



Orindawoods Tennis News

May 2023 Vol: 29, Issue 5

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

Club Refresh and Rebuild

A New Orindawoods

"Time is not linear. When you do something that feeds your soul, you rejuvenate. When you do things that drains your soul, you age. Choose to feed your soul, not drain your soul, and time does not exist." – Alice Berno, the Priestess of the Whispers

50 Years! We are creating a new Club around you as we celebrate 50 years of Orindawoods. Somehow, we get younger and better. Yes, Orindawoods is 50 this year. Congratulations. But Orindawoods is also new and refreshed.

Pool. We have rebuilt the entire pool heater room for the upcoming summer pool season. Our heaters were old and tired, and they have been retired to the big pool heater room in the sky. New, more efficient, manageable, and easier to control heaters have appeared in the space, and with our excellent pool company, Picture Perfect Pools, it should be a great season here at Orindawoods for pool fun, consistent, warm pool temperature, and poolside enjoyment. Come down and chill poolside.

Courts. In addition to that, our tennis courts are undergoing a rebuild over the next couple of years. This year we will rebuild Courts 2&3 using a new mat surface system that covers the cracks and dead spots and removes them for many years to come. This work is tentatively scheduled for August, between summer and fall tennis seasons. Installation should take about 10 days. The court should feel a bit softer too, easier on the legs. Cushy.

In the next couple of years, we will be giving similar treatment to Courts 4-7. Court One was rebuilt in the past 18 months, and now includes **pickleball** as well. Another recent addition to the Club.

Furniture. We are always adding and refreshing our outdoor furniture. Speaking of that, come sit in the lobby. You can watch tennis (and pickleball) on the Tennis Channel every day. So fun!

Junior Program. Erik's new Summer Junior Program is coming, and you can register now (see pages 7&8). Another refresh to an already great existing program. Juniors can not only spend a fun summer, but they learn a sport that keeps you young, and that you can play for a lifetime.

Tennis is a boom sport in America, with 23.6 million players, up 33% since 2019, more than half that play regularly. And those people are living 10 years longer than the normal population.

OW is also part of the **pickleball boom**, with now 8.9 million players in America, up from 5 million only a couple of years ago. And while the average age of a pickleball player was 65 before the pandemic, it is now 38, so the whole family is joining in!

You can play Pickleball by reserving Court 1 after 12 noon, any day of the week. We will schedule some playdays going forward. More fun for all.

Orindawoods continues to meet the challenges of a diverse membership, balancing the need to be inclusive with the desire to have exclusive opportunities that maintain the tennis & pickleball playing quality of the Club. No easy task, let me tell you (see the article below). If you think the Board and I have been magicians with the Club rebuild, over \$100k, balancing everyone's tennis, pickleball and swimming needs is quite a trick, but we're on it!

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 3/30/24
- 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 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 restring!

Quotes of the Month:

"You can never get enough of what you don't need to make you happy."

■ Eric Hoffer

Pool Opening Dates

The Spa is opening the week of May 1st. The pool will be heated starting May 24th. We are looking forward to an amazing summer pool season with our new pool heating system and great pool service. Enjoy a splash this summer!

Monday Club Social Tennis League Begins May 15th

Monday Team Tennis

It's time for the big one: Monday Night Team Tennis!!! So much tennis fun every Monday night!

The season will run from mid-May, through August, with matches and dinners on each and every Monday evening (not holidays). Of all the socials, in all the tennis clubs, in all the world, this is the best! At least that is what Rick would have said (*Casablanca* reference).

MTT is an in-club league (with a few guests), where we create 4 teams and they play each Monday evening, fighting for the title. We have been doing MTT successfully for well over 20 years. Good shots, lots of laughs, tasty food! Play runs from 6-8 p.m, followed by dinner on the deck.

The weather is always perfect, with palm trees swaying to the gentle tropical breeze (OK, sometimes the breeze hails from the south coast of Alaska, but normally, it's lovely). MTT is the best way to spend a Monday evening, meet some like-minded players, and enjoy the finest Orindawoods tennis experience. Join us.

Register: There are still spots! The league will begin May 15th. The cost is \$50 per player for the season (\$75 for non-members) and includes the 14 or so weeks of play. You will contribute a side dish every four weeks or so, when your team hosts dinner. The main course will be reimbursed by the Club. And of course, everyone gets a prize at the end because if you are a member of Orindawoods, you are clearly a winner. It's great fun.

