



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

Monthly Dues Payments:

Billing Update

I want to thank all the members for hanging with us through a tough period of billing the past two years. SilverCreek is working hard to clear up the problems, many they inherited from Associa.

Recently, we needed to take a step back and return to paper billing (since December) because too many people were falling through the cracks and not getting the information they needed.

We are happy to say that most people have been able to get their accounts running properly. But we realize there are still some problems, often around late fees (which are triggered automatically by the program and don't consider "circumstances"). Please continue to contact SilverCreek for help if you are having issues. They will help.

Looking forward, the plan is to return to paperless billing. It saves us and you a lot of money. There will be several options to fit your comfort level. Either 1) automatic debit -- with SilverCreek or through your own bank, 2) use the portal to pay online by bank payment or credit card -- i.e. you chose when to pay, and what service fees, or 3) coupon books. There may be another option or two, TBD.

This is a "heads up." There will be announcements soon with details as we make this transition during the summer months.

Please feel free to get ahead of the curve and setting up an auto pay, or paying online, right now by contacting Silver Creek. (916-877-7793 or accounting@sc-manage.com). Thank you.

Mask Update

Masks are no longer required for vaccinated people inside of the clubhouse. We follow the Contra Costa health guidelines, recently updated in mid-February. Nice to see your smile! I've missed it.

Hit and Fit

This is a great time of year to get back in shape. I know I'm working on it. Tennis is a sport that doesn't really have an "off season", but the action slows down a bit in the winter / rainy months. That means winter is a great time to work on your game, improve your fitness and keep the tennis fun going while building for the "the season".

Here at Orindawoods we offer Hit & Fit, a great exercise class. Hit and Fit (Wed & Friday 11:30-1) is a combination of tennis drills using the ball machine to practice and improve your tennis skills, plus fitness exercises to improve our strength and flexibility for tennis using the TRX. It's a fun, supportive environment of players wanting to improve. You will become more fit, and much better at tennis skills involving footwork, playing the ball when you're moving, how to deal with those pesky short balls (3.5 sitters), and improve your volley and overhead. And you'll look better when you are doing it! Check out the schedule in the sidebar and join us soon!

Don't Be a Dreaded No Show

Hey, there are no problems at Orindawoods ... Everything is wonderful. Happiest place on earth. Sun always shines. Everyone enjoying their tennis. A smile on every face...

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 NOT 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:

"The pain pushes until our vision pulls."
– Dr. Michael Beckwith

But, ... if there was a problem, it just might be people not canceling their court reservations when they can't make it. That is, a court sits empty because it is reserved, no one comes, and no one else can use it, even though there are often people that want to. This can be particularly true for Court Three and the ball machine, where there is high demand all day long. Every single day. It is sad seeing it sit empty because someone didn't come, but held the court.

So, let's make Orindawoods problem free, take care of our friends, neighbors, and fellow members, and free up those unused courts by canceling our unused reservations, so that they can become used courts. After all, a used court is a happy court. And this is the happiest place on earth... it just follows. ☺

Even if you must cancel at the last moment because your no-good, bottom-feeding practice partner flakes out, or even if "your dog ate your homework" (or maybe ate your new strings in your new racquet), still cancel your reservation. Someone might be looking at the last second for a chance to play. You could make somebody's day!!! There is an honor and a privilege.

Think of the karma you will manifest. Your next total miss-hit will float over your worthy opponent's head and land right in the corner for a "clean" winner!

There is no doubt in my mind, that if you (and the rest of us) start canceling consistently, sometime not very far down the line, you will benefit. You will get a court that had been previously booked, but one of your fellow members opened it up when they couldn't play. Woo hoo!!! That will be the day! Do a jig. Thx!



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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

Ball Machine Club

March is the month that we renew our ball machine memberships for the year if you are a Ball Machine Club member. For \$110 for the year, you get unlimited access to the ball machine, when the court is available, through March 31, 2023. You get your own key, so that you don't need staff to get into the ball machine shed. Each year we have about 25 Ball Machine Club members, sometimes more. Easy to recognize them because they are improving.

