



Orindawoods Tennis News

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Orindawoods Tennis Club: 925-254-1065; www.orindawoodstennis.com

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

New Management Company

We are very excited to announce that Orindawoods has a new management company for the Orindawoods Homeowner's Association (Keith remains the Executive Tennis Director for the Tennis Club). The last few years have been challenging (as many of you know) especially on the bookkeeping / accounting / billing side of the business. When Barbara Dawson, our manager of 17 years retired a few years back from Homeowner's Association Services (HAS), that company was no longer able to service our account. We tired both Associa (a large national firm) and the SilverCreek (a more local firm) to run the Association. Both were not able to meet our unique needs as a community and tennis club. Needless to say, this situation took a great deal of time and energy from the Orindawoods Board, particularly the two most recent presidents and financial officers, and of course Keith trying to keep the tennis / business / fun side of the tennis club going, while enduring "some frustrations."

In our recent search for yet a third option, we found a manager we really liked, but in the middle of that negotiation (long story), she switched companies to HAS, our old management company. As a result, **Homeowners Association Services** were able to take us on as clients again. It was a total win / win. The almost perfect solution as their bookkeeping department can meet our needs, a great manager, and they have experience with our type of business.

So, we welcome back HAS, and our new association manager, Erin LaFlamme. Most tennis members will not have a lot of interaction with Erin, but her and her team at HAS will be the strong and stable structure behind the everyday running of the Tennis Club.

Dues Payment / Billing Info: We are sorry that this means that you will have to switch your dues payment, but we know that there will be much less problems and headaches going forward. Problems like "forgetting to bill you, and then charging you a late fee when you don't pay" should be things of the past, that we can laugh about now that the tears and shouts of agony and frustration become a distant memory. We can return to a state of gratitude for a well-run management company.

HAS is sending everyone a paper invoice via mail to start with, then you can set up the form of payment that works best for you. Look for the statement in the mail and switch to the new payment system so you don't get behind. The service will be much better going forward, and we deemed it necessary to make this move, for everyone, members, owners, staff, management, contractors.

Homeowners Association Services: 925-830-4848

Dues for 2024

The dues for 2024 will be **\$152 per month**. We have and continue to make a lot of improvements to the Club, and with the way the economy has gone in the past few years since the pandemic, it is appropriate to make a minor 3.4% dues change this year. Other

2024 Club Rates

Tennis Lessons with Keith & Erik:

½ hour private	\$50
1 hour private	\$85

Semi-pvt (2)	\$55ea
Semi-pvt (3)	\$37ea
Semi-pvt (4)	\$28ea
45 min pvt	\$65
1.5-hour pvt	\$125

Non-members add \$5

Club Dues: \$152 / month

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

Weekly Lessons

Ladies' clinic:	Tues 9:30	\$10
Men's clinics:	Thurs 9:30	\$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

Pickleball Playday

Tues. 5:30-7 begins in spring.

Ball Machine

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

- Ball Machine Club runs thru 3/30/24
- Reserve Court 3 to use the machine.
- Reservations are for **1 hour**.
- Pay using Pay Station / credit card
- iPhone app: **Like My Drill**

Racquet Stringing

by Patric Hermanson.

Patric picks up and drops off racquets early on Tuesday and Friday mornings. Put some zip back your game, get a restring!

Quote of the Month:

"A bird doesn't sing because it has an answer, it sings because it has a song."

■ Maya Angelou

Club prices (lessons, guests, team guest fee, ball machine, etc) remain the same for 2024. Pay when you get a statement from HAS.

Happy New Year! / State of the Union:

Contractors. Orindawoods has many great contractors that work for us, like our maintenance company (Pacific Maintenance Solutions), our landscape company (Green Ventures) and our pool contractors (Picture Perfect Pools). It is so great to now have a stable, well-run management team in HAS, working with Keith, overseeing it all.