Contact Keith for info / to sign up! keith@orindawoodstennis.com.

Orindawoods Tennis Club

650 Orindawoods Dr.
Orinda, CA 94563

Phone:
925-254-1065

Website:
orindawoodstennis.com

Smart Phone Reservation App:
PlayTennisConnect

Facebook:
Orindawoods Tennis Club

Executive Tennis Director:
Keith Wheeler
keith@orindawoodstennis.com

Head Pro:
Erik Oehlschlager
erik@orindawoodstennis.com

Racquet Stringing:
Patric Hermanson
patric@orindawoodstennis.com

Newsletter Editor:
Keith Wheeler

Silvercreek HOA Management

Accounting and billing
questions, contact:

916-877-7793 or
accounting@sc-manage.com

Just Because Tournament

Our June social tournament, the Just Because Tournament (just because we love to play tennis) will take place on Sunday, June 25th. The cost will be \$20 to cover food and fun. We ask that you BYOB and a side dish. We will play tennis from 5-7 p.m, followed by dinner on the deck. Don't miss it! Non-players are welcomed to join for dinner. To sign up, contact Keith (keith@orindawoodstennis.com).

Summer Junior Program

Erik's Orindawoods Junior Tennis Program begins the week of June 5th and runs through the end of July (we will take the week of the 4th off – Happy Birthday America!). See the Orindawoods website or pages 7&8 for all the details!

Questions? Erik would love to help: erik@orindawoodstennis.com

Used Tennis Balls

If you have some used balls that are weighing down your tennis bag, or cluttering up your car trunk or hall closet, please donate them to the Club.

- 1) If the ball is in good shape, please put it in the tan-colored, wood box by the Pro Shop Door. Those go in the ball machine (then we recycle).
- 2) If balls are ragged and are ready for recycle (no bounce, little fuzz), then put balls in the Recycle boxes (by the sink, or the outside box, top of the steps).

Tennis Tip:

Holding On

I have a sore wrist. Usually when I have an injury, I think the injury or pain is pointing to something technique-wise that I could do better. It might not have been even caused by bad technique, it might not even be bad technique, but the injury points out where there is a stress and/or weakness and that there is some way that I could do the stroke better. In my case, the original wrist injury was caused by a car accident thirty years ago, which created a weakness, an instability. If I over use the wrist -- driving screws with a screwdriver is the worst, among many household tasks, but also muscling backhands is not great.... -- then ouch. Ouch is bad. Avoid ouch when possible.

So fast forward 30 years, and my wrist has been hurting when I hit backhands, my traditionally strongest shot. So, I have been working on my backhand the past six months, to see if I can do it without pain. I remembered my teacher, Doug King, showing me how he "held" the grip on the backhand, with his fingertips, his palm not even touching the handle (i.e. therefore no strength at all). Doug had the best one-handed backhand I have ever seen, and I've seen Stan

Wawrinka and Kenny Rosewall (ugh, dates me). This was a big clue that it was about letting go, and not holding on, for if you were not wrapping your bottom three fingers around the grip, you are not able to grip or hold on.

The past six months, I started “holding” the racquet looser and looser and in particular, not grabbing on at contact (or the anticipation of the collision with the ball), which I would especially do if I felt I was late on contact, or “over powered.” I just focused on releasing the racquet (see below), which did all the “work” for me, no muscles.

It takes so much trust and faith to let go, and not try, especially when I decide the ball coming to me is difficult. But with pain being the alternative (pain is the teacher), I have mastered this, the majority of the time. And I am making a lot of shots I didn’t think possible. And get this: when I miss, it is usually because my release is so good, that I’m early, and the ball rolls, beautifully, but into the net. Doable fix: more trust required, let the ball come closer, before letting go.

Technique. I discovered in this process the most amazing timing mechanism. Reach out with the butt of the racquet, towards the incoming ball, and try to touch it with the racquet butt. Right before you can reach it, your arm runs out of length, and it stops going forward and starts to go a bit to the right and rolls and rotates. If you hold the racquet loosely, the head will be flung forward, right onto the incoming ball, with perfect timing. Amazing. No effort, magic. Magic is good.

This has been working great, no pain, except for when I grab on, once or twice an hour, and then it hurts like crazy. Sadly, 99% compliance isn’t good enough. Need to let go all the time. That’s a tall order, but I play, pain free.

