



Orindawoods Tennis News

May 2018

Volume 24, 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

The Big One

Monday Team Tennis

Monday Team Tennis (MTT), our Spring / Summer social tennis league will begin on Monday, May 7th. Each Monday in the summer we play from 6-8:30 pm. MTT is a great fun on Monday evenings, as well as a nice way to meet other club members. **To register** for MTT for the season, contact Keith. We will take members first, and then add non-member friends if there is enough room. There will be 4 or 5 teams competing each week in a round robin league format. The season runs through August.

The cost is \$50 for members, \$75 for non-members for the summer. Each night features three rounds of tennis, plus dinner on the deck. Yum!

Tulip Tournament

On Sunday, May 6th from 2-5 p.m. we will hold our annual spring tennis social, the Tulip Tournament. We will play mix and match doubles for a couple hours and then share wine, snacks and goodies after on the Club Deck. To register, contact Keith or Lysbeth McNeil. No charge for this one.

Coyote Times and Turkey Days

We like to keep things hopping here at Orindawoods, so to keep you on your toes, we now have coyotes in the neighborhood. Obviously, they find turkey quite tasty, and we have lots of those. So far, we have at least one less turkey, probably more, so the hunt is on. Life in the food chain. It's a good idea to keep pets inside. These coyotes will probably cut down on the teenage partying at night, as well (which has actually ended, by the way). It's probably best to use the convoy system late at night, and move in groups and not alone.

Court Resurfacing This May!

Our five-year court resurfacing work will be done the week of May 21st (courts 4-7), and the week of May 28th (courts 2&3). Court One was resurfaced a couple of years ago, and doesn't need the work at this time.

Obviously, there will be some limitations on play during construction. Rules for reservations and play during construction will come out closer to the work itself via e-mail. Resurfacing is a dry season job. We choose these two weeks because there is very little league activity during this time, and it is not during the summer when the Junior Program is in full swing.

The work includes patching cracks in the courts, leveling some troubling areas (court 2), and putting a new top surface on the courts. The top surface is a couple of layers of paint, which is mixed with sand, to control the speed of the court, and to protect the asphalt subsurface below.

Orindawoods HOA constantly saves money to resurface the courts, and to replace courts at the end of their useful life cycle. It is our commitment to keep the Orindawoods Tennis Club as nice as possible.

Court Usage

The Many and The Few

It can be frustrating when you can't get a court at the time you want to play. I think we have all experienced that from time to time. Growing up during the tennis boom in the 70s, it was not uncommon for me to go down to the courts and wait an hour, until it was our turn.

One of my toughest jobs here at Orindawoods (the happiest place on earth – sorry Disneyland), is deciding how to allocate courts during the day. Mornings are particularly busy, while the afternoons are often free for

Summer Junior Program!

All the information about the summer junior program (dates, times, prices) is available for download on the orindawoodstennis.com website. Check it out and join us this summer!

Pool Opens May 5th

The Orindawoods Tennis Club pool opens on Saturday, May 5th. The pool season will run through October. If you don't remember the pool gate code, you can get it on the Swimming page on the website. You need to log in to get this "member only" information.

Pool Rules

- Hours: dawn to dusk, spa until 9 pm.
- Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult
- No Lifeguard (best to have a swim buddy and not swim alone)
- No running
- No diving
- No glass in the pool area
- No pets in the pool area (sorry Rover)
- The gas BBQ is for Club Events only, but there is a charcoal BBQ for your use. Bring your own charcoal.
- Guest kids are \$1, adults \$5

Mondays and Fridays

With all the weekday ladies' leagues ending, there is now lots of court time on Mondays and Fridays, so if you have been looking for a time to play, think about Mondays and Fridays this summer!

Ball Machine Club

If you haven't renewed yet, it is time to renew your Ball Machine Club Membership. The membership runs March 2018 to March 2019. The cost is \$110. For \$110 you get unlimited use of the ball machine when it is available. Ball machine reservations are NOT allowed during prime time (M-F 9-10:30, 6-7:30 pm; Sat/Sun 9-12 noon). You can use the ball machine during prime time if the court is sitting free.

Quote of the Month:

"Don't set yourself on fire in order to keep others warm."

play. I must consider the needs of all members, The Many and The Few. The "good, the bad and the ugly" as the old spaghetti western was titled. And while we don't guarantee that you are going to get a court when you want it, there is an access to courts that can be reserved nearly all of the time.

We are all members of a shared use facility. This is great news in that we all share the costs of having a wonderful place to play. And we have lots of available partners. Owning your own court is terribly expensive, and you still must find people to play with. The downside to club life, is that we must share that facility, and there is not always a court available at the time we want to play.