Of course, during this challenging time for the board and the tennis club management, we have not stopped our amazing programming, and the other work of making Orindawoods Tennis Club the best that it can be on top of all the behind the scenes work that should have been routine. We have done major infrastructure work the past couple of years (courts 1-3, pickleball, and the pool) and we are planning to do more in 2024 (see below). Major thanks are owed to our president Dick Rogan, past CFO Wendy McCollom, the entire board and the recent members of the Tennis Advisory Committee (Linda Winter, Dick Rogan, Fred White, Maggie Reeves). The support for the Tennis Club has been incredible. Not to mention our incredible members, as we all have pushed on, enjoying and loving tennis and our amazing club. Thanks to all! Oh yeah, there was a pandemic too. Ugh... And now much gratitude for Orindawoods Homeowner's Association. I feel blessed to serve such a wonderful community, and to have met so many amazing members and homeowners. I look forward to seeing everyone on the courts real soon!

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Keith's Vacation

ETD Keith Wheeler will be on vacation in Europe from January 9 through January 23. After a very long and successful 2023, it's time for a break. Obviously, Keith will mostly be out of touch during this time of replenishment and recovery and will come back revitalized for a great 2024! We have amazing plans for 2024 (see below). For billing and business issues, please contact HAS, for Tennis Club matters, Erik Oehlschlager. January is a bit of a quiet time of the year at the Club, but our Junior Program is in full swing, and lessons, leagues and tennis are in progress.

2023 What We Accomplished

The facility saw some big improvements in 2023. OWA turned fifty years old, and while it is an amazing accomplishment, what comes with it is maintaining the property to our fine standards, which involved a significant investment by OW. A quick list, most of you know the story:

- Courts 2&3 Rebuild - no more cracks, two brand-new courts.
- Pool Heater Room Rebuild - the spa and pool temperature remained consistent through the entire season. I did not hear a single complaint about the pool temperature this summer. Wow! That has never happened before. Our contractor also does a great job of maintaining the pool. It's never been neater. In addition to the facility upgrades, our programming continued to be active, fun.
- Pickleball Marches on with Playdays (once day light increases, we'll have evening playdays again). Pickleball play has increased in the past twelve months.
- Great Parties, Twilights & Monday Team Tennis
- Holiday Party Returned on December 10th. Fantastic folks, food and fun!
- Junior Program Success! Erik has turned our junior program into a major success. Hundreds of kids learning and loving tennis! It's the future, here today!

2024 What We Are Planning to Do

- Courts 4-7 Patch and Color. It's time for some repairs to our remaining 4 courts, courts 4-7. We are planning a patch and color for these courts, removing the cracks and refreshing the top surface. This is another biggie and investment from the ownership! The exact timing is still to be determined, but this is the plan.
- Of course, our social programming and junior program will continue, and we will add new ideas, programs and events as it is appropriate. For the new year, we have a few new features:

New & Improved Features:

Court Cam - As of publication, there is an unexpected delay in connecting the cameras - sorry - but it is on the way.

Orindawoods was the first tennis club that I know of to have had a court cam (I borrowed the idea from ski resorts many years ago, suggested it to our webmaster, and he helped us hook it up). Unfortunately, for the past several

years, we have not been able to find a system that interfaces with our computers and webpage, and the court cam has been “on the blink”. That has changed, and the Court Cam should be back for 2024. Link at the top of the webpage.

Surgeon General’s Warning: What the Court Cam will tell you is what the courts look like from about 25-30 yards away. No camera can really see a very fine layer of dampness, but you will be able see if they are wet (there is a reflective sheen on the surface when it is wet) and at least close to dry. The picture quality is excellent. A court cam will also not tell you the conditions of the court in an hour, when you are scheduled to play, it doesn’t predict the future (darn), but you can see the current conditions right now (updated every 5 minutes or so). For those that must know, I do have a Chrystal ball on my desk, when you look inside, the truth is revealed (“Your guess is as good as mine”).