I have been working on this for a while now, and some weeks the wrist is better than others, some not so great, but as long as I let go, it’s good. And I’m good, my backhand is good.

Lingering Pain. But the wrist injury is not going away. My wrist is not getting stronger (for slip ups or non-tennis activities). Hmmm? Let’s go back to my original idea, that I have pain because there is a lesson to be learned. I thought the Universe (God, Spirit, Mother Nature, pick your name) was working on my backhand, and my backhand has gotten a lot better. I mean, really good, approaching great. Soon! So exciting! Why isn’t the lesson over (no pain)?

One morning, a week or so ago, I played a ball with my student. I was a bit early and hit an angle shot away from her for an accidental winner. I know in the past I would have tightened up to direct the ball back to her, “saving” the shot, but my wrist surely would have hurt. So, I didn’t do it, and the winner was the result. (She said, “nice shot”, BTW, very kind, considering it was a mistake). But I also knew, in the long run, that if I let go, I’ll play more balls back to her (play better) anyway, but not this particular shot. The accidental winner. I let go of control to avoid pain.

Then it hit me, like a freight train. The lesson was: pain comes from trying to control. And my job was to let go. IN EVERYTHING. This wasn’t about a tennis shot, a tennis lesson, even a wrist, this was a life lesson. OMG.

Pain comes from grasping, from trying to control, from attachment, from trying to play God. Not my job, not my pay grade.

In fact, I don’t even know what is best in this situation. Often, I think I do, but I don’t. I can’t predict the future.

Have you ever been in a competitive match, a point you really want [need] to win, hit a really crappy shot off the frame – I mean choke city, a clunker -- and then they miss it. It was the weakness that made you “great” on the shot, a “surprise,” not how well you hit. If you hit a “good” shot, that they were expecting, perhaps they would have put it away. Or not. We don’t know.

So, you need a Higher Vision, a higher viewpoint, to even know what is best next. And none of us here on earth reside at that address up in the clouds / stars. Not our viewpoint. Not my job to know what is best.

Inquiry. Do you know what is best? (Yes or no). Can you know, with absolute certainty, what is best? (Not really). What happens to you when you think you know? (the self-made torture). What happens when you let go of that thought? (Freedom). What happens when you turn that around? (“Not my job to control” -- Closer to true, to happy).

My job is to let go, to trust the process, to put my best out there and see what happens. In other words, not to know what is best, but to do my best, be my best. Sometimes that’s a frame shot or an accidental winner. ☺

And not just on the court. This doesn’t mean that I don’t make plans, or put forth ideas that make sense to me, but always with the humility that it’s just my best approximation, and that I will have to adjust as the process goes along. And let go of what I thought I knew, when more of life is revealed. Blessings.

Club Thoughts

Where Are We, in Twenty-Three?

The past couple of years have been rough, and not always what I, as the manager, have wanted for the Club experience here at Orindawoods. The Club experience that I have helped to build, with all of your participation (and those that went before), for twenty-eight years. The pandemic, and some challenges with our bookkeeping and membership services, the interface between the members and the Club (the members are the club, really) have led to a few tough times. You all have been great and been supportive of the Club and each other as we have gone through these challenging times. Thank you.

We have all had to make some withdrawals from the “good will” bank account, to trust that in time all will come good. It is time to return to make what makes Orindawoods such a special place. That is to make some deposits in that “feel good” bank account. “Hear, hear.” The Club rebuild (see above) is part of this.

One of the other places to start is what it even means to belong to a club, to be a member, to participate in a group, to interact with each other, and to build the community that has made Orindawoods so strong for years and years, and

make us strong enough to go through a pretty heavy hit (especially the pandemic) in “good will” withdrawals, and come out the other side with the sport of tennis and the Orindawoods Tennis Club booming. It’s such a joyous place to play, compete, and work.

There are certain fundamental things that have led to the success that is Orindawoods, and whenever there is a threat to that, I feel it is time for us to all come together and discuss that, with honesty, and humor, humility and gratitude that we can talk, and be honest. For each of us, has been, and will continue to be (in hopefully a small minor, bit-part role), each and every one of the “momentarily crazy” characters presented below. It is the human condition. Let’s look on that with humility, a sense of humor (do we get the joke? It’s on all of us, after all – me included), and the vision to return to our best. With that preface,

Inclusive and Exclusive

This article is about the truth (whatever that is, from a point of view, mine in this case), and is not intended to offend, or step on politically correct toes, though it probably will. It is just time to be honest about the club experience, the tennis experience, the society experience. Hopefully with a sense of humor, and why not a wry smile too....

