



# Orindawoods Tennis News

March 2024

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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*

## Ball Machine Club

It's March, and that is the month of the year where we restart our Ball Machine Club for the next year (March to March 2025). The cost for the yearly membership remains the same, \$110, and that money goes to maintaining the machine. In 2023 we did two major overhauls of the machine, and basically it is a new machine once again. We replaced both wheels that shoot the balls, plus much of the electronics.

The Ball Machine Club membership gets you one year of unlimited ball machine use, when the machine is available. When you reserve Court 3, you are also reserving the ball machine (if you want to use it). Court 3 can be used for regular reservations as well, but that is where we use the ball machine. You can pay for the Ball Machine Club with Keith, he has the payment device with him down on the court, or up in the office. If you are a new Ball Machine Club member, we will give you a key to the shed so that you can use the machine during hours when the staff is not at the Club.

The ball machine is an excellent way to work on your game, to get a good workout, to practice those "easy" (but not easy, or "too easy") or difficult shots, to do further work on what you have been learning in your lessons, and to just plain have fun - the bliss, joy and rapture of hitting a tennis ball. It's all there!

Plus, there is more: The good news is that the ball machine doesn't talk back, or make bad line calls, or trash talk, and it can't keep score, doesn't give you bad advice (see below). The bad news is that it doesn't miss. But it doesn't care if you hit a good shot or a bad shot, it just keeps coming back at you. Day after day, hour after hour, year after year, your on-demand tennis buddy. Oh yeah, you do have to pick up the balls, and it has a voracious appetite. In fact, judging by the fuzz, it's a messy eater (green fuzz is everywhere).

## Junior Tennis

### Spring Program About to Start

The Spring Junior Program is starting on the week of March 11th. It has been filling up fast with returning juniors. If you would like to get a junior involved, contact Head Pro Erik, see Page 5 for the schedule and details.

PLEASE NOTE: the Spring Program start date has been pushed back to 3/11 due to all the rain. Registration for summer clinics will begin on March 12<sup>th</sup> after we get Spring rolling.

It was a wet winter, especially on Wednesdays, but you can also really see the progress these kids are making. The Club is such a fun place in the afternoons, with all the lively junior action. Woo-hoo!

## Weather Reports and Best Guesses (Practice)

Figuring out if the courts are dry is both art and science. Now we have the Orindawoods Court Cam (a link to the Live Tennis Camera is on the top of each website page). From there, you can link to the Orindawoods Weather Station: temperature, wind, rain fall amounts,

## 2024 Club Rates

### Tennis Lessons with Keith & Erik:

½ hour private	\$50
1 hour private	\$85

Semi-pvt (2)	\$55ea
Semi-pvt (3)	\$37ea
Semi-pvt (4)	\$28ea
45 min pvt	\$65
1.5-hour pvt	\$125

Non-members add \$5

**Club Dues:** \$152 / month

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

## Weekly Lessons

<b>Ladies' clinic:</b>	Tues 9:30	\$10
<b>Men's clinics:</b>	Thurs 9:30	\$10

## Hit and Fit

<b>Wednesday 11:30-1</b>	1.5 hours
<b>Friday 11:30-1</b>	1.5 hours

The cost is \$20 / class for tennis and TRX

## Pickleball Playday

Tues. 5:30-7 begins in spring.

## Ball Machine

Ball Machine Club	\$110 /year
Ball Machine / hour	\$8

- Ball Machine Club runs thru 3/30/24
- 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 picks up and drops off racquets early on Tuesday and Friday mornings. Put some zip back your game, get a restring!

## Quote of the Month:

"Life is really just a lesson in finding the balance between fear and courage."

■ Cara E. Yar Khan

humidity, dew point, etc.), If you're wondering if the courts might be damp from fog, there is graph that tracks the temperature and the dew point, if those lines are crossing, good chance there was fog, and the courts could be damp.

In addition to the Court Cam, there are many good weather websites out there (see below).

And yet — sit back, take a deep breath -- and realize none of them will tell us what the courts will be like in an hour, when we are scheduled to play. And as much as weathermen pretend that they can predict the future, no one can.