Group events are very popular, whether they are a league, a practice, a clinic, a tournament or a social event. Lots of



Orindawoods Tennis Club

650 Orindawoods Dr.
Orinda, CA 94563

Phone:
925-254-1065

Fax:
925-254-1380

Website:
orindawoodstennis.com

Smart Phone Reservation App:
PlayTennisConnect

Twitter:
@orindawoodstc

Facebook:
Orindawoods Tennis Club

Executive Tennis Director:
Keith Wheeler
keith@orindawoodstennis.com

Head Pro:
Patric Hermanson
patric@orindawoodstennis.com

Tennis Staff:
Nathan Sharafian
Alan Zhou
Katie Reaves
Anna Hyman

Weekend Staff:
Nathan Sharafian

Newsletter Editor:
Keith Wheeler

people come out for these activates. That's both good and bad news. If we are not careful, events can dominate all the courts, all the time. Since many are involved, it is tempting to say, majority rules. This makes the majority very happy, but the minority, unhappy. We are all club members. All our needs matter. The thing to remember, is most of us are members of a minority some of the time. The minority must be protected. So, we set aside certain times when these large activities take place, and leave times for more individual and foursome play.

By their nature, groups use multiple courts. And require advanced planning and courts being blocked off. You can't have a league match without using several courts. One can't wake up in the morning and decide to have a tournament today. MTT and Twilights often use all the courts. They are so popular, that to not use all the courts makes having events of this size and fun impossible. We attempt to choose "less popular times" for these massive events.

Generally, on an average day at the club, there are 3-4 courts that can be reserved, two drop-in courts, and 1-2 teaching courts. When we have events, we generally block off the drop-in courts first, then reservation courts. This allows people that plan ahead to still have an opportunity to get a reservation.

John Stuart Mill, the great philosopher, warned against "the tyranny of the majority" in his famous work, *On Liberty*. We do not allow leagues every day, it would greatly diminish the weekly open play. Same with tournament and other events. Yet it is very important to have these events as well. Someone's liberty (I want a court now) should not be allowed to destroy large events, which give so many people pleasure. And vice-a-versa.

It's all about balance. No one type of play is more important than another, no player is more important than another. I know, shocking stuff. USTA is not more important than a casual Sunday foursome. Some people are members for the group events, others for social play with friends. Many are both. It is rare that there are never courts available to reserve, but occasionally, there are events for the greater good of the Club, that use all the courts. Most of the time, there is a mixture of court usage. We are a membership with varied interests. Everyone is important. Everyone matters.

So we are sorry if you did not get the exact time or court you wanted today. There is no guarantee you will get a court when you want, but there is almost always an opportunity to get courts. At the same time, occasionally we hold the large events and activities that are so popular with many members. Enjoy!

Tennis Tip:

Some Thoughts on Tactics

Tactics: an action or strategy carefully planned to achieve a specific end.

The difference between strategy and tactics is that tactics is generally on a smaller scale. Winning this part of the battle, rather than the campaign or the war. For example, the strategy in most guerilla warfare is to wear the opponent's will to fight down. You may lose every battle, or almost every battle, but if you get the opponent to give up, you win. The American Revolution was very much fought this way, with the British winning almost every battle (except Saratoga, which got the French to join in, and Yorktown, which convinced the British it wasn't worth the bother). Tactics deal with the more minor planning on the battlefield. George Washington's primary strategy was to wear the British out, chasing him up and down the east coast, so his tactics were to fight delaying actions, raids and strategic withdrawals, and not to get caught in a fight to the death, which is what the British wanted. Washington only stood and fought when the French blocked the British naval retreat at Yorktown, and Cornwall couldn't win, or escape. He

surrendered, basically ending the Revolutionary War and founding our country.

Weekly Lessons

Hit and Fit:
TRX workout (strength and stretching) & tennis drills using the Playmate ball machine.

Friday 10:30-11:30 a.m. \$15
 Saturday 7:30-9 a.m. \$20

Tuesday Ladies' Clinic:
 Tuesdays at 9:30 \$5

Thursday Men's Clinic:
 Thursdays at 9:30 \$5

The men's and women's clinics are drop-in. Register for Hit and Fit by e-mailing Keith you are attending.

In the case of tennis, tactics is what is the best way to play this point. Where strategy would be more the best way to win the match (get them off the net, control the middle, serve and volley, etc...). If you do tactics well, that tends to add up to a strategic win too. Looking at tennis tactics, here are a couple of ideas that are helpful in deciding which shot to play next, and where to stand.

Positioning. You want to position yourself to defend 1) the most likely shot and 2) the shot that gives you the least amount of time. The more time you have, the more you can move. So a groundstroke, or a volley is generally more dangerous than a lob. You cover where the groundstroke can go first, rather than the lob, figuring you have time to move towards the lob.