So, playing tennis in the winter still involves some guess work, but we can make more educated guesses now. After all, the weather is one of our great spiritual teachers, and encourages us to live in the moment, despite the teachings of our very pre-planned society. Hey, it’s better than earthquakes and tornados for reminders that “the future is now.”

You can also use the court cam to see how busy the club is if you are thinking of popping in for a game on short notice. If this is successful, we’d like to add a camera for court one / pickleball courts. Welcome back court cam!

Vaptr - The Vaptr is our new squeegee for drying courts 2&3. It is to be operated by staff only. It is an expensive piece of equipment that allows us to play on wet courts much sooner (hours) than regular squeegees and drying methods (mother nature) allow. If the rain stops, and we have a 1/2 hour or so, we can get one court dry enough to play. Courts 1, 2, 3 and 4 dry slowly due to location and vegetation, while courts 5-7 dry much faster. If the Vaptr continues to be a success, we will consider purchasing another. **However**, I will say, that while the Vaptr dries the courts so well, it is **very hard work** pushing it, and takes about 25 minutes to do a court, your arms, back and legs are tired when you are done, and that may be beyond what most people are willing to do. I did two courts just this one time, and I was exhausted, and my back was sore. We don’t have the staff recourses to dry several of the courts (without a significant increase in dues - larger staffing, becoming more like a country club - so that is who we are as a community club). Having said that, Keith and Erik have been able to teach several lessons already (15 lessons over the first two weeks), that would have been too wet on court 2 (and some on court 3). These are the two slowest drying courts in the club, as well as the two most used courts. Don’t assume your lesson is rained out if the rain has stopped.

Ball Machine - the ball machine has had a couple of major servicing in 2023 and is running like new. We have replaced the oscillation motor, as well as the pitching wheels, and the receiver (for the phone app) and it is running better than ever. The Ball Machine, and Court 3 continue to be our most popular court at the Club, booked all day long, and a testimony to how many members enjoy the exercise and practicing their game to improve. It shows in your form. You’re looking good out there! Well done, Orindawoods!

We realize the one-button remote continues to be a challenge and weak link in the ball machine system, and we encourage people to get the app for your phone and use that to control the machine. Not to mention sometimes the remote gets taken home by mistake, usually by men. Men? Well, the other side of the remote challenge is that we are challenged by the fact most women’s tennis / athletic clothing doesn’t have a pocket to carry a phone, or remote. I remember when Chris Evert brought the popularity of the two-handed backhand to women’s tennis, and there was no place to put the second ball. At first, tournaments insisted that the players carry two balls, “it’s the rules”, so all sorts of devices were invented to clip the ball on the waist band (of course that didn’t work for tennis dresses), before finally the pro tennis became “one at a time” with the ball kids holding the second ball until the player was ready. Of course, Jimmy Connors didn’t have this problem, as men’s shorts had pockets. But if players wore tights or running shorts, both men and women didn’t have a holder for the balls, or a phone. As for the phone, sometimes we just want to disconnect and hit the ball in bliss. Oh, our first world problems.... The bliss of hitting. Sounds fantastic. Sign me up!

New Year’s Resolution: Better Doubles

Club Doubles, The Biggest Errors

This month, in an effort to help everyone out, let’s look at what I see as the roughly five biggest errors I notice people of all levels around the club make, and how they can improve and get better quickly by changing a few basic underlying beliefs. Most of these focus on doubles, but the concepts often apply to singles as well, with a minor translation. It would be quite easy to turn any or all of these into a New Year’s Resolution (hint).

#1 Positioning

Left or Right or Up or Back. This is a simple one, but of course simple ideas can have lots of details and ramifications. When you think of your relationship with your partner in doubles, do you think: 1) “they are on the left, I’m on the right,” “they have the forehand side, I have the backhand side,” they have the deuce court, I’ll play that ad court,” etc....

