tennis and TRX

## Ball Machine

Ball Machine Club	\$110 /year
Ball Machine / hour	\$8

- Ball Machine Club runs thru 3/30/22
- Reserve Court 3 to use the machine.
- Reservations are for **1 hour**.
- Pay using Pay Station / credit card
- iPhone app: **Like My Drill**

## Racquet Services

Head Pro Patric Hermanson restrings racquets and is a Babolat dealer to meet all your racquet & paddle needs. A new string job will often revive your racquet.

## COVID, Masks, etc...

Currently masks are **REQUIRED** INDOORS at OWTC. Be safe, thank you!

## Greystone Parking

The Club's overflow parking is on Greystone Terrace, across the street. This has worked out very well in the past, but it is **VERY IMPORTANT that we only park on the right-hand side of the street going up the hill**. We must not block the emergency vehicles. Thx!

## Quote of the Month:

"Love is not what we become but who we already are." – Stephen Levine

The Orindawoods Pool will reopen in May, as we do every year, with wonderful, warm, clear water and new pool furniture, we can hardly wait (especially for the warmer weather).

We're hoping 2022 is a great year, where more and more we can return to the fun that is Orindawoods, while remaining a safe place to socialize, exercise and play. Happy New Year! – Keith



## Orindawoods Tennis Club

650 Orindawoods Dr.  
Orinda, CA 94563

Phone:  
925-254-1065

Website:  
[orindawoodstennis.com](http://orindawoodstennis.com)

Smart Phone Reservation App:  
PlayTennisConnect

**Facebook:**  
Orindawoods Tennis Club

**Executive Tennis Director:**  
Keith Wheeler  
[keith@orindawoodstennis.com](mailto:keith@orindawoodstennis.com)

**Head Pro:**  
Patric Hermanson  
[patric@orindawoodstennis.com](mailto:patric@orindawoodstennis.com)

**Newsletter Editor:**  
Keith Wheeler

### Tennis Club Directory Online Version

On the website under "Membership Services" there is a page "[Tennis Directory](#)" that has a link to the tennis club address book. You need to sign-in to access this information.

### Silvercreek HOA Management

Accounting and billing questions, contact:  
916-877-7793 or  
[accounting@sc-manage.com](mailto:accounting@sc-manage.com)

## Dues and prices for 2022

The Tennis Club dues and fees will remain the same for 2022. Lesson costs will also remain the same. Hopefully 2022 will be a year when we are able to get on top of COVID and continue the return to normal. Orindawoods continues to be committed to safe activities and playing the game. Tennis is one of the safest activities we can do as a group, see people, and get some important and fun exercise. It feels good to move around, and to play a game with our friends.

## Junior Program

The Junior Program starts our Winter session on the week of January 17th. Space is limited, and filling fast, so go to the junior page on the website ([orindawoodstennis.com](http://orindawoodstennis.com)), check out the schedule and contact Head Pro Patric Hermanson to sign up. ([patric@orindawoodstennis.com](mailto:patric@orindawoodstennis.com))

### Hit and Fit:

## Getting Fit and Working on Your Game

After an almost two-year COVID break, we are starting up our tennis exercise class, Hit and Fit (H&F) again this January.

**Wednesday 11:30-1 p.m \$20 starting 1/12**  
**Friday 11:30-1 p.m. \$20 starting 1/7**

The 90-minute class includes tennis and exercise using TRX. You will use your own body weight, to create the resistance to strengthen your body. You can go as easy, or hard as you wish. Keith is fully trained in the use of TRX and has taught hundreds of classes. Hit and Fit is exercise, so you need to be able to move around for 90 minutes, somewhat at your own pace, but make sure you are fit enough before taking a class. Questions: contact [Keith](#).

## Pickleball List and Playdays

We are forming a pickleball play list and scheduling some drop-in pickleball playdays to get people out playing this fun, exciting game.

Pickleball is a fast, quick-action game, that is relatively easy to learn, and is played on a court that is much smaller than a tennis court. Because the paddle is right next to your hand (unlike a tennis racquet where the strings are a couple feet away), making it quite easy to find the ball, and send it back over the net.

### Pickleball Playdays:

**Saturday 12-2 p.m.**  
**Sunday 1-3 p.m.**

Playdays are drop-in, though we are trying to guarantee players will be there by registering to play by using our the pickleball playlist each week.

### Winter Tip:

## Please Hang Up the Squeegees

We have squeegees on most of the courts to help you move the occasional irritating puddle. Just a quick reminder that squeegees work a lot better if they are round. They stay round by hanging them up on the fence, and not letting them dry sitting on the ground (drying this way makes them flat on one side). It's a little thing, but it makes a world of difference next time you or someone else needs to push some water around and move a pesky puddle. Thx!

## A Court Reservation Favor

Next time you get ready to make your court reservations, we ask that you reserve Courts 4-7 before reserving Court One or Court Three. Of course at the busy times of the day (9-12 in the morning), this is not possible. We take what we can get, we understand. This court congestion can also happen with the junior program on some afternoons.

