



Orindawoods Tennis News

July 2022

Vol: 28, Issue 7

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

Happy 4th of July

Happy Birthday America. I hope you all have a great day, and a great month here at the Club!

Tennis Action at the Club:

Club Court Usage

Remember this month, we have our **Junior Program** using courts 2, 4-7 from 12-4 in the afternoons, Monday - Thursday. It's great fun! You should see these kids playing and learning the game. Very exciting. If you have a junior, there are still a few spots to join in!

Orinda Country Club's Tyler Browne has been teaching (renting court time) the past couple of weeks when we have unused court time. We are helping out our neighbors (Tyler and OCC members) while OCC court rebuilding project is being completed. So no, Tyler is not our new Head Pro. But say, "hi," he's a good guy, the members are nice, and we are willing to help out in their time need.

Twilight Tennis:

July Twilight, July 24th

Come join us for our first Twilight Tennis BBQ of the summer. We will play tennis from 5-7 p.m., and then enjoy a BBQ dinner on the deck. Register by contacting Keith (keith@orindawoodstennis.com) and let him know if you are playing or just eating (all are welcomed) and if you want steak or chicken. The cost is \$25. Join us!

Pickleball Playdays

Every Thursday evening during the summer, we are playing pickleball at the OW Pickleball Center (court one) from 5:30-7:30. To register, go to the Club Calendar (courts menu) and click on the date you would like to come. You can drop in too, but it is very helpful for the rest of us to have an idea of how many people are coming. We have been getting 5-10 people every Thursday! So fun!

Pro Shop Staff Person

We are looking for someone to work in the Pro Shop on the weekends. Must be a junior in high school or older, work on Saturdays, perhaps Sundays, 8:30-12 noon. Help members, answer questions, membership info, pick up racquets, etc.... Good job for a student, as there will be time to study between customers. \$15/hour. Contact Keith (keith@orindawoodstennis.com)

The Head Pro Search

We are continuing to look for a Head Pro. And starting to explore some different methods of searching. The pro shortage is an industry wide problem, a nationwide problem. Our Head Pro position is a great position, which is compensated well, with great hours (and of course Orindawoods is wonderful), the problem is, there are just not many pros out there, and tennis has been booming during the pandemic as it is viewed as a very safe activity. Five million new players in the past two years (little known fact, but

2022 Club Rates

Tennis Lessons with Keith:

½ hour private	\$45
1 hour private	\$80

Club Dues: \$140 / month

Guests: \$10 (1 visit / week). Pay Station located by the Pro Shop door.

Weekly Lessons

Ladies' clinic:	Tues 9:30	\$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 an expert racquet stringer. Patric picks up and drops off racquets on Tuesdays and Fridays. Stay sharp, get your racquet restrung!

Pickleball Playdays

We play Pickleball on Thursdays at 5:30 on court one. Register to play, and see who is playing, on the website:

[Club Calendar](#) (under "courts" menu)

Greystone Parking

The Club's overflow parking is on Greystone Terrace, across the street. It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that we park on just one side (right side going up) and do not block the emergency vehicles. Thx!

Quote of the Month:

"Be mindful and timeful" - Tom Evans

there are 5 million total pickleball players in the US. Pickleball is seen as the booming sport, while there are all these new tennis players and 22 million tennis players in total. Orindawoods offers both tennis and pickleball!). Enjoy!

For now, ETD Keith Wheeler will continue to bring you the tennis professional services that you are used to, to the best of his ability. Thanks for your patience here, as some things may take a bit more time. Keith is focusing more on the group activities, that include multiple members. We understand it is a bit hard to get a private lesson right now.

We've very sorry about this. Keith should have more time for privates in August, after the summer junior program ends. Thanks for your patience.



Orindawoods Tennis Club

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Tennis Club Directory Online Version

On the website under "Membership Services" there is a page "[Tennis Directory](#)" that has a link to the tennis club address book. You need to sign-in to access this information.

Silvercreek HOA Management

Accounting and billing
questions, contact:
916-877-7793 or
accounting@sc-manage.com

Racquet Stringing

Patric Hermanson continues to do racquet stringing, and new racquet sales here at Orindawoods. His system is working great. Patric picks up / returns racquet on Tuesdays and Fridays. You can leave your racquets with Keith, and he will make sure Patric works his magic. I just had my teaching racquet restrung, what a difference! — Patric is the best!