Positioning and Shot Selection. Different positions on the court are easier to play than others. So a 3.5 player standing in a very strong position, might have the effectiveness of a 4.5 player. Where a 3.5 player standing in a weak position, might have the effectiveness of a 2.5 player. An example (fig. 1): at the beginning of the point, a server has an advantage of being able to place the ball in a certain place, with speed, spin and deception. This makes the 3.5 server, more like a 4.0 (control and

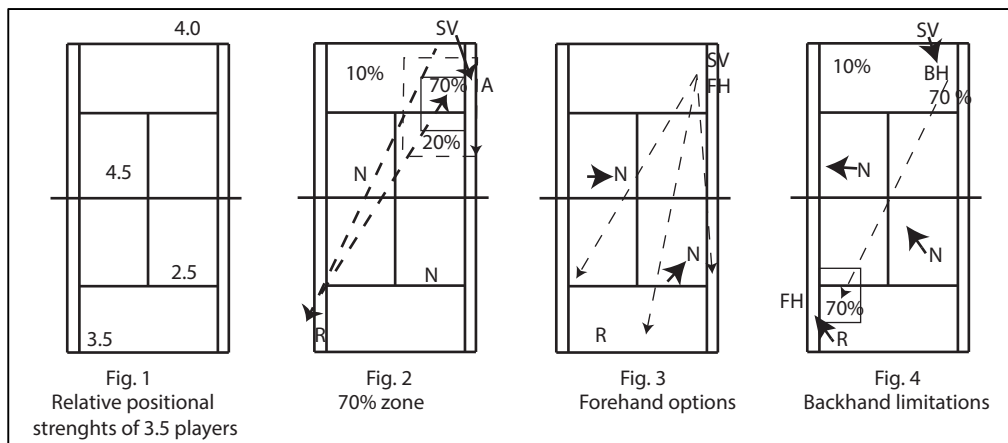
some pace). Their partner, up at the net, is in a very strong position, so even though they are 3.5 player, they are playing like a 4.5 player (plays a lot of strong shots) from that position. The returner is also a 3.5 player (reasonable pace, reasonable control, if the shots aren't too difficult), and from the return position, probably plays like one (unless it is a huge serve). The returner's partner, at the service line, is also a 3.5 player, but their effectiveness is more like a 2.5 player (just tries to get it in, misses a lot).

Well, just doing a bit of math, you can see this is a total mismatch, not a 3.5 (7.0) vs. 3.5 (7.0) match. The serving team is 8.5, and the receiving team is 6.0. The receiving team is going to want to play like two 3.0s, get the ball in, hope the serving team messes up (classic 3.0 strategy, let the opponent make the mistakes). The serving team is going to play more of a 4.0 or 4.5 strategy, hit to the person in the weaker position, make it hard for the opponent. Force errors. The receiving team is waiting for errors. Makes sense. And most serving teams do well when the ball is returned to the net person. They attack.

But where serving teams really fall down is when the ball is returned to the server. After the serve, the server may revert to a 3.5 player, but his partner is still in the 4.5 position. Why not attack the 2.5 player? But most players hit the ball cross court "away from the net player," back to the 3.5 receiver. Once in a cross court rally, the receiver's partner moves in, and becomes stronger, 3.5 and then maybe 4.5. Also during that rally, the server's partner may back up a bit (fearing the lob perhaps), and goes from 4.5, to 4.0, to 3.5, to even 2.5 if they get back far enough.

In other words, in terms of tactics, the longer the rally goes on, the weaker the serving team becomes, and the stronger the receiving team can become. The serving team loses their advantage by the fifth or sixth shot. So good tactics would be the serving team on a first serve, attacking and playing a point that is 4 shots or less, and the receiving team defending and playing a point that is 4 shots or more. Weak second serve, the opposite: returner attacks, server defends. Hurt them when you have an advantage. Don't wait for them to even it out.

Most severing teams don't play this way on the first serve. They fall in the "safe" trap. When the ball is returned to the server, most servers play the ball cross court. It feels safer than hitting to the net person, but the percentages say that hitting to the net person is exactly what you should do tactically.



This is even more the case if the receiving team is inclined to lob. Which is very good tactics if you are in the weaker position. Guerilla warfare, don't get caught slugging it out if you are in a weaker position. Just like George Washington. If you are the stronger team, and you don't want them to lob, don't hit the ball to the person who can lob. Seems simple, completely missed by most people in the heat of battle. They can only lob, if you let them.

Net Players Are Not All Created Equal. The point of the example above (Fig. 1) is to show that not all players have the same effectiveness on different parts of the court. A net player close to the net is very different than a net player off the net. A net player off the net is better at overheads, and worse at just about everything else. So a team is lobbing you, and you back your net player up to deal with the lob. What should they do next? Hit the ball to the net person. Because they aren't really much of a net person anymore (4.5 to 2.5 in some cases). We don't play the shot to the net player because we are afraid they will hit a winner, but what we are remembering is a net player at the net, not a net player at the service line. Observe and understand the situation you are presented with. That's tactics.