Or do you think, 2) “I’m the front player, they are the back player.”

“I’ll take Door #2, Monty.” If you really want to maximize your success: primarily front or back. The problem with this one is the rules of tennis state we must start on certain sides if we are the returning team (or at least we must take turns returning serves and we have “our side”), and that is our side for the entire set (you can switch after a set). And

the server must alternate sides when they serve, every other point (the server's partner can stand wherever they like). So, it is easy to think sides, except we don't have to keep thinking that way after the serve and return. And this is where the good player, changes their thinking. It's better to think that the front player covers the net (ideally the middle - see below) and is the more offensive player, and the back player covers the back, and sets up or supports the net player. Of course, for the receiving team, this can change every point, as one player returns (back) and one player plays the net (up). This doesn't mean that back players don't come forward, or forward players don't go back, but someone is more responsible for short shots, and someone else for deep shots. You can cover the back coming in, by either hitting shots they can't lob, or hitting overheads, swing volleys or moving back if a lob does happen. So, think of the positioning more as what I'm primarily covering, what are my responsibilities, which could change during the course of playing a point.

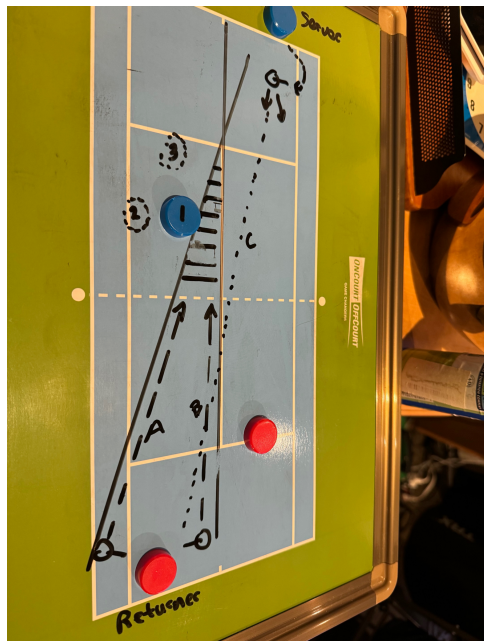
#2 The Window and the Triangle.

The primary target in doubles is over the middle of the net (shots A, B or C below). Whether you are trying to or not, most of the balls go through this area (probably 85 or 90% actually, though it doesn't seem that way). The team that controls this area, either by "standing there" or "hitting through there" is going to win most matches. The net player, or the front player (see above), should have the primary responsibility of covering the shaded part of this area. The back player (the set-up player) will primarily hit their shots through the middle (A, B or C)

All day long, I hear, "If I stand at the middle of the net, they will hit down the alley, or lob over me." Or "if I always hit through the middle, my opponent will know where I'm hitting and just put the ball away."

True, or more accurately, there is truth in both of those statements, so controlling the middle is a bit more complicated than just standing there, or hitting through there, but not a whole lot, actually.

And if you cover the middle, and it was possible to go down the alley, or hit a lob (it isn't, by the way, a lot of the time), you are still controlling the match. You are forcing them to make shots to avoid you that may not be the best shots they can hit, or they may not be even able to do at all. You are in control, they are avoiding you, you are not letting them dictate the play.



The triangle (diagram: shaded area – shots A & B) is the primary target and primary place to defend. The balls don't land in the triangle, they go through that air space (on the way to the back court where they tend to land). And the net player doesn't usually stand in the triangle (sometimes you do, often in pro tennis), but they stand close enough so that if the ball goes there, they can play it (position #1, instead of the often-seen positions #2 & #3 in Club doubles).

Again, I hear, "Cover the alley, George." Which means that George will be pretty much worthless at covering the triangle (position #2). "Stand back George, they're lobbing you and I can't cover the entire back of the court" (position #3).

With those two statements, the server has just massively shot their team in the foot, in terms of winning. Thought you were covering a lot before? The triangle is wide open, and the server is playing singles, without realizing it.