The Club is inclusive, we welcome anyone to join. Well, those that can afford it (already exclusive, without consciously trying). And of course, that includes being able / afford to live close enough, again, exclusion.

We seek to grow the game. We love tennis, and want anyone who wants to play, to be able to join in and play. The Club wants more members (up to capacity, so there is room to play). More people to play with, more income, better service, lower dues (as everyone shares the operating costs).

That means the best player in the club, would love to go out and play with a beginner, right? OK, maybe not. Truthfully, the best player in the club would like to play with people of their level, or perhaps, even a bit higher. Which of course is challenging, them being the best player, and all that. ☺ (So, there are guests – that’s one reason).

When I was at the Tiburon Peninsula Club, my first tennis director job, we would have playdays for the A players, the B players, and the C players. It was an active club, so there were lots of league players, and there was an A1 team, and an A2 team, and there was a B1 team, and a B2 team, and so on. Well, on the drop-in, A Playday, only the A2s would show up, because they wanted to play with all the A’s, but the A1s only wanted to play with people of their level.

Before you say this story is all about “those good, snobby, elitist top players”, the same thing happened at the C Playday, only the C2s showed up. Not a C1 in sight. And if one mistakenly showed up, they wouldn’t make that mistake next week, or the other C1s might start to see that C1 player as a C2... oh no. Before long, tossed out of the tribe, clan, clique... whatever you want to call the grouping.

No judgement here (even if it sounds like it), humans are social beings, and to be excluded from the family, tribe, clan in our not-too-distant past was to be shunned, or a bit farther back in history, pretty much a death sentence, as in the wild (“Lions, tigers and bears, oh my!”), alone, we were so vulnerable without the numbers of the tribe to protect each other. You don’t think our “genes” (social programming handed down from generation to generation) remember this? Think again. Or check out middle school social positioning, friend dumping and cliques.

Growth. Do individual members want more members? Potentially more people to play with, if they are the right level, but crowded courts, competing for space, having to say “no” to people I don’t want to play with, the new person takes my spot on the team ... maybe so, maybe not.

Is the Club and the members at odds over inclusion? Hmm... not when it is about lower dues, well-maintained courts and cool people to play with.

Pickleball Is Inclusive. We are seeing a huge boom in pickleball in the last couple of years. You just go down to the park, put your paddle on the fence, and you can play. No arranging games, no worrying about if someone will take you, etc.... Just like tennis in the boom years, the 1970s. Joy and inclusivity leads to a sport booming. Everyone wants to join it! It’s fun, it feels safe, no one is judging anyone else. And so, they do come out to play, and it becomes a cultural phenomenon, constantly in every news media. Like tennis was in the 1970s. (Yes, every dog has its day).

Well guess what, I hear that the “better pickleball players” want to have a “good game”, and only want to play with people of their level (or better). There are starting to be rankings, and levels, tournaments, league play with different levels, and a pro tour and all the things that make the sport “better,” and “more fun.” It must be so, “serious” sports all do that. And exclusive.

Turns out, pickleball resembles tennis, it’s played by humans. Probably good news (along with all such limitations).

Professionals. Look how hard it is to become a doctor or a lawyer, all the tests, money, years of schooling... partly to protect the profession, keep the numbers down, and the salaries up. It’s an exclusive club, the winners in society, and they want to keep it that way. Status, prestige, income. And at some level it protects the family. Who doesn’t want to do that? Want the best for their spouse, kids, themselves? BTW, tennis pros have certification as well, same deal.

Scarcity. It is a scarcity model. Only enough for a few, so get yours. Only one person can be #1, is another example. The problem is, how do you grow the game if only one person wins. It’s the most exclusive model.

Perhaps that is a bit extreme, most of us set the bar a bit lower, but everyone wants a good game, a competitive game (maybe one they can win, but they want it to be “good tennis,” the way, the style they want to play. Good but not too good – you know, Cinderella Tennis ☺).

Everyone here is smart enough to know that the math on this just doesn't work. No two players are equal. None. Everyone is unique, and at least on this day, one is better than the other. Someone wins. "50% of the people that played today lost" - Vic Braden. Not everyone can play with a better player today, or be part of a strong team, someone has to play with a weaker player, let somewhat weaker players on the strong team.

