



Orindawoods Tennis News

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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 Holidays

"Keith, Patric and the rest of the Orindawoods staff and contractors wish you and your family, friends and loved ones, a very wonderful and happy holiday season. Blessings to all!"

Holiday Schedule

November 22-23	Thanksgiving Pro Shop Closed
December 24-25	Christmas Pro Shop Closed
Dec 31, Jan 1	New Year's Pro Shop Closed

Winter Social

Reindeer Games 2018

The Reindeer Games (Rain – 'O – Dear Games) will be held on Sunday, December 9th from 2-4 p.m. at the Club. (Weather seldom permitting).

To register, contact Keith or Lysbeth McNeill. We are looking forward to seeing all of you reindeer out on the courts, doing what reindeer should be doing. Playing tennis, of course! Beats splashing in the puddles, eh?

We will play tennis, and afterwards share holiday cheer with all our Orindawoods reindeer friends. Join us! There is no charge, just bring a smile and a red nose. Light refreshments provided.

Looking Ahead

Cash in 2019 at Orindawoods

For Tennis Lessons: In 2019, for accounting, timely depositing and security reasons, we are looking to reduce the amount of cash here at Orindawoods. In addition, we would like to make it easier for people to pay for services. We are opening up the option to pay with your credit or debit card courtside, as well as pay with checks.

We ask those people who now pay for tennis lessons with cash, to transition to one of the other methods: check or card. Thank you!

Guest fees will continue to be paid in check or cash, but we will also take credit cards if we are in the office and not out on the court teaching.

• Please don't interrupt a fellow member's lesson to pay a guest fee.

Tennis Events such as the Ladies and Men's clinics, Hit and Fit, Twilights and other parties will still accept cash payments, but also have a credit/debit option for your convenience. The credit/debit option will be available starting in January 2019.

OW Jr. Championships:

Orindawoods Juniors Shine!

Last month we held the Orindawoods Junior Championships, hosting kids from all over Contra Costa County and beyond. Each month, a different club hosts this great series of events. So many families were impressed with our wonderful club (something we already knew).

Several of our juniors did well in the tournament. Peter Reaves won the Boys 16s, while Leo Cardozo was runner up in the Boys 14s. Evern Basegmez won the Boys 12s Consolation and Lindsey Lewis won the G16s Consolation. Several other juniors played in the tournament and had excellent matches. And Emma Hermanson not only played in the Girls 14s (semifinalist), but ran the tournament desk.

Overflow Parking on Greystone

When the Club is very active, members and guests often park on Greystone Terrace across the street from the Club. This is a great place to park, close by. We ask you to keep a couple things in mind when parking on Greystone Terrace:

1. Please don't park in front of the crosswalk. It makes it very hard for people to cross if a car is parked there. The crosswalk is not at the corner, which can make parking confusing. Thanks for helping out!
2. If we can park on one side of the street only, that would be appreciated by the neighbors. When we park on both sides, the street becomes a bit narrow. Emergency vehicles need to be able to pass through.
3. Be careful when crossing Hwy 24, eh, I mean Orindawoods Drive. There are a few drivers that think they are on a NASCAR track when 24 is gridlocked.

Past Newsletters:

Need an idea to rekindle your game? Check out the past newsletter tennis tips on the website. Just go to "newsletter" in the information menu on the website, orindawoodstennis.com. Past articles are listed, with links. Enjoy! Strategy, technique, philosophy, tactics, it's all there. There are tons of ideas to get your game going again!

Used Ball Drop

Please support our tennis ball reuse and recycling program by placing your old balls in the used ball drop by the Pro Shop door. We recently shipped 11 cases of balls to be recycled. Thank you!

Quote of the Month:

"Anxiety is that range of distress which attends willing what cannot be willed" – Leslie H. Farber

"It is the folly of our age to try to take charge of everything. We [can follow] a more peaceful and more successful way. We [do] our part and [receive] the benefits that come to us."

Patric and Keith thank everyone who played in the tournament, all those that helped and watched, and all the Club members of lending us the Club for these fine young people to develop their competitive games. These same kids will be playing at different clubs each month, growing the future of the game. Thank you!



