



# Orindawoods Tennis News

April 2018

Volume 24, Issue 4

Orindawoods Tennis Club: 925-254-1065; [www.orindawoodstennis.com](http://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 7<sup>th</sup>. 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 team 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.

### **Tulip Tournament**

On Sunday, May 6<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **Past Newsletters on Line**

Want to find a helpful tennis tip you can't quite remember? All the Orindawoods newsletters are archived on the website. Just go to the "Information" pull-down menu at the top of the page, and select "Newsletter." You can download newsletters from the past, full of tennis tips and club information.

### **Court Resurfacing This May!**

Our five-year court resurfacing work is due this year. The project is scheduled for the week of May 21<sup>st</sup> (courts 4-7), and the week of May 28<sup>th</sup> (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. 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. Without painting the courts and slowing them down, they would get faster and faster (slippery, for both feet and the ball), and the cracks would continue to grow. Our contractors, the Tennis Court Specialists, use the rite-way crack repair system that has worked very well on a few minor cracks we have had before (see courts 1 and 2 for examples).

Orindawoods puts aside money to resurface the courts every 5 years, and to replace courts at the end of their useful cycle, about every 20-25 years. It is our commitment to keep the courts as nice as possible. Orindawoods has the nicest tennis courts in Lamorinda. Enjoy!

## Patric's Corner

### **The Racquet Line Up**

This month I thought I'd give a little overview of the rackets that we are carrying in the Pro Shop. As you may know, we carry only Babolat rackets

### **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.

### **New Door Code**

The Clubhouse has a new door code. To find the new code, go to [orindawoodstennis.com](http://orindawoodstennis.com), and click on "Membership Services". Click on the link at the bottom of the Membership page, "clubhouse door code". You will then be asked to sign in, if you have not already, and the code will be revealed.

### **Weather Information**

Did you know that you can check the weather and court conditions from your home computer or smart phone? Just go to [orindawoodstennis.com](http://orindawoodstennis.com). On your computer, just click on the "live tennis camera" link at the top, left hand corner of the page. Of course, you can look at a live picture of the courts as well to see if others are playing, a court is available or if they are wet. On your smart phone, just scroll down to the link below the weather summary for a more detailed look at the weather from the Orindawoods Weather Underground station. **Class status** is posted as well.

### **Thank You**

Thank you to the many, many members that offered condolences on the passing of my father. You guys are awesome! Growing up, my dad played tennis with me every day and gave me the love of the game. So supportive and kind. Thanks-- Keith

### **Quote of the Month:**

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

here at the Club. One of the things that makes Babolat so unique amongst racket manufacturers, beyond the innovative technologies and the cool graphics, is the playability of the rackets throughout the entire product line. While they all have their individual personalities, they are all so accommodating to the way you play. Allowing you to fall in love multiple times as you dance your way through the product line. But, which one is "Mr./Mrs. Right"? Follow along with me as I give a rundown of the strengths of these potential suitors.

**Babolat** breaks their performance rackets into three families, **Pure Drive**, **Pure Aero** and **Pure Strike**.



## 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

**Weekend Staff:**  
Nathan Sharafian

**Newsletter Editor:**  
Keith Wheeler

**The Pure Drive** is the racket that put Babolat in the spot light. Brought to Grand Slam fame at the turn of the millennium by Andy Roddick, Carlos Moya and Kim Clijsters, it was engineered for power. And, oh what power it did provide. For some that was enough, but for others it was like dancing ballet in hiking boots. Lots of strength, but no feel. Well, a new Pure Drive was released this year, and they have done a fantastic job mitigating the harsh feel of the earlier versions. Partnering with a French aerospace company, Babolat has incorporated a "thin viscoelastic rubber" into the Pure Drive frame to absorb vibrations and improve the feel of the racket. I have play tested the racket, and in my opinion, they have succeeded. While this is the most comfortable Pure Drive to date, it has not lost its ferociousness. The Pure Drive comes in a wide variety of frame styles, from heavy midsize frames to light large head rackets.