And people say (under their breath), "That is obvious. Tell me something I don't know. Someone has to help the "beginners" out. Dah.... It just isn't going to be me." ☺

Hey, I relate. I'm a pretty good player. Better than most by a long shot, but trust me, I'm a pro, and there are plenty better than me. I know it is more fun to play with someone "who can play" (we each define that in our own way). Is this wrong? No. Is it inclusive, probably not. Is it exclusive, of course. That is the intention? Yep.

Is it wrong? Depends (like everything) on context. After all, I want to play with who I want to play with. It's my game, my time, maybe I'm even arranging all the players (sometimes several courts full of players), reserving the courts, making the game happen, week after week.... So, no.

By its very nature, tennis is exclusive. We play a game, someone wins, someone loses. In a Grand Slam tournament, 128 players enter the main draw (many more in the qualifying, and pre-qualifying tournaments, plus all of those that dream of playing one day), and by the end, only one player doesn't lose. The players are divided into how far they got, quarterfinalist, semifinalist, first round loser, finalist, champion, Level of prize money included.

If you have won Wimbledon, you can probably walk into any pub in England for the next 40 years, and someone will buy you a beer. At least, not to mention some of that "challenging" English cuisine. Accepted anywhere. Almost a "Get out of Jail Free" card. The game itself divides, the rules make for division. There are rankings in the pros, and ratings in the amateur levels. "I'm a 3.5", or "I am a 4.5" has some meaning, status. Until you play. When the balls come out of the can, then everyone is equal, anyone can win. "Any given Sunday."

After the match: "I'm better than you. I won." We feel safe, we have a place in the tribe. We are not alone, we have earned something. Our right to play [type in your level here]. We're somebody. Who doesn't want to be somebody?

"It was you Charlie, it was you. Remember that night in the Garden, you came down to my dressing room and said, 'Kid, It ain't your night. We're going for the price on Wilson.' You remember that? My night! I could have taken Wilson apart, so what happens, he gets the title shot out in the ball park, and what do I get, a one-way ticket to Palooka-ville. You were my brother, you should have looked out for me a little bit. You should've taken care of me just a little bit so I didn't have to take a dive for the short-end money." (Charlie makes excuses). "You don't understand, I could've had class, I could have been somebody, I could have been a contender, I could've been somebody. Instead of a bum, which is what I am. Let's face it. It was you Charlie." — Brando, *On the Waterfront*.

We play in a league, we get a rating, that rating tells us who we can play with. Divides all the players into groups with roughly the same levels. One of the points is so that we get a "good game", we play with people of our own level. Another is that we have a chance to win, even if a HUGE number of players are better than us (they just play in a higher league – out of sight, out of mind). Makes it more fun, more competitive. And it excludes.

What about where the rating is incorrect? Or our skills have changed (gotten better, gotten older or injured and can't play that level anymore? – "I used to be a 4.0..." therefore I am still a 4.0. For life? Before you judge too harshly, remember, it is a club, a gang, a tribe, it is survival, not a physical-skill rating in our hearts and minds. That is powerful.

Can a 70-year-old 4.0 play with a 35-year-old 4.0. No way, but no one wants their rating to go down, they might have to play with people that "can't play," even if they are actually better based on physical limitations. Tough stuff.

Personally, I'm 66, I've had a few humbling experiences in the past couple of years playing with younger pros, players. A pro, yes, but still 66. They say wisdom is the one upside of getting older. I'm working on that.

Speaking of wisdom: I heard Billie Jean King say once after about a million knee operations, "I don't think I could win a 3.0 match." Does that really matter? She is still the most influential woman player (not just tennis, every sport) of all time, perhaps the most influential woman in our society. A symbol. More changed because of her than almost anything. And the #2 most influential person? You could make a case for Bobby Riggs. Every hero needs a foil, a villain.

What About Us? What about the person that wants to join? The group, the team, the Club, the game. In other words, what about us? We all want to join something? We all want to be part of the group. It might just be the next highest group. There was a player once who was #3 in the world and considered his career a failure. Didn't get to join that next higher group: #1 in the world. (Free beer and a pat on the back for life).

Is this the path to happiness, even to security? To being safe? To accepting yourself, to ever being good enough?

Be honest. Does this rat race lead to happiness? "How is that working for you?" — Dr. Phil.

Does that work for anyone? The "losers" feel lousy, unwanted. The "winners" are desperately trying to hold on, telling everyone else to get lost. Or trying get to the next higher "safe" place. The people trying to join, don't feel like they are good enough, that they belong. They feel like outsiders. If your #1? Look at all the yacking about the GOAT.