If you have not been a Ball Machine Club member before, it is a great value if you like to practice. The hourly ball machine rate is \$8 / hour if you pay each time you play, but only \$110 for the entire year (nearly the same as using it only fourteen times). Some members use the ball machine fourteen times in a week (almost). Anyway, it is good fun, and good exercise.

As Dr. Jack Groppe once said, "Why go for a run or head to the gym when you can get your exercise playing tennis! Playing a game!"

The national salesperson of our Playmate ball machine, Stan Oley, had the same idea, and created an entire exercise program, and tons of drills, which you can get on the ball machine app, "Like My Drill." It's free. He had been a college tennis player, and then gotten out of shape by his 30s. But then he rededicated himself to exercise in the form of hitting on the ball machine and got back into great shape, one ball at a time.

And of course, if you are working on your game, or strokes, the repetition offered by the ball machine is a great way to groove the new tennis you! Talk to Keith or Patric to pay for this year's membership, or to sign up for the first time.

Tennis Tip:

Slow to Quick

When we are at the net, we often feel like we don't have enough time. It's a common emotional reaction to playing the net. In its extreme forms, we are afraid we will get hit with the ball. And sometimes we do. As Kenny Rogers wrote in The Gambler,

*You have to know when to hold 'em,
and know when to fold 'em,
know when to walk away,
know when to run.*

As my volleying has improved through the years, I notice that on average, I get closer to the net, and I duck more often. Strangely, those two things go together in good volleying. The trick is to shorten the distance from your

opponent when things are going well and increase it when they are not. It's the classic tennis pro instruction: "Low you go [in], high you die."

Not much time. And it is true about net play, when comparing with other shots in tennis, we almost always have less time when we are at the net, that we do when we are playing farther back in the court.

Sometimes this leads us to want to back up, at least a few feet, if we feel the other player is going to hit the ball hard in our direction. Some players, in extreme, “only come to the net to shake hands”, as the old joke goes.

Balance. On the other hand, we also realize that if we can volley the ball when we are at the net, our opponent will have less time to react to our shots. So, tennis becomes this balance between having just enough time vs. not enough, to best take their time away. Playing as close as they will let you. Pretty tricky to figure out.

And like all tactical situations in tennis, if we are wise, we prepare for the average, or most likely situation, realizing that the really fast ones, AND the really slow ones could present some difficult problems. But because they are less likely we prepare for what happens most of the time and do our best on the rest. Preparing for their absolute best shot (which by definition is, the best shot they ever hit in all their years of playing tennis, thus rare) is counter-productive.

Admitting that there are some points / situations you won't win is important. This isn't really a problem for being successful in tennis, as the #1 player in the world only wins about 54% of the points they play in a calendar year. We don't have to win a large percentage of the points, just enough to win. In fact, barely more than that is clearly all that is possible, even for the brightest stars.

(Note: In a ten-year stretch at the French Open, Nadal won the tournament 9 times. Lost in the semi-finals once. Won 75 out of 76 matches. He won almost 99% of his matches, 75% of his sets, 65% of the games, and 55% of the points ... so in the most successful stretch in tennis history, the winning player lost 45% of the points!!!! ... that is a huge number of points, he lost relatively close to half of the points he played if that doesn't blow your mind and change your outlook on tennis, achievement and how success happens in our sport, you are either already a very good competitor, or totally blind to what is necessary. If you can't handle losing a lot of points, manage that pain, make it part of the process of playing, you are never going to be able to play your best and consistently win).

Time: then there is you. Of course, the time you have to play a shot is also determined by some factors other than how fast the ball is going, or how close your opponent is to you, i.e. how well you move, react, how good your reflexes are, and your anticipation too.

In other words, quickness is a huge part of playing tennis, and especially at the net. If we could get quicker, we could be a much better net player, and at the same time, feel safer.