While the Pure Drive is considered the muscle car of the Babolat line, the **Pure Aero**, played by Rafael Nadal, Jack Sock and Caroline Wozniaki, is the Ferrari. This super car of rackets with its aerodynamic design and flashy colors is made for the curves. Curves in the form of spin. From its earliest version, the Aero Pro has been a spin monster! And the latest version, introduced in 2017, has only enhanced that characteristic. A tweak to the design has, according to the company, reduced drag by about 11% compared to the previous version of the racket, and the introduction of oblong grommets at the top and bottom of the frame allow the main strings (up and down strings) more movement along the cross strings to, in theory, increase the lift of the ball.

The new kid on the block is the **Pure Strike**. First introduced in 2014, this racket was designed for the all-court player, equally adept at the net as at the baseline. And while its feel was fantastic, winning over players like Dominic Thiem and Sam Stosur, it lacked a little punch. In 2017, the racket was given a bit of an overhaul. The frame was widened in the head and in the throat of the racket, and the cross strings were spaced out a little. Both of these enhancements have brought the power level up to "perfect"! Add the new white and orange graphics and you have the most popular racket in the pro shop today. Both Keith and I use this racket, and it seems to be the most popular demo racket in our stable.

If you are interested in trying any of our three families of rackets, come by the pro shop and pick one up from Keith or me. All three varieties come in light, medium and heavier versions, so we are confident we can find the right racket for you.-- Patric

---

### Tennis Tip:

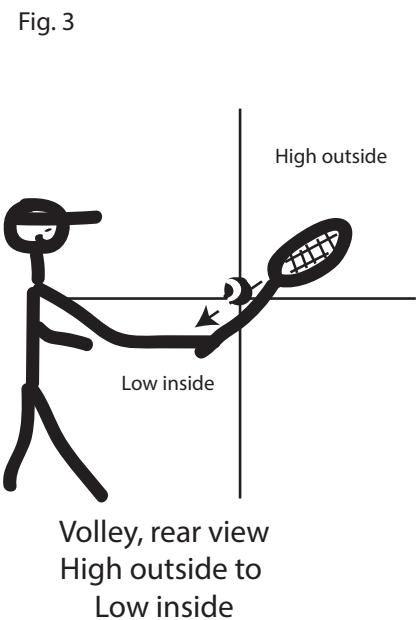
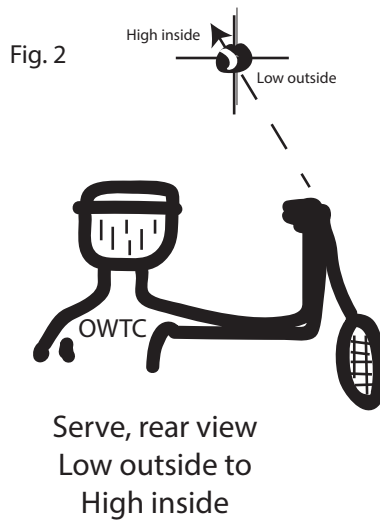
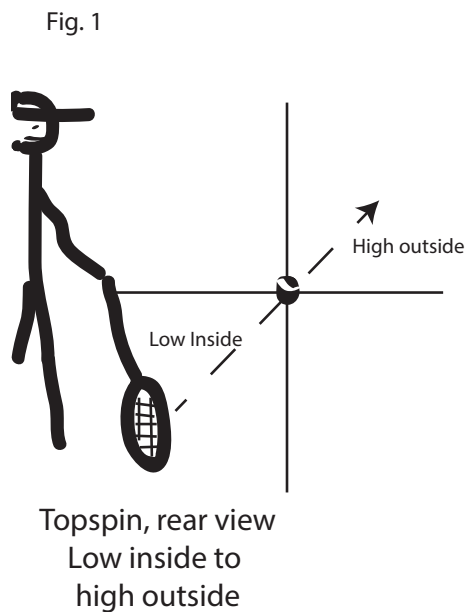
#### **Ball Alignment Part II**

As we discussed last month, on topspin groundstrokes, we want to approach the ball from the low inside, moving towards the high outside. (Fig. 1)

**Drop.** In order to do this, we need to drop the racquet head. This involves three drops, the shoulder lowering the upper arm, the elbow lowering the lower arm, and the wrist lowering the racquet. If the wrist, or elbow is cocked up, your racquet head will be too high, and you will no longer be low inside, but often high outside the contact point. If this is the case, you will often roll the ball into the net. You are approaching the ball from the wrong angle for a topspin ground stroke.

