



Orindawoods Tennis News

January 2018 Volume 24, Issue 1

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

Court Lights Operating Procedures

We have a new way to turn on the lights at night at the Club. In the past the lights would just come on at a set time, and go off at a set time. Now we have installed a switch where you control when the lights go on. There is a timer, so after set number of minutes, the lights will go off. At that time, you can turn them on again. The switch is by the gate to court #2.

There is still the 4:30-9:35 limit to when you can use the lights, but the lights will only come on if you turn them on.

The new LED lights use only 40% of the energy of the old lights, and we will probably only have them on a few hours a night, instead of five hours (in the winter) like before, so more savings. Thanks for helping us be more energy efficient.

Exit Tip: When you are the last ones on the court and want to leave, turn the timer down to 5 mins, so you have light leaving, and then the lights will go off when you are safely to the parking lot. Thanks!

Holiday Refection: Why A Club, Why Orindawoods?

A club is a group of people with a common interest joining together to share in an activity. Primarily tennis, in our case, but also friendship, acceptance, a place of fun, joy, play and a sanctuary from the "real" world. As one of our members once said, "The club is like my own backyard, only all my friends are there." How great is that!

Since I've been at Orindawoods I have moved eight times. Relationships have changed, people have moved on, some have passed on. And the membership has changed, some people are gone now, new people have come and joined in, but the spirit of Orindawoods has remained.

A love of tennis, a joy for life, a place where people are welcomed, friends greet us, activities are offered, the fine facility awaits.

Why do we play tennis? The reasons vary. Friendship, exercise, pursuing our personal best, competition, challenge, learning something new, health, well-being, joy, rapture. Tennis is a microcosm of life, where perhaps we have a bit more control, simplicity, understanding, but life always reminds us that we don't always get what we want, that a winner or a double fault is only a shot away, that a success or a failure is only one shot, then we are on to the next point, and that is simply OK (openness and kindness). We don't have to win, or win all the time, or win ever, to be just fine right where we are.

In my lifetime tennis has taught me that perfectionism is bad way to go. "Nothing promises so much, and delivers so little." I've learned that exercise can be fun. That we can get lost in our pursuit of a goal. That we can learn things we never thought we could. That athleticism is primarily learned, not given. That anyone can play, and enjoyment is primarily up to you. I have known happy 2.5s, miserable 5.0s. You value is not to be found in your rating or ranking. Some of the most miserable people you'll meet in life are a "success." And there are those for who it all seems so easy, because they do it the easy way. And the hard part is not in the doing, but in learning how to do it the easy way. That there are no mistakes, only lessons. And that people learn when they are ready to learn, and you can't force the time table one little bit.

So, welcome to Orindawoods. Whether this is your first month, or you been here forever (close to), take a moment, look around, enjoy it all. It is all to be enjoyed. Many blessings this holiday season.

Winter League Play

Teams This Season:

The USTA 40 plus season is approaching, and so far we have the following teams:

USTA 40AW4.5

USTA 40AM4.5

USTA 40AW3.5

If you are interested in playing, contact Keith and he will put you in touch with the proper captain

In addition, the BALL season is ongoing, and we will have a Spring League team.

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.

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 telling Keith you are attending (e-mail).

Used Ball Drop

When you are done playing with your tennis balls, please donate them by dropping them in the Used Ball Drop just to the left of the Pro Shop door. The ball machine and juniors thank you.

Quote of the Month:

"If you continue this simple practice you will obtain some wonderful power. Before you obtain it, it is something wonderful, but after you obtain it, it is nothing special." – Shunryu Suzuki

Looking Forward / Looking Back

Shinryu Suzuki said many years ago to his students, "Each of you is perfect the way you are.... And you can use a little improvement." The same can be said about our Club. Perfect the way it is, and always improving going forward, while honoring what has gone before. Time doesn't stand still, and as Nick said to Jay Gatsby, "You can't repeat the past." Though Gatsby tired. Here's a review of our past and a look to the future:

Court resurfacing: We have scheduled the resurfacing (top color, crack repair) for 2018, and have set a date with our contractor. Recoloring the courts gives us a chance to repair any cracks, to maintain the quality of the surface and to control the speed the court plays at. Newly recolored courts are slower, so the ball grips better, and your shoes do too! The date of the work is to be announced, but it will be done in the summer of 2018.

Of course the tennis courts are one of our primary assets here at the Club, along with the great members and knowledgeable, dedicated, fun-loving staff. Keeping the courts in top shape is a top priority.

LED Lights. We had LED court lights installed in November to improve the night play on our courts, and to save money at the same time (LED lights use 40% of the energy of regular court lighting). We have also installed switches that allow us to turn the lights off when not in use, saving even more energy. Thank you for turning off the lights when you are done (some may feel the lights are off when they are playing, even in daylight – different lights, upstairs lights). We don't want to waste valuable energy and create unnecessary expense.

