



Orindawoods Tennis News

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

A New Year

2023 at Orindawoods

First, Happy New Year! And best wishes to all!

We are looking forward to a great year of tennis, after it stops raining, that is. I know, we need the rain, but this is a bit much. So here I offer a bit of rainy-day entertainment.

For 2023, we have our weekly tennis clinics (see box to the right), many social events, our great junior program, private tennis lessons, numerous playing opportunities, pickleball and lots of tennis action. Enjoy!

The Orindawoods Way

I was talking to a member last week, and they said, "What a nice place Orindawoods is." And went on to add, "[The staff] make it a nice place to be, so it logically follows for the members to just be nice too."

It is what we all do. The culture created by the staff and members make our Club a wonderful place to be. We treat others the way we would want to be treated. Thank you all for your part in keeping the Orindawoods Way going, in every interaction in the club. "I like this place, and could willingly waste my time in it." – William Shakespeare, avid tennis buff.

Events for 2023

It is still too early, and far too rainy to seriously start planning for events for 2023, but in general, we plan to do many of the great events we do each year, plus a couple TBAs:

- Tulip Tournament (spring, after showers, with flowers)
- Just Because Tournament... (June)
- Monday Team Tennis (about 18 weeks of tennis on Monday evenings starting 5/1).
- Twilights (July, August, September, October)

League Tennis This Winter

- USTA 40AW4.0 & USTA 40AW4.5 (matches are middays on the weekends).
- Sr. BALL. We have two teams. Matches are on Mondays & Fridays. Each team plays once a month.

2023 Tennis Club Pricing

Remember, we have some new pricing for 2023, so if you haven't updated your autopay yet, please do so. We don't want you to get charged a late fee. Club dues are now \$147. Most lessons went up \$5/hr., and guest fees, ball machine fees and our social event fees have stayed the same. The cost of life around us, just keeps going up, and to maintain the service we love to give you, some adjustments have been necessary. See a summary of pricing in the box above. Thank you for supporting us!

2023 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: \$147 / 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

Ball Machine

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

- Ball Machine Club runs thru 3/30/23
- 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 is continuing in his fine tradition of being our expert racquet stringer. Patric picks up and drops off racquets early on Tuesday and Friday mornings. Put some zip back your game, get a resting!

Quote of the Month:

"Find the life underneath your life situation." – Eckart Tolle

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IMPORTANT: Auto payments: If you have your account set up on an auto payment, be sure to change the payment amount to the 2023 pricing (\$147). We don't want you to incur any late fees.

Court Cam, Court & Weather Updates

We would love to have the Court Cam back up and running, but it is not so easy to do, and I'm still looking for a solution that would work for the Club. In the meantime, if you go to the "Live Tennis Camera" page (upper left-hand corner on the website), I will post the court conditions when there is inclement weather, to the best of my ability. It is hard to predict how fast a court will dry (I have practiced guessing for years). Sun, wind, warmer air, and warmer ground are the most important factors. After a recent storm, the courts dried fast, because it was a warm system. Some of the colder storms and days in December, parts of the courts never dried, even long after the rain was gone. As we head towards February and March, the courts will dry much faster. Plus, the days are getting longer. Something to look forward to in the deep, dark, wet of January.

Junior Program 2023

The Winter Junior program (and all the rest of our tennis) got off to a wet start this year. But don't worry, we will be adjusting the pricing according to the start date. And there are still spaces available. Also remember that within our pricing, we are taking into account that on average, two classes per session get rained out. If it doesn't rain, you get two "free" classes.

Go to the [Junior Page on the Club website](#) to get all the class details, times and pricing. The Spring Jr. Program will start in mid to late February and will have a similar structure. Come join Erik and learn tennis!

Tennis Tip:

Pros Have It Easy

Over the years, I have reflected a couple of times on how professional tennis players have it much easier than club players when it comes to playing a competitive match. Of course, this sounds ridiculous, and perhaps, it is. I know a couple of professional players, and the strain and stress they go through, physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually is intense, and can be exhausting, even with the potential rewards being high. And while there are some financial rewards, I met a woman who was

on the pro tour for about 12 years after playing a couple of years at UCLA. She was in the top 50 in the world for 8 years, and when she retired in her early 30s, she had saved enough money to pay for completing her degree at UCLA. That's it. So very few of these people are getting rich. And even if you win a slam, and take home a million + dollars, that all gets spread around pretty fast with expenses. For most players out there, it is a break-even proposition at best, and most are losing money and can't afford to stay out there too long. And the tour life is a tough, lonely life, where everyone you know and interact with is a competitor. However,....

I don't know what you do for a living, but pros get to play tennis, and get paid for it. Sometimes a lot. Hmm, sounds pretty good to me. Perhaps that is a massive misunderstanding. Interestingly, one of the ways that pros release the stress and strain of tour life, is to remember, with gratitude, what they are doing for a living, and how blessed they are. "I get to play a game for a living." It can help, your point of view.