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Tennis Tip:

Gravity

We stand up all day long, and when we don't, we often sit, but that whole time, we are fighting gravity, which wants to pull us back to earth. Our muscles and bones hold us up, and we don't even give it a thought.

If you have fallen recently (I hope not), I'm sure you were surprised at just how fast the ground comes up. There is a tremendous amount of force there, pulling us down, that we don't even realize until we are no longer able to resist it.

Gravity keeps us connected to the ground. We don't float off into space, even when we want to just a little bit (jumping in volleyball, basketball or for an overhead). What else is gravity good for besides holding us to the terra firma?

Gravity returns the ball to earth, hopefully after our shot crosses the net, and before it crosses the baseline. Helpful. But everyone has that going for them.

Gravity is this large source of energy and the question is, are we using it to our best advantage to help us play better tennis? To give us an edge?

You cannot serve two masters. Last month we used the example of form vs. power? You can't focus on both. What's your focus? Our conclusion was that you would do much better focusing and obeying form, rather than try to propel the ball yourself. Attempts to hit the ball hard, often end in failure, because their single-minded focus on speed, forgets some really important stuff, like control, spin, placement and deception. Having good form doesn't prevent you from having power. Form creates power that also possesses other desired tennis traits.

Yet the ball must be propelled. How do we make it go, if we are not using muscles to power the ball? This is where gravity can be used to great effect in your game. Think of a roller coaster. There is a machine, or motor that uses a cable, or catapult (California Screamin') to raise the cars to the top of the first hill, and then they fall down the track from there. There is no additional propulsion after this initial lifting. The roller coaster cars simply follow the track down the course to the bottom, often with many hills, banked turns and even corkscrews and loops. Whooooo Hooooo! (raise your hands!!!!)

This is like how we want to use muscles, and gravity on a tennis stroke. We want to start by using muscles to lift the racquet up, into a starting position, then relax the muscles, drop the racquet, letting it "return to earth" with gravity, and then we shape (this is the form of the stroke) the course that it travels on after that. We don't (with our arm) add any additional force, we just let the arm fall, then the racquet fall, turn, and twist into position for contact, and then recovery (follow-through). Let your racquet (it's a trampoline, after all) and the force of gravity hit the ball.

Try this: hold your racquet up by your shoulders, parallel to the ground, tip pointing forward, handle pointed back, and then just let go of it. See how fast you must move your arm to catch it before the racquet hits the ground. That is much faster than most of us ever swing a tennis racquet. Tremendous force, right there, that we didn't even realize that we have. Just by raising our arms. Wow.

We fight gravity unconsciously, we resist it's pull so naturally, we don't even realize all this potential energy is even there. Instead, we use muscles to swing the racquet.

When we are focused on propulsion, we can't adjust to the nuances of the flight of the ball. When gravity provides the speed, we can adjust and guide the racquet.

Just like a roller coaster, it is a little scary to let go and just let the racquet fall, but once we get the hang of it, how to "shape" the racquet's flight, it becomes very easy to control the ball this way. Much easier than trying to control it by swinging the racquet with muscles and "over playing" the shot.

Up and Down. It took me a long time to realize that gravity was the force I wanted to be using. Period. A lot of us, most of us, almost all of us, think tennis is played forward: in other words, back and forward. Backswing, follow-through. When

what the best players do is play tennis more up and down. As soon as tennis becomes about up and down, gravity makes sense as a source of power. Gravity is really good at down. Now I start a stroke by lifting my arms up and dropping them down, rather than pulling them back, and pulling them forward.

Think of tennis like skiing, lifting up (unweighting), dropping down (weighting). I want to drop the racquet on the ball. Much like a roller coaster, the falling racquet will "bottom out", and swoop up to stroke the ball on the way up, from low to high. The ideal topspin stroke. Make contact on the descent, underspin.

A modern stroke. If I push with my toes / legs right when the racquet is bottoming out on the fall, plus a few twists and turns with my arm (torque), I can add additional force to the stroke, by channeling that gravity drop, and turbo charge my game without using slow, inappropriate, inefficient, muscle force.