## Orindawoods Tennis Club

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## HAS Management

Accounting and billing  
questions, contact:  
925-830-4848 or  
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**Sisyphus.** Including me. Yet every morning, and often several times a day, I check the weather apps, for the slightest glimpse of a hint into the future and post the weather conditions on the website at the Club. I get it, since you are at home, sometimes miles away, you want what some live eyes and ears can see at the Club right now, without having to get in your car and come over. I get it, 100%.

### Apps I Like:

**Weather App** on the iPhone - much better, more accurate since it has incorporated Dark Sky prediction model (rain about to happen with accurate alerts 5- 10 minutes before). I go here first.

**WeatherUnderground** (our weather station is part of the "underground"), long-range predictions are very general (because they have to be - might show it's going to rain all day b/c they are not sure exactly what time the storm will pass through next week, but they can see it's out there crossing the Pacific; whereas for today, or the next day, it is quite accurate about the time).

**Windy** This one has the best maps, and they are fantastic! Fun to play with. Can watch the wind patterns for hours, for example. But it has maps for everything. Like where you should wear your long underwear, and how thick.

**Carrot**, snarky attitude (on purpose), but the weather info is good. You can adjust the layout / format easily to suit your needs as well, which is nice.

**Clime** - the NOAA app, very good maps, tends to over predict rainfall. They post a rain emoji for a day or hour if there is only a 5-10% chance. The info is all there, but you can get the wrong impression with a fast look.

**Hurricane Tracker** - just 'cause I'm curious, fortunately, we don't have to deal with hurricanes here, but I'm a weather junkie, and like to see and understand these storms.

**WeatherBug** is good, for a different look. Not an app I use a lot but enjoy it.

**My Mornings.** So, each morning (especially when the weather and court conditions are questionable), I take a shot at looking at these mobile Ouija boards, take a look out the window, even walk around on the courts, and then giving Club members a best guess from here on the ground at Club Central, as to when the courts might be playable. I post my guess on the court cam page. This is just a written guess, like the same I give when people call or text me, which happens on questionable tennis days, as the skies are clearing, and the courts are drying.

Of course, all the apps don't agree, and none of them are "right," (know exactly what is going to happen). And add to that we have the fact that all courts don't dry the same (cts. 5-7 dry much faster than cts. 1-4, in general). Then, the amount of

time they take to dry varies on the atmospheric conditions (sun, shade, temperature, wind, and ambient temperature of the ground, and the air). Yesterday, with very high winds, the courts dried very fast. All this says, the courts dry a lot faster in March and April than in December and January.

**Dry???** But there is one more variable. What is dry? Or what is playable? It varies for each person, and it varies what kind of tennis you are going to play. Plus, 1) people feel very strongly about their definition of what dry is, and 2) that they are right. So one group might play on a court that is damp, but not wet (no rivers and puddles) while another group won't play if the court is dry, but the lines seem slippery (by the way, every court contractor I know says this is false, the lines have the same materials and sand as the rest of the court and dry at the same rate). This is all to say, you can't argue or convince someone who knows they are right, which is most of us.

So, I'll do my best to say what is "dry," knowing that I won't get it exactly right for everyone, and everyone needs to decide for themselves.

**The Future.** And finally, what I said or wrote 45 minutes ago, can change radically in the following 45 minutes. I know everyone is trying to save an extra trip down to the Club, or not miss a possible chance to play. See, even that is

different. Some people will drive miles if they have a 5% chance to play, others won't drive a block if there is any chance part of the court is still damp or if there is one puffy white cloud in the sky over Moraga.

**Personal Responsibility.** Each of us must take personal responsibility for our own safety. Just like when we are at the net, and a person might hit the ball at us. If the other person is about to hit an overhead, from close range, we are not going to stand in the same place as if they were hitting a low, difficult volley, forced to hit up and softly.

Recently I posted it would be dry by 10:30, some people came out, some chose to play, some didn't. One seemed frustrated I was wrong, by their standards. Personal choice, personal responsibility. Only play if it is right for you.

**Hydroplaning – What does science say?** Courts (roads too) are slippery when there is a film of water between the rubber of your shoe, and the surface of the court. When can we be certain that contact with the court has been lost?