What if every time you played tennis, you got better. No matter who you played with. It could be true, even on "off" days, because you are learning something. Something for the next time. Maybe you get a lot better, when you play someone that challenges you. Really challenges you, like someone who can barely hit the ball back, and yet you have

to move, stay focused, and make difficult shots, still look good, like you know what you are doing, not because their shots were so “good,” but because they were so “bad.” (Inconsistent, wild, all over the place, soft, hard...occasionally lucky, even brilliant). And we think that if we don’t deal with that, we are “less than.” We lose our spot, somehow.

We all want safety, guarantees, and there aren’t any. No one wants to die, and we are all going to die. Sorry to be the bearer of bad news. The answer is right there. Impermanence, change, suffering, and the opportunity to live now, and enjoy the present. To experience the adventure. To play the game today, no matter who we play with. Win or lose.

We are nervous when we play a match because we don’t know the outcome. We want to win, to prove we belong, we are good, we are somebody. But there is great uncertainty. Even if we are the “better” player. We never know.

Have you ever noticed how happy the #1 player in the world is when they win a match? Any match. A first round match against #205, in some backwater tournament that is hardly even TV. The commentators and fans say “it was a routine win for Novak” but the player doesn’t look that way to me. Big smile, relief. Joy. They know it can always go wrong. Always. That #1 is showing gratitude that for one more day, one more day it worked out for them.

With this much uncertainty, it is natural that we try to stack the deck, make it the way we want it to be. Either “they have to let us in” (inclusive) or “we only want good players.” (Exclusive).

And of course, if we can’t only have good players, play with who we want, then we will go somewhere else where that is the case. Some place who will let me be exclusive. Someone who will help me try to be safe, in a world, a sport, a life, that isn’t safe. There are several “boutique” sports that have sprung up in the past 30 years where people that are not the highest-level athletes (who are playing other popular sports) can win and get a college scholarship.

Social Tennis. At our social tennis events, there are hardly ever any “strong” players. This is because good players grumps, they don’t like to have a good time, hate to party, detest good food, despise good wine, never socialize, and simply abhor fun. They are miserable people that only care about winning and their inflated egos. Yeah, right. I’m kidding. ☺ We all know that isn’t true. Everyone likes to have fun, be social.

The Club wants to be inclusive, and good players feel excluded from social events. Because we force them to play with everyone. If we could guarantee they could have a good, strong game, they would come. Yes. I know, I’ve set it up that way before. They love tennis, a party and good food as much as the 3.0 players, or the 2.5s.

And they don’t want to look like they are snobs, elitists, have to say “no” to people. Better just to be left out of the fun, then be that way, and do that. Nobody wants to be a jerk, even the jerks. And everyone is better than somebody else, so everyone gets a chance at that “jerk” role. No free pass there, either. Unless they can convince someone, like their captain, pro, manager, or event organizer to do the jerk role for them. Do the excluding.

So how do we grow the game? Have more people to play with, expand the fun, be inclusive, when everyone else has to do that work, accept weaker players in, but not us? When we only reap the benefits of that, but not do any of the hard work. 1) We insist, that people that don’t want to play with us let us in, but 2) that we don’t have to play with anyone we don’t want to play with. Seems fair to me. Perhaps we are in total agreement there. ☺

Of course, you can dress all this up, by thinking you are better than you are. I deserve to play because I’m better than they think I am, or my rating says (ratings are certainly flawed, by the way, often based on just a few matches, and there are always extenuating circumstances like “I was a good team player and accepted weak players for partners and therefore lost matches that make my rating lower than it really is”).

So, I get to play with who I want, and I don’t have to play with anyone I don’t want.

It’s the ultimate acceptance or belonging, isn’t it? The high of all highs. King of the Hill. The free pass. The rules don’t apply to me. I’m special, I’m safe, I’m never going to die. I’m a god.

Are you able to convince others to treat you that way? Again, how is that working for you?

Big Fish Story. One of the things tennis is very good at teaching us, is there is always a bigger fish. And even if you are one of those very rare ones that are #1, for how long? Before the next guy comes along. How many rival gunfighters do you have to kill before someone is quicker on the draw that you and leaves you for dead in the street?

This is happiness? Does the scarcity model really work for anyone?