Summer Reminders

I recently sent out an e-mail reminder of all things summer at Orindawoods. Rules and ways of behavior to all get along. You can check that out on the website, orindawoodstennis.com by looking under the information menu and "e-mail history".

I would offer that the biggest problem right now is players not canceling unused reservations. Please be thoughtful of others and open those courts up.

A few quick reminders here, "highlights" so to speak, of the most "troublesome" areas of concern:

Pool Rules – there are lots of pool rules, because, let's face it, this is one area at the club where things could go seriously wrong. Please:

- Close the gate (to protect non-swimmers).
- No diving, running on the deck.
- Best not to swim alone, in case something goes wrong (there is no lifeguard)
- Swimmers under 14 need to be accompanied by an adult
- Limit spa use for kids under 5, as they cannot regulate their internal body temperature the way older people can
- Please be mindful of others in your activities. We are sharing the pool. Please share not only the physical space, but also be aware of sound and noise that others might not find as amusing. Say, Marco Polo.
- Pool closes at 9:30 p.m. (the heater goes off at that time as well).

Ball machine

- Pick up the balls, all of the balls, when you are done.
- Be finished on time
- Cancel unused reservations – lots of people are looking for times
- Late in the day, put the machine away. Don't assume the next person will come.

Court Etiquette:

- Pay your guest fees. It's a privilege of membership to have guests. Please make sure your guests are paid for. Pay station is in the lobby.
- Close the gates coming and going.
- Be mindful of those around you, be respectful by avoiding loud court chat, walking across other's courts, and around courts on the noise gravel paths during play, etc.
- Leave the court in the condition you would like to find it if you were coming to play. Pick up all your stuff, return equipment to where it belongs, throw away any trash, don't leave balls laying around, etc....
- Water is the only beverage allowed on the courts, no food.

Court Reservations

- Cancel unused reservations. PLEASE!

Court Safety

- Stay hydrated on these really hot days. If you feel thirsty, you are already in a compromised state. Heat illnesses can come on fast and get very serious before you even realize it.
- Wear sunscreen (long-term effects of over exposure are dangerous too).

Parking lot care:

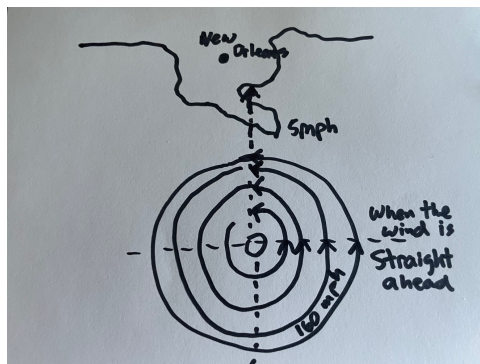
- Use care in the parking lot, especially with younger ones. Look before you pull out and watch your kids.
- Don't stop or park in the narrow drive to pick up / drop off players. Dangerous congestion can result.
- Pulling out onto Orindawoods Drive. It's like pulling onto a freeway sometimes, unsighted and from a standing start.
- Crossing Orindawoods drive from overflow Parking on Greystone. Again, assume you are walking across the freeway, use caution.

Tennis Tip:

Force of Nature

This month we want to talk about a couple of natural forces, the way things work in nature and in physiology.

Hurricane: Imagine a hurricane, a big one, Katrina, 160 mph winds, category 5, moving towards New Orleans, (sounds and looks very scary) ... at 5 mph... It's not the forward speed that is scary (other than you have time to think about how bad it is going to be). It's the rotational speed, which let's face it, hits you coming and going, as well as sideways. The big forces in nature are rotational (storms, tornados, rotate, waves roll). And our bodies turn in arcs, to say, play a tennis ball.



What if I need to aim that force to accomplish a task, like winning my tennis match? To get the rotational force to 'aim' forward, we need to move out to the side (see the drawing, at what point in the "storm" the force is going forward – it is not at the most forward point, but out to the side — that would be where we would need to be making contact or releasing to make an object like a tennis ball, golf ball or baseball go forward)

Worst instruction ever: "Get your racquet back", leads to the worse response ever: swing forward. That is not to say there is not back and

forward in a tennis stroke, but it is not linear, the forward and back is part of a three-dimensional rotation. It is much more useful to think in and out (width) and up and down (height). All these motions of the racquet are best accomplished by rotating the arm (and thus racquet) in the shoulder joint. How best to do this?