Ace It! We said tearful and joyous goodbye to Ace It! in 2017. Our Breast Cancer fundraiser earn more this year than ever before, but the hands of time have caught up with the wonderful people that host this event, and it was time to give it a grand sendoff that it deserved. Thanks to the thousands of people that have supported Ace It! over fifteen fantastic years. Orindawoods remains open and committed to helping the community in causes that matter, and if another worthwhile cause or group of people come along, we will step in and lend our support once again.

Social Tennis. Our great social tennis programs will continue in 2018, just as they did in 2017. Off-season Monday Night Tennis, Monday Team Tennis, Twilight Tennis BBQs, Tulip Tournament and Reindeer Games will all continue, with perhaps an addition or two just 'cause we love fun!

Clinics. Our amazing weekly clinics continue with the Women's Clinic (Tuesdays, 9:30), the Men's Clinic (Thursday, 9:30) and Hit and Fit (Friday 10:30, Saturday 7:30). Whether it is working on your game, meeting new people or getting into shape, we have the clinic for you.

League Play. We will have lots of fun and competitive league play in 2018, with Spring, Fall and BALL leagues during the school year, and USTA on the weekends. Winter leagues are listed on page one.

Landscaping. In the past couple of years, we have refreshed some of landscaping and are considering other projects that can help improve the look of Orindawoods. Money doesn't go very far when it comes to landscaping, but we have approved an upgrade to flower beds around the deck and entry way (coming in Spring 2018).

Junior Tennis. Our amazing junior program led by Patric Hermanson will continue after school clinics this winter and spring, and week-long clinics in the summer. Join us! It's a great place for kids to learn the great game of tennis.

Lessons. As always, lessons are available with our two great pros, Keith and Patric. Rates for 2018 will remain the same. A couple times a year, Keith and Patirc attend tennis conferences, plus do lots of other continuing education to keep our teaching at the cutting edge of tennis. If you need help with your game, we are here to help.

Weather Info

What we need is accurate information about the upcoming weather. Of course, the weather is the weather, so the words "accurate" and "weather" don't really go together. But trying to get as close to this as possible, we would like information specific to Orinda, and not so regional. A lot of weather sites say, "Oh Orinda, that is closer to Oakland than Concord, so we'll report Oakland info." Well, anyone who lives here knows that those hills between Oakland and Orinda make our weather much more like the inner valleys than the bay. But we are closer to the bay, than say Concord, so we don't have Concord weather either. We need weather information specific to Orinda. We have several tools here at the Club to help you:

- Court cam – our Court cams (2) show an up to the minute picture of the court conditions.
- Daily postings – on the Court Cam page on the website we post our interpretations of the weather daily, several times a day if conditions are changing. These are based on our keen, experienced eye and our crystal ball.
- WU Website – Our OW weather station is linked in to Weather Underground. Click the link on the Court Cam page.
- Raw Data – the raw data from our weather station is also available, so for example, you can see if there has been any rainfall in the last hour, the last 12 hours.
- Resources: There are other great apps I love. Some are: Dark sky, WU, Hi-Def Radar & WeatherBug.

Membership Openings

As has been our pattern the last several years, there are a few membership openings in the winter months. Once we get to March or April, the Club tends to be full, and people wait all summer and fall (second summer in these parts) for an opening, which starts to happen again in November. So, if you have any friends who have been thinking about joining, this is the time to do it. If they wait until summer, they probably can't get in until next winter.

Guest Fees for 2018

Guest fees for 2018 are \$10. No change. Members are responsible for their guests, that their guests pay the guest fees. It is your Club. We don't have the staffing (front desk staff every hour the club is open), or the facility (fenced in, single point of entrance) to police guest fees. People pay fees because it is important to cast your economic vote for what you believe in. Support the club you love. In fact, guest fees are a significant part of the Club's income, thus keeping the member's monthly dues down (about \$6 per month).

It is a privilege of membership to have guests. Guests are for the members, so you have someone to play with, you can invite your friends over, etc... Guests are for you, but they need to pay their way. Please respect the rules and support your club. Thanks.



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Tennis Tip

Are You Having A Breakdown?

In A Perfect World. Each of us has ideal stroke. If the ball came right to us, just the way we like it (Goldielocks ball – not too hot, not too cold (slow), not too high, not too low). The more often we take our ideal stroke, the better we tend to do. Sometimes we blow it, because we go for too much, but generally, our chance of success goes way up when we hit our ideal stroke.

Now most of the time, we set out to do just this, take our ideal stroke. But stuff happens, and our stroke can "break down." The form, the shape, the rhythm, the timing starts to distort a bit, trying to deal with the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." i.e. the bounce of the ball (or a bad toss). It is these distortions that cause us to hit weak shots, or make errors.

FFT. As we described in FFT (form, footwork, timing) a couple of months ago (November 2017 newsletter), you really don't want to change your form. Sticking to your form should inform you as to where to move (footwork) and when to start (timing).

Mistakes. But desperate times call for desperate measures, and in our effort to make contact, we do tend to make form changes. And that is when the trouble starts. Our stroke breaks down.

Tactics: One way to look at tennis is that you are attempting through your stroke (varying speed, placement, spin and deception) to break down the stroke of your opponent, while at the same time, doing your best NOT to break down your own stroke, no matter what they throw at you (the kitchen sink?).