Or, we compromise. Sometimes we play with better players, sometimes we play with weaker players. We have a playday, first round, play with the stronger players, next round mix. Even this isn’t fair, because the weakest player always gets to play with stronger players (but they won’t be the weakest player for long), and the best player always must play with weaker players. It must be tough, being Novak Djokovic ... I’m really feeling sorry for the guy. The money, the houses, the fame, the trappings of success, the “free beers for life (which he can’t drink because he has a strict training diet)”

In our more rational, even moving towards enlightened moments, we recognize our fear is probably more like “I’ll always have to play with the weaker players” or “I’ll get identified with the weaker players, because I’m willing to play with them”, or “the weaker players will think they are equal to me, because I play with them.” No one wants to lose their place in the world order. “I could’ve been a contender.... I coulda had class....” I get it.

All kidding aside, a stronger player who plays with a weaker player is a treasure. A tennis saint. And yeah, it costs them. I won’t lie. Just depends how you keep score. In the abundance model, there is unlimited joy.

It needs to be reasonably fair. Moments we help, moments someone helps us. That is community, that is living in a village, that is a club. That is the true meaning of inclusive. Everyone gets their needs met **some of the time**.

But fair is not equal. Because none of us are equal. We are all unique, and wonderful, in our own special ways. And if we could be a bit less afraid of those differences, not worry about how our sister got the “bigger half”, and realize, at some point, we will be the insider, or the outsider, and why can’t we say, “Hey, come on in” (when I’m the insider) or “Thanks for having me” (when I’m the outsider). Be gracious and accepting. Treat people the way you want to be treated.

That’s a club that people want to belong to. Truthfully, with a few hiccups, that is the club that we have had for almost 50 years at Orindawoods. Let’s not change that club, for the sake of a couple of hours of guilt-free pleasure, getting everything we want, and not having to share with anyone.

And pretending, in the blissful joy of self-delusion, that it is just us. No one will notice. No one else needs to know. ☺

Trust me, everyone is keeping score, where do they stand, and they will notice. Because if you get it, you won’t be alone, everyone else will want it too, and you will be excluded at some point in that process. “What goes around, comes around, nobody plays for free.” And the Club becomes exclusive, in all the bad ways, self-destructive ways.

Inclusion. I don’t want to exclude anyone. But let’s not delude ourselves, inclusion is hard work, and not always fun. And it includes letting the “[your level]” have their special, exclusive court time with who they want, some of the time as well. Exclusion within inclusion, but only for a round or so within a twilight or round robin.

Let’s get on with playing tennis and have a good time anyway. Because, believe it or not, we do have control over that. We have control over having a good time. Every time. Further reading: *Man’s Search for Meaning*, by Victor Frankl. Or: “Two men looked through prison bars, one saw mud, one saw stars.” – John Powell. How is your view?

Orindawoods Tennis Club Summer 2023 Junior Tennis Program Afternoon Sessions Monday through Thursday, June 5th through July 27th

The Orindawoods Tennis Club’s Summer 2023 Junior Tennis Program will run from Monday, June 5th through Thursday, July 27th and offers a variety of afternoon junior tennis clinics during weekly Monday through Thursday sessions. The program does not operate the week Independence Day is observed. Clinics are grouped by the following 2022/2023 grade school designations:

- Transitional Kindergarteners and Kindergarteners (TK & K);
- First and Second Graders (1st & 2nd);
- Third through Fifth Graders (3rd - 5th);
- Sixth through Eighth Graders (6th - 8th); and
- High School Tennis Team players.

Our program utilizes aspects of the USTA’s Junior Development Program, which features Red, Orange, and Green tennis balls to promote stroke development and ball tracking skills. These tennis ball gradations allow players to more quickly ascend from learning basic strokes to rallying to point-play.

Our Summer 2023 program will also incorporate pickle-ball and table tennis (ping-pong) play Monday through Thursday for our 3rd through 5th graders and on select days for our 6th through 8th graders.

Summer 2023 weekly session clinic costs and times for all groups are summarized below in Table 1. Level descriptions of the clinics follows Table 2, which shows the daily operating schedule for the Summer 2023 program.