Of course if you can hit a few flashy alley shots (or lobs), and talk it up a bit, and convince everyone you play with (by shaming them if the ball goes down the alley), then you might be successful, until you play someone who isn't buying what you are selling, no matter how much you gloat when you "get them."

Basically, as a net player, I figure if I don't get passed down the alley a few, even "several" times in a match, I'm not in the middle enough, and I'm

not "annoying" my opponent enough to make them try a strategy that doesn't really work long-term.

It's math folks. A student said sadly to me the other day, "I got passed down the alley 3 or 4 times in yesterday's doubles." Out of 50 or 100 points (5-8 points in a typical game, 8-9 games a set, play a couple of sets = 120 points or so, half of those you were the net player = 60 right there). Really, this is a concern? Three or four shots? On average, you must win about 58-65 points or more to win that 120-point match. If each point lasts an average of 3 shots, that's 360 shots, and you are worried about 3 or 4? Do the math! Orindawoods is populated by smart people, so why do we fall for this stuff? Emotions... they short-circuit our brain. Unless we are on guard to stop it, and even then....tough!

How to manage the middle, and play the triangle, is a long discussion, and the basis of almost all elite strategy in doubles, but let's just suggest that where you hit the ball to your opponent largely determines where they can hit the ball. In other words, a well-placed serve down the middle with pace and spin basically forces the return to be back up the middle, so your partner could "stand there." If the serve is going fast enough, or skids low, it is pretty much

impossible to lob (that is: get over the net person and in the court). As the returner, it's better to hit A or B, than C. A shot to C sets the server up with a forehand to attack your net player, who starts in a weak position, off the net.

A corollary to #2, would be: "Doubles is Not Rallying", stop hitting cross court / starting a rally. Attack the triangle.

#3 Hitting the Open Court vs Hitting Your Best Shot.

This is one of the stages of development in every player's progression as they improve. When you are a 2.5 or 3.0 starting out, you are just happy to make contact and get the ball in. Then after playing a while, you slowly start to be able to control the ball a bit and put it where you want. And even adjust the trajectory, angle, speed, and spin of your shot. This can take years to master and is a worthy cause. This is a 3.5 or lower 4.0 player. Strategy and tactics come to the forefront, and you start thinking about how to "trick" or "outmaneuver" your opponents. Tennis becomes a "chess game." The problem comes when you start to obsess over the target, to the detriment of most other qualities of your shots (speed, spin, depth, deception). "Too much of a good thing isn't good."

When you are locked into a "3.5 mind-set" or paradigm, and you want to improve, you think more about aiming, or hitting harder, better placement, what your opponents are doing, etc... And if you do this, you will get better at 3.5 tennis. True enough, but that doesn't really make you a better player, just a better 3.5.

"How can you play tennis for 15 years and still be a 3.5 player?" - David W. Smith (great, innovative teaching pro and high school coach). It's true, why aren't we getting significantly better if we play so much?

The key to unlocking the door to being a better player is to change your mindset, and to start to think like the players that are better than you. You need a new paradigm. Ever watch kids at a playground? If you take a 4-year-old to a playground, they pay no attention to the younger kids, they are watching with intent the 5-year-olds, maybe the 6-year-olds. The 7-year-olds are of no interest, they are miles ahead of where they are in physical development, "no way I can do that!", but if they could do some of those 5-year-old things... cool beans.

OK, I love USTA, I'm on the NorCal Board, level-based play is great (all the players in a league are basically the same level, so everyone has a chance to win, go to nationals, get a silver plate or t-shirt and feel success), but the real downside of this is you don't get to experience, on the same court, playing with and against, better players. How they are playing, shots they are choosing, i.e. what makes them better. Yeah, if you're a 3.5, you might get smoked by a 4.5, but you'll learn something. This isn't all bad, and "failure" is when you learn. You don't learn that much from success. In fact, if you are successful, you continue to do what works, you aren't changing much at all. Our culture has become so attached to winning. Let's not forget, George Washington lost practically every battle he ever fought, until the last one. Yorktown. Founded the country, I'd call that a success. Thanks George!