But if there are lots of courts open, say midafternoon or on the weekends, or evenings in the summer, we ask that you reserve Courts 4-7 first. After 12 noon Court One can be used for pickleball. Since it is the only court we can play pickleball on, it would be considerate to leave it for pickleball players if you can.

Court Three is the only court where the ball machine can be used, so for the same reasons, if that court can be your last choice, that would be great, and much appreciated. Of course, in the evening, there are no ball machine advanced reservations, so treat Court Three the same as Court Two, and reserve whichever is available.

We understand that there are legitimate reasons why you want to play on Court One or Court Three (less windy, more private, for example) and we are not saying that you can't. Only that you make that choice thoughtfully, with good reason. That's how we roll at Orindawoods, thinking of others. Thank you!

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### **Tennis Tip:**

## **Catching and Sending**

Playing tennis is a game of catch. First you receive the ball, and then you send it back over the net. Just like when you played catch with your mom, your dad or your mates. You can't throw the ball back, before you have received it.

In tennis, there tends to be an over focus on the sending. This is where most tennis players fail, or their game breaks down in to hit and miss, and unpredictable results. This is understandable. We all want to see the ball go back over the net. Hopefully well. So, we tend focus on sending, and not on receiving. This often leads to swinging, sometimes lashing out, to hit the ball, rather than turning and drawing the ball in, catching it.

It is true that tennis presents a particularly tough challenge here. Catching and sending are blended in tennis, happening almost, but not quite, simultaneously. The gap between catching and sending is hundredths of a second. How do we manage that? The better the player, the greater the separation between these two parts, and the longer the "hold" of the ball on their stings. The less-accomplished player has the ball bounce off the stings and has little hold (there is always some hold, as the strings are a trampoline, and the ball does push the strings back and "sit" on the racquet momentarily — the question of skill and quality is how long we can hold the ball). Contact with the ball can be divide into three parts: the catch, drive and release. All three are important in playing tennis well. How well I receive, or catch the ball, determines how well we can "hold" and drive the ball while the ball is in contact with the strings. Then how the ball leaves the strings, the release, helps determine the spin, speed, direction. i.e., the "cool stuff". :-)

**Hitting?** Most people think, for obvious reasons, that tennis is a game where you hit the ball. Strike it. Even sometimes, whack it. After all, that's what it looks like to the naked eye. This idea that tennis is hitting a ball is, at worst, a dangerous self-deception. At the best, an oversimplification, that often leads most of us astray.

As we mentioned, the vast majority of players primarily think about sending the ball back over the net. How hard, where they want it to go, what they want to do to their opponent, how they can win the point. Sending taps directly into our competitive nature, one of the main reasons people play.

And yet, the simple truth mentioned above, is that you can't send the ball very well, without receiving it first. You must get a hold on the ball to have any reasonable chance of success. Think of a shortstop in baseball fielding a grounder. He has to get a good grip on the ball, after catching it, before he can throw it to first base, with any accuracy. Accuracy becomes terribly important in a game like tennis, with a rather large net and tight boundaries.

**Drill:** If you held a tennis ball in your hand, and tried to toss it into a teaching basket, this is much easier (though not that easy, depending on how far away you are) than trying to hit the ball in the basket with your racquet from the same distance. When we toss the ball, our fingers are in contact with the surface of the ball. Since we are touching the ball, it is much easier to control how and when we let it go (release it). As well as control how much force. Though it is much harder to do, and takes a lot of awareness and practice, we can get this same sense of feel, touch and hold with the strings of our racquet. (This is a good reason to keep your strings in top shape, by the way – talk to Patric!).

How do we get more hold, more touch, and more feel in our shots? Not to mention more useful power, power we can use, control, attack with. Power that doesn't leave us feeling out of control and wanting to slow down, to be more cautious. Power that actually frees us to want to let go, to speed up. Imagine that!

**Mimic Catching.** Well, think about how you catch a ball with your hands. If you hold your arms directly out in front of you, where your arms are between your body and the incoming ball, you are very strong, but stiff. The ball often hits your hands and bounces off. There is no give. You are like a wall. The faster it comes, the more it wants to bounce off your solid hands. The more speed, the harder it is to catch. And the more necessary. Blocking doesn't return it well.

How do you make your hands less solid? If you turn slightly to the side, where your arms can reach out, touch the ball and retract with the ball, to the side of your body, then you can absorb a lot of the incoming force, and keep the ball from bouncing off your hands. Watch a baseball player or football player catch a ball. They move, even contort their bodies so that the ball is received to the side, or over their head, or below their torso, and never directly at them, because then need to absorb the energy of the ball, and not have it bounce away.

The same applies to "catching" the ball with your racquet. If the racquet is directly in front of your body, it is in a very strong position, and the ball hits it like it is hitting a wall and bounces right off. But if you play the ball to the side of you, where your body is not directly behind the racquet, then the racquet and your arm have more give, and you can soften the contact. Of course, the racquet, strings and tension of the strings that we use has a part in this as well. Some racquets and strings have better give, others less. It's best to have proper, fine-tuned equipment.