Negative Emotions. Tennis is much more difficult than the outside observer's often thoughtless comment when a pro reacts negatively to the stress and strain (McEnroe, Kyrgios), "It's just a game." Especially when that is said about someone who desperately striving for success on the cutthroat, dog-eat-dog tour, and to weather the pressure to win enough to afford to keep going. But then again, in the end, "it's just a game."

"When I first observed the art, a kick was just a kick, and a punch was just a punch. When I studied the art, a kick was much more than a kick, a punch much more than a punch. When I mastered the art, a kick was just a kick, and a punch was just a punch." — Bruce Lee

A Path to Competitive Wisdom: It's just a game. It's much more than a game. It's just a game.

Adoration. Then there are the fans. How nice for pros, to have someone rooting for you. I mean, in a game (like life) where you are largely on your own, how many people are cheering for you? Even the pantomime villains like Djokovic, have people who love them and cheer for them. Sounds good, until of course, we factor in the critics, sports pundits, Monday morning quarterbacks, the "away" fans and the paparazzi. Yuck! Not to mention, not wanting to let your fans, coaches and supporters down.

Close Support. Pros have a coach, or family there to watch. How about a physio to help you prepare, or cool down? A massage after you play a tough match? How many people are sitting in your "box" during your morning game? Sounds dreamy being a pro, compared to strapping on my old, worn-out tennis shoes and a collection of arm and knee braces, and slogging my tired body out to court seven all alone.

Easy Stuff. There are some obvious situations where the pros have it easier. Do you have someone courtside managing your sweaty wet, gross towel? Does someone bring you water? Or hold an umbrella over your head to provide shade on changeovers? Anyone ever carry your bag onto the court?

Here are a couple perks, especially as we get older, that would be nice. Do you have someone to keep score for you? Or call the lines? How about pick up the balls? (I mean, come on, you don't even pick up your own balls? It's like you have fun, make a total mess, and your mom cleans your room for you, and puts everything away, so that you know where to find it next time you want to make a mess – living the dream).

Of course, an official calling the lines makes it easier because you don't have to worry about your opponent "missing the call," especially on "big" points or on "your best serve" of the match. Or that aggravating and sometimes not so unintentional "just out," comment, perhaps designed to mess with your head and get you out of the zone, break your concentration, make you wonder if it was, just out, or perhaps, just in, etc.... and your monkey mind does the rest to bring your flow to a stuttering halt.

Chat. In fact, pros don't talk to their opponents. The etiquette is very clear here. Don't say anything. There is no requirement to be friendly, social, or even acknowledge the other players at all. At the Club level, we must interact all the time, whether it is about the score, making the line calls, or feeling that we must be civil or even chatty on the changeover. The pressure / expectation to be nice, even to cheaters and bums.

This chat can involve intentional or unintentional "gamesmanship." "Wow, your backhand is really on fire today", which sounds nice, but could easily take someone out of the zone, cause them to over think it, or try something foolish, and thus throw the player off. So maybe not so nice. Pros don't have to deal with that.

Club players must deal with chat, like it or not. It's all part of the fact that we are playing a "game", and the pros are "working". We need to act like it is a game, the pros "just do their job, and then go home."

And out on the club's courts, sometimes it is more than that, a bit of ribbing, at side bet on the next game, or a comment meant to throw them off. All in good fun. Or not. People are serious and like to win.

What a Strange World. Think of it, our culture has turned play, a game, into a job, work. Pros work. The relevant question here is, do we have to turn our tennis (play) into a job (work)? Are pros the role model? The intense seriousness and need to win. Careful how you answer that one, your joy could be at stake.

What if you have a little ache, or strain? Pros get the trainer to come down and help them out?

Styles of Play. There are some subtle things in the style of play, and tactics and strategy that are much easier for the pro. "Really???" Well, let's consider these:

A pro hits a good ball. Ok, maybe it is too good sometimes, but you don't have to worry about "random shots, going anywhere." You know, a ball off the frame that clips the net and drops over on the opposite side of the court from where they are aiming. A pro's shots generally go where they are intended, and that means that they are somewhat predictable, and you can plan tactics, or an overall strategy to try to combat what they are trying to do. Again, the shots may be too good, but they are rarely "random acts of God," or "lucky." That is an easier problem to try to solve. You know what you're getting into.

I mean, we all love to get a ball that is hit to us and is "easy" to hit. The hardest shot in tennis is not the rare one that overpowers us. At least that is coming to us. The most challenging shot is the soft, weak, random shot that we must move to. And when we get there, it is so slow, we must generate all the pace.