"Well Keith, I just want to win, I want to beat my friends, be the best on the block, etc..." Fair enough. There is some status and credibility in winning. Sports psychologist Allen Fox said, "I finally found out the key to winning I just don't play anyone who is any good." It's a pretty common strategy in playing league tennis and "the art being the best player at a lower rating."

A local club won 3.0 nationals many years ago and made a big deal about it. It was a great accomplishment for those players, who rose to the occasion, and delivered a great result. I'm all for that, but that is just a moment in time, a day, a weekend, on a progression, or on the continuum of your tennis life. To stand there and think that gives you status and credibility for a lifetime, I'm afraid nothing really does that. I mean, you don't control what others think. Think of a potential banner over that club's entrance, "3.0 National Champions, the best lousy tennis players in America." I know, harsh, and not a knock on those players in any way, they played to their very best, won, and were the top 3.0s in America, but that's not the destination. Is it? The end product? Do you want to be a beginner forever just to say you won? Who are you fooling?

I'm a teacher and a student of tennis, of life, so I know my paradigm is geared (prejudiced) towards getting better, helping those around me get better, or living the best, most fulfilling life that we can. The Club being the best it can be. Makes it a nice club, always improving (look at the new features above). Not everyone thinks that way.

Cutting to the chase, the better the player, the more they think about hitting the ball well as the #1 priority, not where they are hitting it (target / aiming). That is not to say they don't aim, but they aim where they can play their best shot, regardless of whether the opponent is "covering it, or not." They will ignore trying to hit the ball into what seems like an open court, in order to hit a strong shot. In fact, they play their best shot as often as possible. If a 4.5 played a 3.5, and the 4.5 just hit the ball basically right to the 3.5 and the 3.5 tried to hit the open court, the 4.5 would win, because their shots are just too good. They are making high quality shots, a very high percentage of the time. Their interest is in quality. This is hitting through the triangle above, with intent. "Here's my best, try to stop it."

You say, "Well dah, but I don't play 4.5s."

Really? There are a lot of 3.5s that can hit a 4.5-level shot, if they hit their best shot. But they often hit a shot that isn't very strong, or effective (comes out a lot like a 3.0 or 2.5 level shot) because they are hitting to the open court, which happens to be a place they can't hit their best forehand (4.5 - level even), or even a forehand at all (just miss).

So, does hitting your best shot conflict with #2 above, which is mostly about aiming through the middle? Sometimes yes, and be aware of that, but in general, most shots go through the middle anyway, and most of your best shots go

that way too, so when it comes to hitting through the middle and hitting your best shot, they are most often the same. If the serve goes wide to your forehand on the deuce side, the easiest shot is crosscourt, which passes over the middle of the net. If the serve is up the middle on the deuce side, the best backhand return is basically up the middle or even slightly back toward the net person, so through the window. Same on the ad side, the wide serve to the backhand, best shot is back cross court through the middle, and the serve up the middle to the forehand, is best returned hard up the middle or towards the net person, which is also going through the window.

What I'm saying is club players often dumb their game down, in the pursuit of what they think is being smart, hitting the open court. Which leads us to:

#4 Fool's Gold: One-Shot Winners.