This is the catch in tennis. Catching, ... just think how radically this changes our approach to tennis. Most of us are drawn, thus striving, to get in a stronger position, where we can use our muscles and leverage. When actually, what works best, is to be in a weaker position. A position where our arms and racquet can absorb, hold, move freely, quickly, whip and release.

Seems crazy, doesn't it? But consider this before you judge. What is the strongest shot in tennis, the one that can be played the fastest? The serve. Which is executed over our heads, where even the strongest man has very little strength. Power in tennis comes from weakness, from flexibility, from whip, from throwing, from slinging the ball.

Basically, I'm trying to avoid slamming into the ball, or being stiff and having the ball bounce off my racquet like it is a wall. It is not to say that you can't play this way, most people, to at least some degree actually do, but it doesn't work as well as if you can learn to absorb the shot, drive the ball, and release it back towards your opponent.

Is this easy? Not particularly to learn. Is it worth it? Most certainly. Once you master it, is it easier to play? Yes.

So, catching makes some sense when the ball is coming at you, with force, but what about if it is not moving, like on a serve? Well, think of a pitcher or shortstop in baseball, they hold the ball before they release it at astounding speed. You still want to catch the ball and then throw it. Get a "grip on it" before driving and releasing it. It's "easier" to grab it when it isn't moving, so we should use the serve to really throw the ball well. So, we still catch the ball on the serve, rather than think of just batting it. I like to visualize throwing the ball in the backhand corner or throwing it out wide.

**Visually**, an elite stroke has different parts and different speeds. The racquet approaches the ball softly, and slowly, there is contact, and then the racquet accelerates to release the ball back over the net. It looks like two speeds, slow and then quicker. There is a wind up (gathering energy), that starts relatively early, and moves the racquet quite slowly into position (and the feet move the body into position), and then there is a blending of the strings and the ball, and then the ball is slung out of the contact, the release (of energy). There is often a dramatic follow-through, which demonstrates the amount of acceleration used in slinging the ball. If the racquet starts slow catching, then picks up speed building up to the release, it makes sense that the fastest part of the stroke is after the ball is gone. We want to be in acceleration when we let go, still speeding up.

**Swing.** However, when someone swings at a ball, to hit it, the racquet has a much more constant rate of speed. The racquet picks up speed well before the ball arrives, and then slams into the ball, plowing through it, and causing it to bounce away. There is relatively little "hold" on the ball. "Danger, Will Robinson!"

Swinging at a ball is a sign of a certain mentality, assumption, or thought. The swing is constant, same speed, same direction, same path, and so the player is expecting the ball in a predictable place. (BTW, this is one problem with using the ball machine, the ball is so predictable, we start to assume where it is, and start swinging too much). In a sense, because it is all based on the ball being predictable, we stop actually paying close attention. We miss the subtlety of its flight. Or we're more paying attention to something "more fun", "more exciting," "more interesting:" like where we want it to go, or how fast, the result, ... rather than how it is going to happen. This is the trap of swinging.

**Stroke.** Stroking is a different mindset. It is based on the subtle differences in each and every ball that comes to us. That is, receiving. While there is a pattern to the stroke, of course, a very precise pattern in fact, it is not dependent on the ball being predictable. It is based on adjusting (mostly our timing and position), remaining flexible and open to the variances in the ball, and the conditions, allowing the player to adjust right up to the final moment, but staying present in the moment. The beauty of this is that because we are able to "catch" the ball better by adjusting to the ball, once we have got the ball on the strings, we can fully commit our energy in a way that is seldom possible when swinging and discovering halfway through the swing the ball isn't quite where we predicted it would be.

Whether you are stroking or swinging, if you are playing a game with the intention of winning, there is a real limit to how hard you can hit. You can really only hit as hard as you can get the ball to fall in the court a reasonable amount of the time. Players are a lot more courageous when practicing or "just hitting" (literally), than when playing a match and keeping score. The contrast between "practice" and "match play" can be striking. Consequences change our actions.

Players swinging often attempt last second adjustments to rescue a shot. These adjustments cause deceleration, reaching, faulty aiming and unpleasant miss hits. A player stroking the ball, catches it, and then is "all in," on the sending phase, able to fully commit to sending.

**Kinesthetically.** Play with how your body feels. Next time you go on the court, just adjust your attitude, your outlook, your goals a bit. Pretend you are catching and throwing the ball, rather than hitting it. It feels different. It's slower, more deliberate, softer, lighter, slower, then quicker, more whip and more speed. But just a short burst, almost undetectable at times. Catching and throwing is a state of mind, that leads to a change in how you play. Just feeling like you are catching rather than striking will have amazing dividends, even if it is a bit hard to get the hang of at first.

Tennis is a game of control. You can only play shots you can make. It's never going to feel like you are working hard with your hands. Soft and subtle is the feel you want, light and loose. Don't hold the racquet in a death grip, but let it float through the air, winding, dipping, curving and releasing as you go through the process of playing a ball.

These two methods look different, feel different, sound different and can have very different results. This is why someone who catches usually plays the ball harder than the person who intends to hit it hard. In the end, you can "go for it" a lot more, if you think you have a reasonable chance of making the shot. Confidence and commitment that comes from "getting the catching right," then building through the drive to getting the release just right. Good luck!