Unfortunately, we are only born with so much athletic ability, and it varies from player to player, so how do we get quicker? We can't change our athletic limits. It's genetics (like most things, it's our parent's fault – ha ha). Athleticism can seem like a fixed quality.

Here we are at the classic serenity wisdom, “accept the things you cannot change, change the things you can, and have the wisdom to know the difference.” – Reinhold Niebuhr.

The good news is how we apply those athletic qualities can change. We need to learn better time management. There is a business saying that “80% of what you do leads to 20% of the results. 20% of what we do leads to 80% of the results.” Success is largely built on getting that 20% right. Picking your battles, focusing on the important ones.

So how do I get quicker? Unfortunately, the obvious answers, “run around more” or “run faster” are wrong. (“For every situation in life there is an answer that is clear, simple and wrong.” – H.L. Mencken)

The opposite is actually true, we get quicker by slowing down. What?!?!?!?

Or more accurately, we slow down in order to empower us to speed up when it matters.

I know, so counter intuitive! We're short on time, after all. And it doesn't even seem to make the slightest bit of sense. It is a koan (a zen puzzle that defies logic and teaches enlightenment). One can spend years studying it. I have.

On the other hand, everything makes sense at the level of understanding. So, truths that are not obvious often take a deeper level of understanding. Clearly there are people that see things better, clearer than others.

Wayne Gretzky, “the great one,” the best hockey player ever (more goals, more assists, more points), was said to watch all the other players chase the puck all over the ice, and he would just wait for where it was going to end up. Everyone else naturally assumed you chase the puck. Of course. Naturally. You need to have the puck, that is hockey, except for when it isn't. And he wasn't always right, just more than anyone else. That works, that's the greatest.

Mistakes. What makes us slow is moving around too much. We make a lot of small mistakes, error of excess, that we must spend a lot of time, energy and space, correcting. Time that we don't have at the net. If you slowed down, waited to see exactly where the ball was going, and didn't move until you knew, you would actually get there much quicker. The trick is to only act when we know something for certain. And you have to wait (ready to move) awhile, closely observing, until you have enough information to know for certain. As time moves on, I get more information.

A progression of answers. You split step, then: Is it a forehand or a backhand? Is it a ground stroke or a lob? Then you turn to the appropriate side. But you don't move. Don't move until you know how far away it is. And even then, you don't want to move, because you don't want to just touch the ball, you want to arrive at contact accelerating through the contact point. I.e., you want to almost be late, and arrive at the last moment with acceleration. That's quicker. You must wait long enough for that information to be revealed. The force you want on the volley comes from moving your feet (body), not swinging your arm (too risky and inconsistent).

Appropriate. The way you are quicker, is that each and every move, each and every action, each and every decision is appropriate. Recognize the task and use just the right amount of resources to accomplish the task in the best possible way.

The best player. So, the player that is the closest to being late, without actually being late, is the best player. The player that pounces, not just reaches, scrambles, blocks, flails, or hits.

So how? “Wait, wait, pounce.”

Split step (wait), turn (wait — load your legs, plot your intercept course), drive (go). Accelerate through the ball. You want to be moving the quickest after contact. That means you are accelerating at contact. In track, the sprinter is coached to run through the finish line, not to it. You don’t want to be passed at the tape because you are slowing down. In tennis, this deceleration can be seen in weak shots, shots with no pop, or dumping balls in the net.

You might not move (forward) for the first 70% of the time that you have, while you gather information, turn, coil, load your legs and poise, and then only act on what you see, and know, 100% where to intercept, so that in the last 30% of the time available you are moving so quickly that you zoom past where you would have been if you left earlier, having made inaccurate choices and moving slow, with uncertainty, in fits and starts.