Stretch shorten cycle. Consider a rubber band, or a bow and arrow. When a bow is not strung, it just sits there, with no potential energy, it is at rest. Same with a rubber band. When you string the bow, there is a slight amount of tension, like when you slightly pull on both sides of a rubber band.

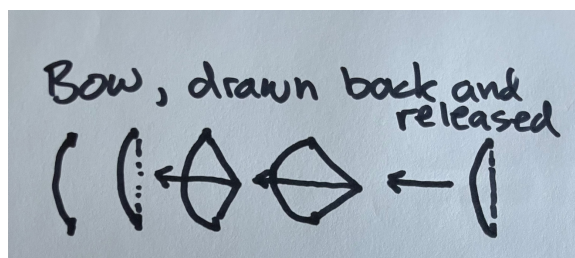
As you pull it back more, the tension increases, and the bow or the rubber band wants to return to the natural state of rest, with no stretch. The more you pull, the more the tension, and the slower you are able to pull the two sides apart, until, at some point, you are not strong enough to pull it apart much more, or even at all.

There is tremendous tension now (i.e., potential energy, stored energy), and at some point, that tension pulls the rubber band or string of the bow out of your hand ("the arrow releases itself" –

Eugen Herrigel, *Zen and the Art of Archery*). When it first releases, it is going the fastest, has the most energy, as it tries to return to the state of rest. As the bow or rubber band gets closer to its original shape, the state of rest, with no tension, it slows down, eventually stopping (after it springs past the point of rest). How far you pulled the bow back, would determine how fast and how far the arrow went. Same is true with a tennis stroke, because your muscles, tendons, fascia are like a bow, or rubber band, the farther you stretch them, the quicker they want to return to the state of rest. The more coil, or wind up, the more energy or force. And if you wind them enough, you can't hold the coil, and they will spring back rapidly.

Wind and unwind, not back and forth swing, not lift, not push. You don't push an arrow, the bow is stretched, the arrow is released. And in tennis, I don't want to pull with a muscle, I want to stretch and release the muscle for maximum acceleration.

Ironically, every afternoon or evening when I was growing up listening to my beloved Giants I heard the answer, but I didn't understand what I was hearing. I heard the answer, but I was not ready to hear. The announcer on the radio, Lon Simmons, would say, "Here's the windup and ... the pitch". It's the wind up that creates the pitch, but I couldn't really hear it, I didn't understand the way the body worked. At a game, in person, we could see it, if we had eyes to see, and ears to hear, but often we see an arm move, but we don't understand what is really happening. We think it is muscles



contracting by firing, and not by stretching and releasing. For example, on the serve, your arm straightens, which is usually the job of the triceps muscle turning on, but for elite servers, measured by scientists, that muscle never “fires.” Strength isn’t what is important. What is important is elasticity, flexibility, letting that happen, timing the release. I wasn’t ready yet, apparently (my very mediocre baseball career being proof and evidence of that) to play that way or even to understand. Power comes from coiling, from going back and in, not going forward. From retreating, not advancing. From stretch and not from strength. I didn’t have ears to hear, or eyes to see. Not yet.

Spin for in. In tennis, we use this spring nature of the body to not only impart force on the ball, but also spin. Spin is how we control the ball. “Spin for in”. Or the famous saying, heard by many players, “when I need to have more control, I hit harder.” (Rod Laver, Monica Seles, etc....) They go faster (actually quicker, accelerate better. It is not racquet head speed, but racquet head acceleration - even the great ones who know how to do it, don’t understand what they do - they just do it) to produce more spin (and power).

In order to produce spin, I don’t want to slam directly into the ball. I don’t want to hit it, so to speak, I want to roll it. That is, the strings grab onto the felt on the outside of the ball and turn the ball. When I hit a ball, it bounces, when I spin a ball, it rolls. I want less hit at contact, and more roll.

A working definition of hitting: when I hit a ball, and it goes sailing through the air, I find myself praying it goes in, hoping it comes down in time, rather than know it is going in. The bounce of the ball scares me, after I hit it. Or practically, I end up hitting the ball softer to make sure it drops in, I push it over the net. I’m a pusher, and I play from a scared emotional space, dominated by fear.

Instead, I could put more spin on the ball, accelerate to assist gravity by using aerodynamics to help the ball return to the court in time. I would empower my game, and play from excitement, possibility, and not from fear. I want to learn to control the ball through spin, not ask for Divine intervention to solve my error in ways. Most people want to be healed of their dis-ease, but don’t want to change their behaviors. Change your behavior.