On a **forehand** groundstroke, the primary racquet path is to the right (for a right-hander). On the **backhand**, it is to the left. In other words, inside out, or the play is to the side. At contact, the racquet face points forward, but it is moving primarily to the side. Almost everyone goes forward too much, causing swing.

**Lift, Not Swing.** When the ball arrives, the racquet should be mostly lifting, not going forward (swing). If you move forward from this low position, the ball will fly long (due to a bounce, rather than a roll). You want to lift from the back and shoulder, not the wrist or elbow. When your arm reaches about shoulder height, the elbow bends and the racquet wraps back over your opposite shoulder.



**Underspin.** When we hit underspin, or slice the ball, we want to move from high outside towards low inside. (Fig. 3) We use underspin primarily on volleys, and slice backhands. Though some people use it quite effectively on the forehand as well. On the underspin, the racquet head should be up, to get the outside position, so our wrist is cocked, and our elbow is often bent so our forearm is up too. The upper arm can be raised too, so the racquet can position outside the ball. As the upper arm moves down and in, the racquet naturally moves from high outside to low inside.

**On the serve,** everything is flipped upside down (Fig. 2). You want to approach the ball from the low outside, moving towards the high inside. The primary path is to the left (for a right-hander – the racquet is moving from outside the ball to inside the ball by rotating the shoulder in, up by your ear as you finish, your arm pointing forward).

**Grips.** For dropping the racquet on the groundstrokes a grip more towards the Western, or Semi-western allows us to drop the racquet into the proper position (low and inside) more easily. While on the underspin shots, a more Continental grip allows us to keep the racquet head up better (high and outside). On the serve, the Continental or even Eastern Backhand is superior for the shoulder rotation needed for the optimum service motion (speed and spin).

### Tennis Tip:

### Shot Selection

**Picking the proper shot** to hit in each situation in tennis is often the difference between winning and losing. In fact, often the better hitter loses to the better player. Because to be a good player, it is not just about hitting well, but also choosing the best shot and tool (type of shot) to match the situation you find yourself in. Someone can have better strokes, but through a series of "poor choices" ends up losing to someone who on simply a skill basis, is far below them in stroking ability. A great competitor often possesses far better tactical and strategic awareness than others.

Put another way, a lot of the best players, frankly aren't very good (at merely hitting the ball). When we have a player that has great strokes and great shot selection, we have a player that is far above the average player.

**Choices.** When a ball comes to us, we often have three choices, which I will call, the **smart shot**, the **ego shot** and the **fear shot**. An example: In doubles, your opponent hits a decent serve it to your backhand on a second serve in the deuce court. The smart shot is to drive the ball hard up the middle (splits your opponent, large target, gives them no angles to hit into). The ego shot is to pull the ball across your body and try to slip the ball down the alley past the net person. And the fear shot would be to block back a lob or poke the ball cross court (right to their forehand).

**The trick** is that in a similar scenario, this could change. Let's say it's a pretty big first serve to the backhand, now maybe the smart shot is the lob, for the net person is covering the drive up the middle. Or what if it is a really big serve, far too hard to lob? Then maybe the percentage shot is to hit the backhand where most people hit it best, towards the alley, or at least towards the net person (at least you can make the shot, even if it is right to them). On a weak serve to the backhand, you may even run around it and hit a huge forehand up the middle. "Take that!"

**The Question.** Good shot selection has a couple of components. Put simply, it's the answer to the question, "What is the best shot for the situation I can make?" Thus, two pieces: 1) only hit shots you can make (realistically 8 out of 10 times), and 2) what shot is going to have the most positive effect on the outcome of the point if I make it?

**The goal** would be to play a match where you played **95% smart shots**. We're usually way below that 95%.

**Calmness with Energy.** Ski racer Lindsay Vonn was talking about the upcoming downhill race at the Olympics last month. She said before the race that her biggest challenge was going for it too much, going too fast, and therefore not being able to follow the best line (path) down the mountain to get the fastest time. She needed to focus on staying on that line. After the race, in which she won a bronze medal, she was asked what was the difference between winning the bronze and the gold. She said that she paid a bit too much attention to staying on the line, and didn't quite (we are talking about hundredths of seconds here) let it go enough.