History Lesson. Using gravity is just one of the many ways that tennis has changed over the years to be more in tune with the way the world works (physics) and the way the body works (physiology). When I learned about 1970, strokes were very stiff, and muscle movements were emphasized. The game was rigid and slow. Very linear. Compare a video of tennis back then (Laver and Rosewall, Billie Jean King) to tennis today, Federer, Nadal, Djokovic, Williams, and movements are not only faster, but faster because they are in line with the way the natural world works, and the way the body works. Speed, plus spin, placement and deception, is the result.

Better tennis. Modern tennis. Get gravity (nature, reality) working for you, instead of fighting against it.

Tennis Tip Replay:

Six Stages of a Match Revisited.

Many years ago, I saw an amazing talk by Mark Bey about the six stages of a tennis match. I wrote about it in the newsletter at the time (July 2012). This concept is so helpful to all of us that play the game, compete in matches, that I would like to share some of these ideas again, plus a few add-ons. The basics first:

Practice competing: Just like learning your strokes takes practice, you need to also practice competing. If you play one league match a month, that is 12 matches a year. The top player in professional tennis plays about 100 competitive matches a year. Developing your game should consist of four parts: lessons, group lessons / workouts, practice on your own, and match play. Most people heavily overload one of those, and miss the balance. Some people just play matches, that's not so good either. And if you have played tons of recreational matches, but no "competitive" matches, you are not ready either. It can take several seasons of playing at the level you want to perform at, to really get comfortable, and up to speed.

Young kids enter their first junior tournament, and expect to win. Often, they can be crushed, especially emotionally. They had no idea how hard it was to translate practice into performance. It's our job as coaches and parents to provide some perspective, see the things that went well, and encourage what needs to be worked on. Learning to compete is a process, it takes work, and practice. But adults do the same thing, play a league match occasionally, and wonder why it doesn't go so well. We can't just will victory. We play, observe, make mistakes, experiment, learn, improve. It's a process. How well you handle that, and grow, will determine if you continue to improve, or protect your ego and find a reason to stop (see below).

Every match, something will go "wrong." You need to be ready for it, and adjust to it. This takes practice too. Don't go out there after not playing for months, weeks, even days, and expect to compete like a seasoned veteran taking every bad call and blown shot in stride. "[To] keep your head when all around are losing theirs, and blaming you." -- Kipling

Warm up for 20-40 minutes before you go out on the match court. Warm up should include all the shots, especially your weapons, or how you are planning to win the match. Make sure part of the warm up involves competing / playing points. You're not learning how to play, you are getting ready. You are warming up your mental as well as the physical game. When the match starts, you want your full competitive game on. Starting well is huge.

The Six Stages:

Stage One: The Warm Up and First Three Games. Play like the player you want to be. If you are missing at first, no problem, keep building the game you want to play. The real error is not making mistakes, it is to not be working towards the player you want to be. Grow into your game. Look like the player you have trained to be. Get your rhythm, find your strokes, get your game plan going. Play your best game. Your "A Game." Tennis is about how you finish, keep building towards a successful finish. You don't win the match winning warmups, but you can set the tone. Coaches have reported watching matches and their players don't even look like the person they have trained. Not so good.

Stage Two: Up a Break, Down a Break. Minor adjustments. Refine your game, adjust to your opponent. This is not the time to make major changes. The emphasis should be playing your "A Game" BETTER. When pros are losing, they usually try to play better, not switch to something they don't do as well.

• Example: you are attacking, they start lobbing. You move back to defend the lob. Do you really think you are going to lob better than a team whose "A game" is to lob? Really? I mean, reeeaaallllyyyyy? You need to attack better, not change to their "A game" and play their way. Hit balls that are more difficult to lob, hit overhands, use the "I" formation, etc...

<p>Weekly Lessons</p> <p>Hit and Fit: <i>TRX workout (strength and stretching) & tennis drills using the Playmate ball machine.</i></p> <p>Friday 10:30-11:30 a.m. \$15 Saturday 7:30-9 a.m. \$20</p> <p>Tuesday Ladies' Clinic: Tuesdays at 9:30 \$5</p> <p>Thursday Men's Clinic: Thursdays at 9:30 \$5</p> <p>The men's and women's clinics are drop-in. Register for Hit and Fit by e-mailing Keith you are attending.</p>
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Stage Three: One Team Has 5 Games. Closing out the set if you are ahead, staying in it, if you are behind. You don't want to lose a set. The winner of the first set wins 71% of the matches. The player who is behind will get really consistent, stop making errors. They don't want to lose. The player who is ahead needs to play their game and finish points. The trailing team won't take many chances, but they won't make many mistakes either. Finish. Or make them finish.