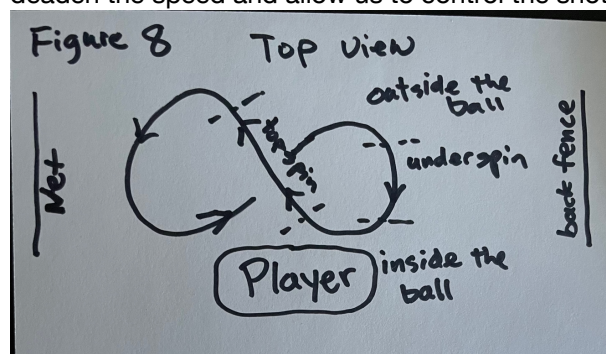
A practical definition of hitting: speeding into the ball to cause a collision. Sometimes that is a direct hit, the ball just bounces, sometimes it is at an angle, which can produce spin, but either way, I’m having to time the flight path of two moving objects to try to achieve a successful and productive contact.

Catch and Throw: Contrast hitting to catching and throwing, using stretch and shorten, where you just wait for the ball to arrive (so simple), and catch it in the stretch of the body, and release it with the shortening of the body’s stretch, a much easier task to coordinate and time as we are not really moving, yet have great potential energy. Stretch and shorten allows us to do one of the great mysteries of sport, to “move without moving” to unleash tremendous force with very little, very easy, movements. Elite players make tennis (and coordination) look easy because it is easy. It’s just a bit hard to learn how to do it the easy way. Especially if we are convinced that we have to hit the ball.

Volleys. This stretch and short relates to one of the great truths of tennis, that I completely missed for many years. “When you volley, the ball should leave your racquet slower than when it came in.”

When we are at the net, the court is much shorter than when we are at the baseline. A ball coming from our opponent (at the baseline) can be going much faster and farther than the shot we are going to play back to them. They can fire it 78 feet (82 feet cross court), we have to return it maybe 45 feet from where we are standing, or less to keep it in. If we are not close enough, and the ball high enough, to hit it down, we must “take energy off the ball” to get it to stay in. In other words, when we underspin a volley, we are slowing the ball down.

How? Think of that rubber band again. We could take the ball on the way in, on the wind up, when the tension is increasing and the body, like the bow or the rubber band, is feeling more compressed, and is slowing down. This would deaden the speed and allow us to control the shot.



“All the shots are the same”: The “stroke” or “form” is basically the same for all shots. Underspin on the wind up, on the way in, topspin on the release, on the way out. Catch / hold / release. San Diego teaching pro Jack Brody talked a lot about the figure 8. Look at the figure 8, the underspin stroke is on the way in, the topspin stroke is on the way out. Your arm winds up on the way in, and releases on the way out. It has the most potential energy the more it is wound up and releases the quickest the closest it is to fully stretched. So, if you want to slow the ball down with underspin, you catch it right as you are most wound, when you are going slowest, when the winding of the body is forcing you to slow down, you can barely twist any more. If you want to release

it fastest, you contact the ball right as you are letting go (actually right on the change from in - catching - to out - releasing), when the muscles are the most stretched, and releasing the quickest. They accelerate as they are released.

So what part of the body are we stretching? This is where most people get lost because the answer is not so obvious. The muscles in the arm are not very big. And the force they create by pulling is not very great (muscles pull, they don’t push). So, the obvious answer, pushing (leverage) or swinging (momentum), that is, using strength or speed, is not the best way to play a tennis ball with relatively weak arms (compared to the legs or core muscles).

A bit of physics: force = mass x acceleration. That is, weight, multiplied by how fast you are speeding up. (Not how fast you are going). The weight of your racquet, body and arm doesn't change much, though if you are moving into the shot, the mass might increase it a bit (careful, not necessarily "stepping into the shot"). Acceleration is the big variable here, as I can change acceleration a great deal, and mass not very much.

So, I understand I need to speed up to increase force. How do I accelerate? Primarily, the internal and external rotators in the shoulder. That's where the real power is, in the rotation, in the torque.