See, that fastest way down the mountain is a combination of going fast, and taking the most direct route. Vonn was accurate, but not fast enough. If she went too fast, she wouldn't be accurate enough. There is the trick, how to be calm, but have optimum energy. Optimum energy is not full power, but you can't sit on your energy too much in the

**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

On rainy days, Hit and Fit will be held indoors in the Clubhouse, a TRX workout. It's fun, it's a killer workout!

**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.

pursuit of accuracy. A great lesson for tennis and shot selection. We often move to fast, and lose precision. But we can be so precise, that we end up sacrificing too much speed. We play the safe / fear shot, or the ego shot, instead of the smart shot. The right shot is the right shot, make or miss.

**Singles Tactics:**

Defense: Hit deep down the middle, give them no angles  
 Offense: Open the court (hit to one side), then hit either 1) into the open court or 2) behind them when they run to cover the open court.

Offense and Defense: Hit high balls to the backhand. No one likes those.

**Doubles Tactics:**

Down the middle is the safe shot and the most damaging most of the time. You split them, and give them no angles. In specific instances (generally when you are playing from the side), angles or shots down the alley can be the appropriate shot.

Always consider this test when picking your shot: 1) can I make it? 2) will it cause the most damage? Obviously, it isn't causing damage if you can't make it. (though scaring them with a terrifying miss sometimes is useful).

**The Next Level.** Once you have learned the strategy, the percentages, the strokes, there comes a point when the conscious mind needs to let go. Let go of picking the shot. You trust what I call the **second voice**. The first voice is your ego, your conscious mind, telling you what to do. This can even be the best shot, but it comes from a place of overthinking, and restricted flow, we can over play it and miss. Or get tight and choke.

If we can hear the first voice ("hit down the line") and just let it go, a second voice will be revealed. This voice is much more connected with your inner wisdom, your tennis wisdom, your body wisdom, and takes into account all kinds of things that the conscious mind over looks. For example, your eyes maybe focused on the ball, but they actually see everything. This second voice may be aware that your opponent is leaning one way, or it may sense their fear, or their ambition, and choose a shot appropriately. I can't tell you how many times I have listened to this voice, wondered why I hit it right to them, and then been surprised that they dumped the volley in the net. They weren't ready. My conscious ego didn't know this, but the second voice did. Trust, confidence, humility, these are the tools of the second voice. Of wisdom. Of faith. Good luck out there!

**Junior Clinic Schedule Spring 2018**  
**March 19<sup>th</sup> – June 1<sup>st</sup>**

The 2018 Spring Junior Clinics will begin **March 19<sup>th</sup>** and will continue thru the week of **May 28<sup>th</sup>**. The 10-week program will be led by **Head Pro Patric Hermanson**. The **Summer 2018** schedule is posted on the website!

| <u>Level</u> | <u>Class</u>                      | <u>Time(s)</u>  | <u>One day/week</u> | <u>Two Days</u> |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------|-----------------|
| <b>I</b>     | <b><u>Lil' Ones</u></b>           | <b>Tues/Thurs 3:15-4pm</b><br><i>The Lil' Ones class is for the always adorable 4-6 year olds</i>                                 | <b>\$140*</b>       | <b>\$220*</b>   |
| <b>II</b>    | <b><u>Future Stars Group</u></b>  | <b>Tuesdays 4-5:30pm</b><br><i>The Future Stars Group is for our 7 to 10 year old players.</i>                                    | <b>\$255*</b>       | <b>N/A</b>      |
| <b>III</b>   | <b><u>Tennis Development</u></b>  | <b>Thursdays 4-5:30pm</b><br><i>In the Tennis Development Group is for beginning through intermediate players ages 11 thru 14</i> | <b>\$255*</b>       | <b>N/A</b>      |
| <b>IV</b>    | <b><u>Tournament Training</u></b> | <b>Wednesdays 4:30-6:30pm</b><br><i>The Tournament Training Group is an invitation only class</i>                                 | <b>\$325*</b>       | <b>N/A</b>      |

**\*Non-members should add \$25 (Lil' Ones, only \$15).**