Individual Skills. And of course, a player may be 3.5, but their particular skill set means they certain shots better. They may play like a 4.0 at the baseline, and a 3.0 at the net. So, skill sets must be considered too. Often in a league match, as opposed to a weekly foursome, we don't really know the other player's capabilities. Therefore, it is better to go with the basics described up above, than draw conclusions from a few shots they might make or miss. For example, you might play a player for the first time who is missing a bunch of forehands in the first set. Little do you know, that is their best shot, and so when you hit it to their forehand, you may get a couple of errors early on, but then you are also "warming them up," and by the third set, you can't believe how good they are. Now what?

"The Shot That Never Happened." This is one of the hardest concepts to get in tactics and strategy. Say you hit the ball to the net player off the net, the "2.5 player." Your opponent hits a crazy shot for a winner. You know it is low percentage, but they just made it, and made it look easy. How do we pretend that shot never happened, and continue to play that shot? What if they do it again? How many times do they have to make it before you take it seriously? These are very tough questions. Trick questions. Say they pull off a "miracle" three times in a match. Is it three times out of ten, or three times out of four? A HUGE difference. 30% or 75%? It's not the number, it's the percentage.

Two Truths. Basically, there are two truths we must deal with. 1) the next shot could go anywhere. Absolutely true, you really don't know where the next shot will land. And 2), there is a predictable pattern (fig. 2) where that next shot will go most of the time. You want to stand where it will go 70% of the time, and be close enough to cover another 20% by moving a bit. There are 10% of the shots you will never get. And if you try to cover those by adjusting your position, you are making yourself weaker on the shots that happen most of the time. You're dumbing down your game.

For example (figure 2), if you serve the ball hard to the backhand in the ad court, the ball is coming back cross court almost every time. You should move out to the alley (A), and prepare yourself for a forehand. When the ball lands in the 70% area, you will essentially have an easy shot (Fig 3, forehand options), and be a "better" player than you are (3.5 player in a 4.0 position). If you stand more in the middle (Fig. 4) you will be able to cover the 10% lobs down the line better, but you will now be hitting backhands when the ball lands in the 70% area. You are trading a forehand which you can hit down the line, through the middle and crosscourt (Fig. 3), for a backhand that you will have to hit cross court (Fig. 4. few players can manage a down the line backhand off a cross court ball. This essentially makes you a 3.0 player!).

Bozo. Maybe you have an amazing backhand, I do, but you are more predictable hitting a backhand, and thus weaker. Your opponent can do the same thing you should have done on the serve, step out into the alley and have a forehand on the next shot (Fig. 4). Your partner gets passed up the line, and you yell at them (hopefully under your breath) for not covering their alley, and it is totally, completely and absolutely your fault. (a less evolved but astute partner may turn around and shout, "Stop hitting backhands, Bozo"). Notice how the net players must shift, depending on what shot the backcourt player is playing. You strengthen or weaken your team by your tactical choices. You're a 3.5, who would have been a 4.0 hitting forehand and instead of 3.0 playing a predictable backhand cross court. Sorry, that makes you Bozo.

Therefore, when they hit that 10% shot, which is almost always a winner, you say "nice shot" ("you lucky _____" under your breath), and then you forget it ever happened. Because that is what winners do, they look for the shots that will happen most of the time, and let the others go. Emotionally, this is tough, but stay in your brain, in your will, with your game plan, your tactics, and out of your emotions and fear, and you will be able to do it.

Court Dimensions and Tactics. Which court is bigger, singles or doubles? Both are 78 feet long, but the doubles court is 36 feet wide, and the singles court is only 27 feet wide. So why is the doubles court narrower? What? Narrower? There are two people, you are almost always trying to play one, and avoid the other (hopefully based on the numbers above, fig. 1), so the doubles court is really 36 divided in half, or 18 feet wide. And of course, when angles come into play, if court be narrower and / or shorter (more angle, the shorter the distance to the side line boundary). You must be much more accurate in doubles than singles.

Harder or Easier? So, another trouble with doubles is that the ball often comes right to us. What? That's a problem? Well, in fact, it is. We don't tend to move very well when the ball comes right to us, and most of making a shot is adjusting our position so that our form doesn't change to play the ball. In singles, we are much more inclined to move, because we have to move on most shots. Therefore, our feet are already moving, or ready to move, and we tend to set up a lot better. Plus, as mentioned above, the target is larger (we don't have a net person to avoid when they are in the strong position, and to hit to when they are in the weak position). So you may get a lot more exercise in singles, and that may make singles seem very hard to you, but there is a better chance of playing well. How about that? Therefore, move in doubles like you are playing singles. It's called exercise. Good luck out there!