Break down our own stroke? Yes, it is up to us. That is the good news. Our stroke, whether it breaks down or not, is up to us. Only we can lose form, chase a ball, give up our motion, lose the plot. Our opponents may give us a boat load of motivation (a great shot) to break down, but it is up to us whether we take the bait. That is also the bad news. Our errors are on us. Especially "unforced errors." Errors on shots we could have made, if we just didn't break our stroke down. Do something foolish, rash, desperate or over-cooked.

Now of course, a lot of these breakdowns happen too fast for the conscious mind, they are subconscious. And we all know, as Carl Jung pointed out, "the problem with the subconscious is that it is subconscious." But though training, though "right" practice, we can engrain responses to all sorts of balls we may receive, and learn (even subconsciously – especially subconsciously) how to respond automatically, and appropriately to all sorts of challenges, so that our stroke is less likely to break down, and to break down less often. And if we do error, to recover on the next ball, and not have the break down continue. For when your stroke is broken, that is when you really start to lose matches. Not individual hiccups and errors. We all make those. To error is human.

Opponent's Breakdown. When you play a ball to your opponent, one of the main things to look for is whether they are taking the ideal stroke, or whether it is breaking down. If it is breaking down, start moving in, looking for defensive shots: High, short, in the middle. If you're at the net, look for a volley in the middle or an overhead. If you are in the backcourt, look for a short ball, a 3.5 sitter, or a swing volley, or perhaps a bounce overhead. Read the game, don't just stand there and be surprised by a weak shot. They are predictable, based on stroke mechanics breakdowns. When you play a good shot, force their swing to break down, you should win most of those points. Go get 'em!

The Second Voice

When I'm playing tennis, and the ball comes towards me, I often get some pretty strong input from a voice in my head. If the shot is coming fast, it says something "rational" like "hit the ball, hit the ball, hit the ball, late, late, late, ahhhhhh!!!!!!!" If the ball comes at a normal rate, I hear something like "let's go down the line with this one! Show them who the big dude is on this court." If the ball comes super slow, it's something like, "OK, remember, get up to the ball, raise your elbow up, take it easy, keep moving, don't swing, hit the middle, no, the side, the alley... ahhhhh hit it!!!!!!!"

The next thought is something like, "I can't believe I [missed, rushed, messed that up, pushed, didn't do it right, hit that out, hit that in the net, didn't follow my protocol, hit it right to them, didn't put that away, smacked it into the fence, etc...]." Or more simply, "How flippin' embarrassing."

Or in its short-hand form: "[insert favorite swear word – use volume to better make your point to all those present – even those five courts away] !!!!!!"

Maybe your experience is different. Calm, cool, collected, appropriate. Or not.

In any event, in my experience, my ego or conscious mind often gives me a bit of a hint as to what to do when I'm receiving a shot in tennis. A little "helpful" advice, and little attempt to "control," or "manage" the situation. A thinly disguised mistrust of my body's ability to make this "very important" shot.

I must say, I've only been playing fifty years, but I've yet to find this first voice or suggestion very helpful. And often hurtful. While the second comment, by this first (ego) voice, about the nature of how I messed up, is often debilitating, much worse than the miss itself (It's only one point, after all).

"Whoever has ears hear, let him hear." Beneath and behind that first voice, often drown out by the sheer volume and desperation, of the first voice is a second voice. A quiet, yet true voice. Tim Gallaway (Inner Game of Tennis) called this Self 2, or if you are more spiritual, god's voice, or humanistic, your inner voice. The point here is that if you can let that first voice go, the voice of the ego, the conscious mind, and just wait ("way too long," if you listen to the ego's desperate cries for action), the second voice will come. This is the voice of reality, the fully informed voice, the voice free of emotion (other than joy / satori -- being one with what you are doing), the voice of wisdom and appropriate, on-time action.

An example. Your opponent comes to the net, hits a ball to your forehand and almost immediately you hear, "hit the ball down the line." Let that thought go, let it drift right on by, and see what happens.

One thing that won't happen is you'll miss the ball (which is what your ego is desperately shouting will happen). Self 2, god, your inner voice isn't stupid, they know you need to play the ball. They also know that action from anxiety and fear, or ambition, seldom goes well, is seldom appropriate, or seldom effective.

What will happen when you wait for the second voice, is that you will play the ball much farther back than you thought possible, the shot selected will be good and often effective, your opponent often will be at a loss as to where you are playing the shot, and you will have a much better chance of playing well, and ultimately winning.

Sounds good to me. All you must do is manage a bit of fear, and the controlling, anxiety driven first voice. Stay in the moment. Wait for the second voice. Wait for the kingdom of heaven. We are so close, and seldom let ourselves get there. It's there. Wait for the second voice. Good luck out there!

Junior Clinic Schedule Winter 2018 January 9th – March 16th

The 2018 Winter Junior Clinics will begin the week of **January 9th** and will continue thru the week of **March 12th**. The 10-week program will be led by **Head Pro Patric Hermanson**.

The Level I and II classes will be taught using aspects of the USTA 10 and Under Development Program.

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

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