TABLE 1. SUMMER 2023 JR. TENNIS PROGRAM SESSIONS AND COSTS

CLINIC GROUPS AND TIMES	WEEKLY SESSIONS AND DATES						
	WEEK 1 6/5 - 6/8	WEEK 2 6/12 - 6/15	WEEK 3 6/19 - 6/22	WEEK 4 6/26 - 6/29	WEEK 5 7/10 - 7/13	WEEK 6 7/17 - 7/20	WEEK 7 7/24 - 7/27
TK & K 1:00 - 1:45 PM RED	M - TH \$60 (\$15 NMF)	M - TH \$60 (\$15 NMF)	M - TH \$60 (\$15 NMF)	M - TH \$60 (\$15 NMF)	M - TH \$60 (\$15 NMF)	M - TH \$60 (\$15 NMF)	M - TH \$60 (\$15 NMF)
1ST & 2ND 1:45 - 3:00 PM ORANGE	M - TH \$100 (\$15 NMF)	M - TH \$100 (\$15 NMF)	M - TH \$100 (\$15 NMF)	M - TH \$100 (\$15 NMF)	M - TH \$100 (\$15 NMF)	M - TH \$100 (\$15 NMF)	M - TH \$100 (\$15 NMF)
3RD - 5TH 1:00 - 4:00 PM ORANGE & GREEN	M - TH \$180 (\$30 NMF)	M - TH \$180 (\$30 NMF)	M - TH \$180 (\$30 NMF)	M - TH \$180 (\$30 NMF)	M - TH \$180 (\$30 NMF)	M - TH \$180 (\$30 NMF)	M - TH \$180 (\$30 NMF)

6TH - 8TH 1:00 - 4:00 PM GREEN & YELLOW	M - TH \$240 (\$30 NMF)	M - TH \$240 (\$30 NMF)	M - TH \$240 (\$30 NMF)	M - TH \$240 (\$30 NMF)	M - TH \$240 (\$30 NMF)	M - TH \$240 (\$30 NMF)	M - TH \$240 (\$30 NMF)
HIGH SCHOOL TEAM 4:00 - 5:30 PM YELLOW	T & Th \$60 (\$15 NMF)	T & Th \$60 (\$15 NMF)	T & Th \$60 (\$15 NMF)	T & Th \$60 (\$15 NMF)	T & Th \$60 (\$15 NMF)	T & Th \$60 (\$15 NMF)	T & Th \$60 (\$15 NMF)

NMF = NON-MEMBER FEE

TABLE 2. ORINDAWOODS TENNIS CLUB JR. TENNIS PROGRAM SCHEDULE

JUNE							JULY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3							1
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30	31					

CLINIC DESCRIPTIONS

TK & K Red Lil’ Ones clinics develop hand-eye coordination and racquet control so that students can start contacting the ball using basic service and groundstroke mechanics.

1st & 2nd and 3rd - 5th Orange Future Stars clinics develop hand-eye coordination, racquet control, and basic service and groundstroke mechanics so that students can start trying to rally with other players.

3rd - 5th and 6th – 8th Green Tennis Development clinics teach and develop basic service and groundstroke mechanics while emphasizing tracking down balls with various trajectories and learning to keep the ball in play using full groundstrokes. 3rd through 5th grade Green players will have to demonstrate the ability to start points with serves and return-of-serves. Green Tennis Development clinics are the starting point for 6th through 8th grade players until they demonstrate the ability to play points at our 6th through 8th grade Yellow ball clinic level.

6th – 8th Yellow Match Play Training clinics are for players who have demonstrated the ability to start points with serves and return-of-serves, track down balls with various trajectories, and keep the ball in play. The goal of these clinics is to further develop stroke mechanics, rallying, and point-play skills in order to play tennis matches. These clinics will also introduce and develop net play (volleys and overheads) skills.

High School Team Yellow Match-Play Training ball clinic is for High School team players. The goal of this clinic is to provide off-season all-court training to players looking to move up the ladder on their high school tennis teams.

CLINIC REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT

E-mail erik@orindawoodstennis.com to inquire about appropriate clinic levels for your child(ren) and to register for clinics. The following information is required for registration:

- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) - First and Last Name(s), E-mail(s), and Mobile Phone Number(s)
- Child(ren) - First and Last Name(s), 2022/2023 Grade Level(s), and Age(s)
- Clinic(s) - Week(s) and Name(s) of Clinics you wish to register for (i.e. Week 1, 6th – 8th Yellow).
- Are you a member of Orindawoods Tennis Club?

Payment is due before the first clinic date to reserve your space in the clinic(s). Payment can be taken over the phone prior to the start of the program by e-mailing erik@orindawoodstennis.com to arrange a convenient time.