If you step on a damp court, and your foot leaves a "footprint" formed from pooling water, often some bubbles, that is an indication that it is too wet, that you could slip. That "outline" of your shoe is left there by excess water. The water between the rubber of your shoe and the court surface. If there is no sign that you even walked there, then you are probably safe to play. Stopping and starting are the two actions when you are likely to slip, so if there is dampness, go slow. I just run different, and stop gradually, if there is some dampness. That means that singles probably isn't a good idea (some people think singles is never a good idea). Stopping is the hard part, on a wet court, or with aging limbs. Of course, this dampness can vary all over the court, so I would error on the side of safety, always.

**History:** History tells us, or weather records more specifically, that we are getting near the end of the rainy season. March and part of April sees some showers, but remember, it dries a lot fast now than in the cold of December and January. As I write this, it was supposed to rain all day, but with the wind, the courts were dry some of the time. Then an intense shower. That's March.

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### **Tennis Tip:**

## **A Tennis Tip on Tennis Tips**

They're always tennis tips and pieces of advice. Some seem helpful, some interesting / intriguing and some just stupid or perhaps beyond our understanding (is that the definition of "stupid?"). I like the way Lao Tzu says it:

*When a superior man hears of the Tao  
he immediately begins to embody it  
When an average man hears of the Tao  
He half believes it, half doubts it  
When a foolish man hears the Tao  
he laughs out loud  
If he didn't laugh  
It wouldn't be the Tao*

As a teacher once explained to me, everything makes sense at the level of understanding. Insanity doesn't seem insane to the person who is caught in that crazy. To them, their actions make perfect sense. Each person inhabits the world of their creation. Thus, the reason for that explanation offered throughout all-time, looking back on some action that didn't go so well, "Seemed like a good idea at the time."

At my level of understanding, after 55 years of tennis, playing, teaching, studying, and contemplating, there are three basic paradigms or belief systems for playing tennis. They are based on significant differences in understanding of force, and our bodies, and what we can and cannot do. Each of us has bought into one, sometimes they can be different for different strokes, but we are using one system most of the time. Sometimes we shift systems due to pressure, or "the will to win", pragmatism, or fear of losing, or one just isn't working very well today ("Where is my backhand today???"). And there are people that do well at their level, using each system. There is more pushing at the lower levels, swinging too, but you see various styles at each level.

I believe that one system is better than the other two, but the point of this article is that they can all work, up to their limitations (glass ceiling), but that we really get into trouble when we start mixing ideas, tips, and instructions from one paradigm when we are playing with a different set of beliefs.

For example, if you were using the swing and hit model, which most players intuitively understand, get your racquet back to prepare to hit, is a good idea. But if you are pushing, or shooting the ball, "get your racquet back" is the worst tennis instruction ever.

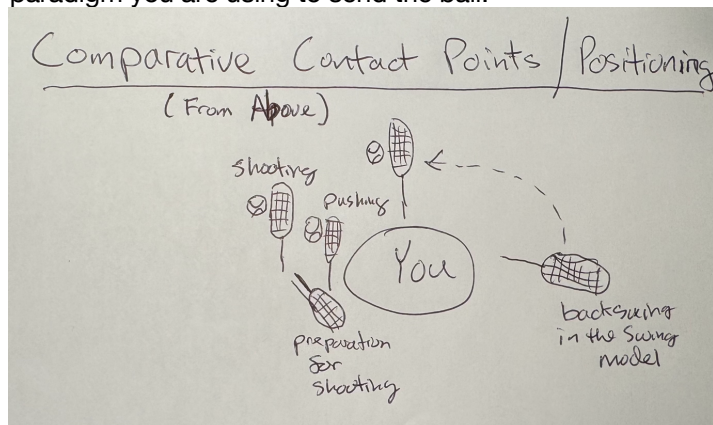
*Few things are right or wrong,  
But thinking makes it so  
- William Shakespeare Hamlet*

So, is “get your racquet back” wrong? Yes and no. It depends on how you are planning to send the ball over the net. If you are hitting the ball, it is not the worst thing you could do. I will tell you it is not the best method, it would be malpractice on my part as a teaching pro if I didn’t, but for swinging and hitting, it makes some sense.