Stage Four: First Game of the Second Set. Most important stage. If you won the first set, you want to reestablish your dominance. Come out strong, don't let them back in the match. If you lost the first set, you want to show them right away that things are going to be different. Establish doubt in their minds, erase that confidence they got from winning the first set. Same if you split sets. People naturally let down after a tight set, don't! Mantra: "The next game is the most important game."

Stage Five: Driver's Seat. Up a Set, Up a Break. Break their will to compete. Don't give them a reason to feel they have a chance. No silly errors, play your game. If you are behind, keep fighting, try to create doubt and pressure in the mind of the opponent by not going away.

Stage Six: Match Game. Play the percentages. No unnecessary risks. Hit shots you can make, increase your margins. Players get tight at the end of matches, and play too safe or make mistakes. Go for your shots, with good margins.

- Win the first point. If you do, 74% of the time you win the game. Often in a walk. If you're facing match game, make them beat you; don't hand out free points. Many people struggle with "serving for the match."

- First point of a tie-breaker is huge. The server serves one point, then the other team gets to serve two. If you are serving, and don't win that first point, you could easily be looking at 0-3 (you must win 10 of the next 15 to get to 10-8; 7 of the next 9 to get to 7-5). If you are receiving and win that point, you are really in the driver's seat.

The biggest challenge in tennis is to maintain your level throughout the match. It is so easy to "take a break" and let your focus slip. The player that wins must be playing better at the end of the match than the player that loses. You must win the last point. It is crazy that one team gives up. You should never give up in tennis, you always have a chance. They must win that last point, and lots of perfectly good players have trouble closing out matches. Your opponents maybe one of those. Especially in a league match vs strangers, how do you know? They could be the biggest choke artist on the planet. Find out? (you have nothing to lose, or do you?)

Why do we give up? To protect our ego. It doesn't seem to hurt as much if we weren't really trying. But then why did you even begin? Ego protection is wonky thinking. Losing hurts, fight to win. Don't trick yourself that it won't hurt as much if you give up, and stop caring. If you are out there, you want to win. Do your best, give your best, through all six stages. Don't do well in one stage, do better in the next one. Don't kid yourself, if you lose, it will hurt. If it doesn't hurt, you shouldn't be out there. If you don't care, you shouldn't be out there. "I'm just playing for fun." Yeah, winning is more fun. Vince Lombardi said the best thing in life is to lay on the field of battle, having given your best, exhausted and victorious. The second-best thing was to do the same, having lost. Losing isn't the worst thing that can happen. Not living is. Live!

Don't assume that because a match started one way, it will continue. The winner must actively win the match. Good luck!

Winter Junior Program 2019

The 2019 Winter Junior Clinics begins the week of **January 7th**, and will continue thru the week of **March 4th**. The 9-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	\$125*	\$200*
	<i>The Lil' Ones class is for the always adorable 4-6 year olds. We will be developing the coordination and balance of these young players as well as giving them an introduction to tennis using age appropriate balls and court size.</i>			
II	<u>Future Stars Group</u>	Tuesdays 4-5:30pm	\$235*	N/A
	<i>The Future Stars Group is for our 7 to 10 year old players. The players will be working with 10 and under balls on 36', 60' and full courts. Stroke instruction, tennis games, and match play are all part of the curriculum as we work our way up to green dot balls and full court.</i>			
III	<u>Tennis Development Group</u>	Thursdays 4-5:30pm	\$235*	N/A
	<i>In the Tennis Development Group we will work on refining technique, improving footwork and developing strategic awareness for successful match play. This class is for beginning through intermediate players ages 11 thru 14.</i>			
IV	<u>Tournament Training Group</u>	Wednesdays 4:30-6:30pm	\$300*	N/A
	<i>The Tournament Training Group is an <u>invitation only</u> class. Contact Patric about setting up a try-out. Non-members: add \$25 (\$15 for Lil' Ones).</i>			