These very small muscles, tendons, and fascia are some of the springiest stuff we have in the body. Full range of motion of a shoulder is about 270 degrees, and it turns out, that when stretched, our shoulders can rotate that entire distance in about a 60th of a second. Think of that, next time someone hits that ball at you at 100 miles per hour. Your shoulder can go so much faster than a measly 100 mph, and that "powerful shot and that 2-ounce ball" is no match for the force you can create, unwinding your shoulder, arm and racquet onto and around that ball.

Brian Gordon, PhD, the tennis biomechanics guru, has done studies that on the serve, for example, 70% of the force comes from internal shoulder rotation, and 20% from the resulting wrist extension (triggered by that internal rotation — i.e, hold it loose, and your wrist wants to straighten when the arm is wiped around that quickly. In simple terms, if you want more power on your serve, wind your arm better, not use your legs or trunk more (the legs have a place, they can help increase the stretch by pushing up when the racquet head is dropping down behind your back, not by pushing up, when the racquet is going up, that's releasing the tension / stretch - slowing you down). But then Vic Braden knew that intuitively 40 years ago, "I know a guy in a wheelchair that can serve 130 mph, it's not the legs, folks."

Think back to the hurricane above, rotational force, and add in the stretch shorten cycle, to create and maximize that rotational force, and you have quite a weapon in your hand, that is, in your arm, in your shoulder, in those tiny little rotators, stretching and shortening.

Twisted. Most of us have seen those slow-motion videos, or still pictures of a tennis player, or pitcher, with their arms all twisted in an ungodly manner, in what seems like impossible positions. In fact, positions you can't hold your arm in, but you stretch in and out of (and are captured on film). The arm bounces, in and out of the stretch, with tremendous acceleration.

"It is said that this shot or style of play is for only the elite players, that normal people shouldn't try it. Well, my question to you is, are these players elite athletes because they are more gifted or are they elite players because they are doing something better." — Brett Hobden.

And most of us don't even know we have this incredible weapon in our shoulders, in our ability to stretch and shorten. We don't even understand the potential we possess in our bodies. And this is all humans, not just elite athletes. In fact, an elite athlete is not so much someone who is more gifted (perhaps a couple percent) but someone who knows how to use their body to maximum effectiveness. Yes, athleticism is largely learned and can be taught.

On a forehand or a serve (a forehand is an underhand serve, the great change in tennis stroking in the past 50 years and why the game has gotten so much faster - it's not the racquets folks (to paraphrase Vic again), or the poly strings, or some "magic" only the great ones possess. It is a better understanding of the body and how it works.

Don't lift / don't swing / instead: spring. On the serve or forehand, we want to twist, or wind our arm back, actually let it fall, into external rotation, to the point that it can't go back any more, and it springs / bounces forward ("the shot releases itself"). On the one-handed backhand, it is an internal stretch, that leads to an external rotation.

Now all this has to happen in real time, and it feels impossible to manage all this when the ball is speeding towards us. But it is not true, if we can manage our time in the most advantageous way. Remember, our arm is much quicker than the ball. And far quicker than our eye (remember those pictures and slow motion of the things we cannot see, the arm stretched into positions we felt were inhuman or impossible).

What we need to do is set up the circumstances in which we can use this amazing force. We have to get in position, and wind up, so that the tension can be released on the ball. Our mind is much quicker than that incoming ball as well, we just need to know what to do, and pay attention (be present) to let it happen. "Be mindful and timeful" - Tom Evans

"Take your time." I love that phrase. It's your time, take it. Use it to the fullest potential. Notice how what is going on in your mind governs the speed of time. Lighten up and observe the slowing down. The world slows down.

"I can't control time." Really? When we are nervous, everything seems to go fast. There isn't enough time. When we are calm, everything seems slow. The closer we pay attention; the slower things happen. Why does everything slow down in a car accident? We are really playing attention, seeing everything. One human being can return a 130 mph serve, another sees the ball go by them, or hit them in the chest. Funny, but it can be the same person, depending on whether they are focused, or scared. Good day, things go great -- bad day, you feel uncoordinated and overwhelmed. You could be playing the same guy you play every Tuesday. Completely different result. We need to learn how to calm the mind, to take our time, to stretch and shorten, to receive and then release the shot. To let the force of nature, overpower our opponent, and not feel overpowered ourselves, using old methods that don't work very well. When a ball comes fast at you, most people react. That is, they re-act (repeat) their old, bad habits, that are not specific to this shot, this ball, at this moment. They stop seeing and play a video of some "ideal shot" instead of responding to this particular ball, using methods that are far superior to anything someone can send at you. Good luck out there!