Do you like to hit winners? I do, I'm sure you do too. There are few things as pleasing as seeing your shot go past everyone, landing in just the right spot, and everyone at least looking "wow", if not exclaiming it out loud. These are often the highlights of your matches, and worthy of a place on your mental trophy case. All good, at least after the match ("Never count your money when you're sittin' at the table, they'll be time enough for counting when the dealings' done" — *The Gambler* Kenny Rogers). So that highlight also / sadly contains a bit of bad ("bad-lights"???), as far as your long-term best interest. Highlights are great, and great fun, but they are memories of the best, or worst moments, and not a statistical study of every shot (what is working). I'm not saying we don't want highlights, or even lowlights, but we want to base our shot selection on the percentages (which contains all the good shots, all the bad shots, and the almost countless number of average shots). That is, what leads me to the best performance possible, and winning more often. Because that is a highlight too, and a reward. And, a trap, if we don't manage our minds / thoughts properly.

This is all a precursor to "winners don't usually come out of the blue."

You don't just crank it up and let it fly and hit the ball past a well-positioned opponent (call that a One-Shot Wonder). Most winners are well crafted, even if it is not intentional. You move the opponents around, to open a space that is big enough to make the shot, relatively easy, even if you are under pressure (tight match, feeling nervous).

An example of how I manage this in my own mind. "I never hit alley shots, except for when I do." It's a funny phrase that seems to amuse me to no end, found in George Rodrigues' book *Why Is Blue Dog Blue?* and his great statement, "I never paint Blue Dog purple (except for when I do)." What does it mean? To me, in this context, it means I don't really intend to hit the ball in the alley, but if the alley shot opens up, and I know I can make it, I'll take it. It's not something that I'm going to know in advance, or plan. The point is going to play out, and then, all of a sudden, I have a good look at a wide-open target. My opponent has moved, perhaps because of my previous shot, and left an opening.

This idea or philosophy can apply for any shot. "I don't hit winners, except for when I do." "A backhand is what I do when I can't play a forehand." In other words, I don't try to force the outcome, I let the outcome take its course, by playing high percentage shots, the appropriate shot, hitting my best shots often, that may give me an opening, or not, but I must always adjust to the situation, and not rely too much on planning ahead ("No plan survives contact with the enemy" - famous military adage).

#5 It's better to hit the ball hard.

A bit of a trick statement. I don't even want to hit the ball, I want to stroke it (I prefer, "catch and throw it"), but that is a different topic. What I mean here, is starting out with the intention of hitting hard is putting you, before you even start, in the sending mindset. You're thinking about the target, the outcome, the result. You are getting ahead of yourself, they haven't even served the ball yet, in some cases. And you need to receive the ball before you can send it.

How important is this? Is this a new / modern / new age tennis concept?

Well, if we look at the most "famous" and successful tennis tips of all time, what are they? "Watch the ball," "move your feet," "get ready," "keep your head down at contact" These are receiving skills. Nothing about sending or hitting here. Even your positioning on the court before they hit, i.e. most strategy, is about receiving their shot. Nothing about power, or over hitting, or lack of force, or even aiming / placement. Getting ahead of ourselves (thinking of sending and results before receiving) has been a problem since day one of tennis. A mental trap full of errors.

What I've found is if you want to hit hard, it's actually better to think "hit it easy". Go slow, make sure you are lining the ball up. Receive (or catch the ball well), because if you do this, you will feel confident releasing, or sending the ball, and send the ball faster than if you set out to hit hard, and then must adjust to try to make contact or get the shot in. That adjustment usually takes the form of slowing down to find the ball. Deceleration = loss of power.

BTW, the best way to play as self-proclaimed "big hitter," is to vary the speed, spin, depth, and location of your shots, often subtlety. They will over-swing, "have an off day" and miss a ton of shots. This is what a pusher does when they play a self-proclaimed "real tennis player." ("I'm not a wimp, I don't hit wimpy shots!") Well, at least not a wimp until I'm crying and complaining about losing to a pusher). "Real tennis players" are the easiest players to beat. By a million miles (ask any pusher — ha ha). Just hand them the rope, and they'll hang themselves. If they're really lost, they won't even realize you did it, they will just think they have to practice more. Practice swinging and hitting hard more, stuck in a lost cause of their own making. Good luck out there! And Happy New Year (tennis resolution)!