Even for the seasoned pro, the soft shot is fraught with danger, and presents an opportunity to have an embarrassingly easy shot to miss. Or eventually lose a point they felt they already won. While the pro has trained more how to deal with these weak shots, or "3.5 sitters", there are far fewer of them in a pro match, than down on the local courts. In club tennis, there are large numbers of opponents who are consciously trying to "slow it down" to make it harder for you. Most of the league singles play is dominated by

“consistent” players. Players that don’t miss, players that want you to miss. Sometimes they put a little “English” on the ball, a little “junk” to throw you off. “Take a bit off...” Pros don’t have to deal with that s—.

In Deep. Here is a subtle version of this difference. Many of the balls that come to club players land well within the court and will bounce twice before they cross the baseline. Club players must often play inside the lines of the court, to prevent the ball from bouncing twice. Unless a pro chooses to come to the net, they almost always stand behind the baseline, often well behind the baseline, thus all shots land in front of them. A club player can’t do that. They won’t be successful enough at handling the large number of short balls. So, they must stand inside the baseline most of the time, except when the rules say they must start behind the baseline, to serve (then you better move forward). That means, that while you may be better at getting a short ball -- the majority of club shots -- the deep ball is going to be difficult. It could land behind you and still be in. Pros just don’t have to hit this shot, unless they are in a strong, net position to do so.

Say, for example, you stand around the “blue line” to receive a weak second serve, but after returning that, your opponent hits the next ball (serve +1) deep, either a lob or just a “good, deep, shot (like we are training to do with lessons or on the ball machine). There is often no time to get back, so we are faced with taking it out of the air. A volley? A swing volley? A half-volley? An overhead? All tough shots in “no man’s land,” between the baseline and the service line, relatively far from the net. It takes a lot of training to not only be good at these “boutique” shots, but also to know which shot to use, and when.

And there is the whole idea of “no man’s land,” which clearly isn’t the case in club tennis, because that is where we spend most of our time. “All man’s land???” We would lose far more points being too far back. “No man’s land” is a military term for the ground between two powerful armies. A dangerous place, a deadly place, not a place you would choose to be. But club players must be there, in the danger zone. So, while these “deep court volleys” are occasional, add-on shots for the pros, used once or twice a match, if at all, these shots are the tools of survival to the club player. A much “easier” situation for the pro.

Pros Were Beginners Too. It’s only fair to remember, that the pros did have to learn how to do all these things when they were learning, improving, and developing as a junior. They had to master these skills before tennis was served on a silver platter. You know, “shaken, not stirred”. Tennis got easier.

Speaking of Development: I often wonder, or ponder, the dark / shadow side of the game, how many pros were “tough competitors” and “squeezed the lines” a bit when they were younger, and no one was watching. And what if that helped them get to the point where someone was “watching the lines.” What is success built on? I know, kind of a dark thought. Sorry. We like our heroes clean, and, well, heroic.

Or perhaps, was the cut-throat world of junior tennis, what made the ones that survived so strong? Perhaps a positive: “What doesn’t kill you makes you strong” – Nietzsche. And while that worked for them, for the .001% of all children that take up tennis, what about the others? Are they really all losers? Victims? A harsh view that makes being a pro seem like being a rare winner. “The world is a jungle” -Thomas Hobbs.

Tennis Gets Easier. This is all to say, that in the course of your tennis development, the years of learning (10,000 hours), playing, practicing, competing, you have to learn skills that, if you get really good at them, you basically rarely have to use them again. You can play more on your terms, with your best skills.

Dealing with a cheating opponent is a basic survival skill in junior tennis, or league tennis, even club tennis with “friends” (which is really difficult because for some totally bizarre reason, it is more important to stay or appear to be friends, than to mention an error or argue a call — somehow protesting injustice is what is labeled wrong or uncivil -- cheating is just fine), but when you get good enough, there is someone who calls the lines impartially for you. Pros have one of the hardest, most emotionally challenging parts of competition, taken completely off the table. How many matches have you played with linesmen, or Hawkeye, making the call for you? No one argues with the computer, even if it has a margin for error too.

Or consider all those crazy lobs we must face, on a regular basis. If you develop a dangerous overhead, or you can lob back in a way that terrorizes your opponent, then suddenly, no one lobs you anymore.

Or to a lesser degree, if you have a great forehand, it is amazing how many backhands your opponent asks you to play during a match. It is the tennis version of the classic situation in golf, the better you get, the fewer shots you get to play (a golfer that shoots par, a 72, plays 25% less shots than a duffer who shoots a 95). We train for hours, months, years to get an overhead so that we will never have to hit one again, except in warm up (most important overhead of the match is the first one in warmup). Or as I joke with my students when they hit an exceptional, exquisite shot, “If you hit the ball that well, no one will play with you.”

Do pros have it easy? No. Easier than us? In some ways, yes. In other ways, obviously, no. Life is full of challenges, no matter what your level. There you go. We have the opportunity to embrace the challenge.