OK, the challenge Even if the concept makes sense, now that you have a higher level of understanding, getting the feel of it takes some practice. It takes a lot of nerve not to move. Nerve you have to develop. Guts, courage, faith, and a belief in how you play the game. To wait and see, takes an unbelievable commitment to excellence, at the expense of feeling that you are out of time, and that you have to get every ball. It’s wisdom over fear, belief over emotion.

On the practice court, in a lesson, if I can get you to feel it just once, it will be like the doors to heaven / enlightenment just opened. “Ah ha”.... and then followed by a Mona Lisa smile (the smile of enlightenment). Perhaps a giddy laugh of knowing you have been handed the keys to the kingdom, which were sitting next to you the whole time.

How many times in my tennis life have I discovered something new, and said to myself, “If this is tennis, then I don’t know what I was playing before, but it wasn’t tennis. It wasn’t this.” A seismic game changer.

What you know. In this situation, it basically comes down to: using what you know (and waiting for it), vs. giving in to the panic that you feel (and thus acting on impulse before you know, because you figure “doing something is better than doing nothing” -- another massive, self-defeating lie or self-deception – that we all fall into from time to time).

A simple test. When you play the ball, are you accelerating, or decelerating? Is the ball in the best place possible, or have you jammed yourself, or too far away? Are you moving on the best line or having to alter course? These errors are symptoms of moving early, of guessing, of acting inappropriately by starting before you know where you are going.

Are you sure, or not sure, when you move? Are you moving with confidence, or moving in stops and starts?

The truth is, you can only be sure when you actually see what is happening. You are never sure when you are guessing, or leaning, or hoping, or praying.

How well? The goal is not how much you move, but how well. You might not be able to move very much at all on certain balls (ones that come fast, or are hard to read). Do you move with conviction, certainty, confidence, or are you in full blown panic, convinced you don’t have any time? And therefore, ironically, actually giving yourself a lot less.

“If you can keep your head when all around are losing theirs and blaming you.” – Kipling

Even tougher. It is better to wait and not get to this particular ball, i.e. lose this point, than to be chasing the ball around aimlessly, and miss a lot of shots that you could have made if you just waited and retained your balance.

My doubles partner Rick used to say, “You can’t win until you are willing to lose.” And he meant that simple statement (another koan) at so many different levels. A tennis match roughly breaks down like this: 40% of the points are yours to lose, 40% are theirs to lose. There is 20% of the points that are evenly balanced in the middle. The outcome hangs on those middle points. You want to do your best there. But you can’t throw away “your points to win” by making silly mistakes. The more unforced errors, the more you must win of those finely balanced, middle points. A tough enough task already. Be ready, patient, present, observe and respond well. Don’t get lost (literally) in chasing the phantoms of the shots you fear (their points to win). We need to let their great shots go. Even their lucky shots.

Keep it simple / stay on course. In other words, position yourself where the ball is most likely to go, and be ready to play the balls that come to you. Rather than trying to figure out how to get their best shots, and not be ready for the easy ones. I know 4.5 player who routinely hits the ball right to the stronger opponent in doubles, because that is the one shot they are not looking for. And they often miss, with the resulting embarrassment and break down. It works.

If you win 54% of the points, you’ll be at the top of your level. That leaves very little room for missing easy shots that you could make if you were just present and doing what you know. In a match that is 100 points, that’s six mistakes on shots you should make, that gets you down to 48% and likely losing. Six shots separating the best from the middle of the pack. Six shots out of 100 that you missed because you were looking for something else instead of being ready and waiting to see what happened. The thing you feared never happened, but the thing should concern you, not being present, did. Take care of your business, and let the rest go. They hit a winner or an ace? Say, “Not my business.”

You stay present by slowing down, so you can be as quick as you can be. I hope now, at least in theory, that doesn’t sound quite as crazy. Acting that way, calm in the face of adversity, is a lifetime practice. And the great thing is, if you fail once, or a thousand times, you can just get it better on the next one. You can’t control outcomes, but you have a huge say in performance. And performance impacts outcomes. No mistakes, only lessons. Good luck out there!