How about “have a firm grip?” or “don’t use your wrist?” Again, with swing and hit, there are already a lot of variables, so again, not the worst advice. But if you are shooting the ball, well, you can’t if you don’t hold the racquet, ball (basketball, shot put, etc.), loose and let your wrist / forearm, flex, stretch and release. Holding it tight would be the end of that. If you were pushing, a firm wrist seems like a good idea as well, like if you were moving a refrigerator, and the force is in your legs or arms.

So again, you must know what paradigm you are playing, for an instruction to be valuable or nonsense.

**How about positioning**, which is important in tennis, no matter how you play. But where? Since receiving / preparing is one of the most important things in playing a ball, let’s look closer at what you should do, based on what paradigm you are using to send the ball.



If you are swinging, your arm goes back and then move forward, in an arc around your body. You are starting with the racquet behind you, the ball in front of you, and your body in the middle. The relationship is:

Ball / You / Racquet

You must get the racquet around you, to contact the ball. If the path of the incoming ball is too close to you, in width, you are jammed up. You can’t get your arm through to where you can hit the ball, your body is in the way. That means you are going to need to stand to the side of the path of the incoming ball and make contact more out to the side. The arm movement is more of an arc, almost a circle around you. (Your body as center).

But if you are pushing the ball (leverage) or shooting

the ball (leverage and torque), your arm / racquet is between you and the ball, and you must get behind the ball, and not have it so far out to the side (as if you were swinging). The leverage is much better when you are behind the ball, so you can push. And you’ll want your arm slightly bent so you can use your arm muscles to push forward. This is the easiest way to play, and learn, but it lacks power, and therefore is not effective as you play better players.

For shooting, want to be more behind the ball to create the compression (stretch and then release) you need to shoot the ball. It’s better if your arm is straighter (your hand is the center), for more stretch back with the racquet head. This stretch creates the most force we see in tennis today. The relationship for shooting and pushing is:

Ball / Racquet / You

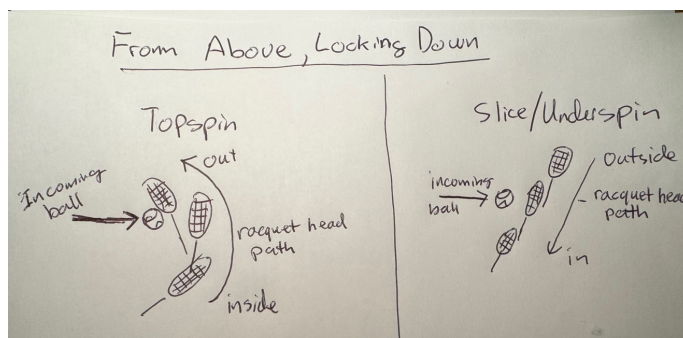
So how you prepare, where you stand, the timing, and the physics involved are completely different between swinging, and shooting or pushing.

Now if you are switching back and forth between paradigms, sometimes hitting, sometimes pushing (shifting back and forth in styles), you are going to need to adjust your positioning accordingly. Pushing works much better with the ball in front of you, swinging with the ball more to the side.

Of course, how you prepare, and how you propel the ball changes everything: Timing, position, tension, grip, focus, shot selection, tactics, strategy, power, spin, control ... you name it. So, getting this positioning right, based on your paradigm of choice, would be paramount.

An adjustment in positioning is also generally required if you are playing the ball with topspin or underspin (slice). In fact, often the way the ball comes to you, should help you to determine what kind of shot you are going to hit most successfully. Topspin shots tend to have the ball a bit more in front (even when swinging, just not as far as when shooting), and closer to the player (in width), where slice can work quite well, and is better, when the ball is further away (in width) from us, and further back (in depth). This makes slice the appropriate response for a ball that seems to be headed past us, and / or one that we are reaching to the side for.

This is because a topspin stroke is primarily inside out, and a slice is primarily outside in. On a right-handed forehand, on a topspin shot, the racquet head travels (in addition to forward and up) across the ball left to right (inside the ball’s path towards outside the ball’s incoming path), from the perspective of the person playing the shot. On an



underspin shot, on the right hander's forehand side, the racquet face would pull across the path of the ball from right to left (as well as higher to lower, and some amount of back / forward).

Moving in three dimensions is one element of what makes the modern strokes so much more powerful. The swing model and push model are mostly back and forward, though there are swing models that have a vertical component (at the cost of forward movement). The width in the swing model arcing in a circle around the body is too slow to positively effect much acceleration). Modern strokes, shooting the ball, incorporates a dynamic width dimension. Three dimensions, three sources of stretch and acceleration for speed or spin. The game evolves, evolve with it!

**Please note, we have adjusted the Junior Program schedule below slightly due to weather during the winter session, starting classes on 3/11 (instead of on March 4th) and the session will be 8 weeks. Registration for summer will begin March 12<sup>th</sup>.**



### Orindawoods Tennis Club – Spring 2024 Junior Tennis 650 Orindawoods Drive, Orinda, CA 94563

Spring 2024 junior tennis at Orindawoods Tennis Club (OTC) will operate from Monday, March 4, 2024, to Thursday, May 9, 2024. If you are interested in participating please contact Erik Oehlschlager via email at [erik@orindawoodstennis.com](mailto:erik@orindawoodstennis.com). Groups are formed based on player levels and the following grade school designations:

- Transition Kindergarteners and Kindergarteners (TK & K)
- First through Third Graders (1st - 3rd)
- Fourth and Fifth Graders (4th & 5th)
- Sixth through Tenth Graders (6th - 10th)

We use two player level categories for groupings: 1) developmental groups - those learning to develop service, groundstroke, and ball tracking skills that are necessary for playing points; and 2) playing groups - those that have demonstrated the ability to focus, play points using service, return-of-service, and groundstroke rallying skills. Participation in the playing groups is by invitation only and limited to 4th through 10th graders.

The Spring '24 costs and schedule of daily times for all groups are summarized below in Table 1.

**TABLE 1. SPRING 2024 SESSIONS AND COSTS SCHEDULE**

TIMES	GROUPS, COSTS, AND SESSIONS			
	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
3:15 - 4:00 PM	TK-K DEVELOPMENT MEMBERS \$170 NON-MEMBERS \$195	TK-K DEVELOPMENT MEMBERS \$170 NON-MEMBERS \$195	TK-K DEVELOPMENT MEMBERS \$170 NON-MEMBERS \$195	
4:00 - 5:00 PM	1ST-3RD DEVELOPMENT MEMBERS \$225 NON-MEMBERS \$250	1ST-3RD DEVELOPMENT MEMBERS \$225 NON-MEMBERS \$250	4TH & 5TH DEVELOPMENT MEMBERS \$225 NON-MEMBERS \$250	4TH & 5TH PLAYERS MEMBERS \$225 NON-MEMBERS \$250
5:00 - 6:00 PM	6TH-10TH DEVELOPMENT MEMBERS \$225 NON-MEMBERS \$250	6TH-10TH PLAYERS MEMBERS \$225 NON-MEMBERS \$250	6TH-10TH DEVELOPMENT MEMBERS \$225 NON-MEMBERS \$250	6TH-10TH PLAYERS MEMBERS \$225 NON-MEMBERS \$250

The Spring '24 schedule of dates and the schedule of dates for Summer '24, Fall '24, and Winter '24/25 are presented below in Table 2.

**TABLE 2. 2024/25 DATE SCHEDULE**

S M T W T F S							S M T W T F S							S M T W T F S							S M T W T F S						
MAR '24							JUN '24							SEP '24							DEC '24						
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	21	22	23
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	28	29	30
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4
31	1	2	3	4	5	6	30	1	2	3	4	5	6	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	29	30	31	1	2	3	4
APR '24							JUL '24							OCT '24							JAN '25						
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	12	13	14	15	16	17	20
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	19	20	21	22	23	24	27
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	26	27	28	29	30	31	1
28	29	30	1	2	3	4	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
MAY '24							AUG '24							NOV '24							FEB '25						
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10	11	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	17
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	17	18	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	24
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	24	25	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	
26	27	28	29	30	31		25	26	27	28	29	30	31	2	3	4	5	6	7	8							
SPRING 2024 DATES							SUMMER 2024 DATES							FALL 2024 DATES							WINTER 2024/2025 DATES						