



August 2008
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Orindawoods Tennis News

Orindawoods Tennis Club: 925-254-1065; Office Hours: M-F 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m., Sat./Sun.: 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., www.orindawoodstennis.com
"I like this place, and willingly could waste my time in it – Celia, *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene IV

Men's Lunch Bunch

Awesome!

Last month I attended the Men's Lunch Bunch BBQ at Woodhall. This semi-annual event (July and the holidays) always reminds me of what it's all about here at Orindawoods. Here is a bunch of guys, many in their eighties, coming together to see each other, break bread and enjoy friendships that are sometimes fifty years old (many of these guys worked together). There is a sense of community here, of caring for each other, for supporting each other as we all grow older.

And this group has always been open to new members, and now there is a new group, the young bucks, joining into these festivities. I have no doubt that these young guys, in their sixties, will continue the tradition. Even a few of the working guys, take the time to take lunch off and come to be part of the group.

It is what a club like ours is all about. Orindawoods is much more than a place to play tennis. You see it with this men's group, and the Ace It! Breast Cancer Awareness Day. Our Club is a wonderful place to be a part of, thanks to you all for making it that way!

Ed Payne

We lost Orindawoods resident, former board member, tennis partner and friend Ed Payne last month, and he is greatly missed by all those who knew him in the Orindawoods community.

To walk with wisdom
To speak with kindness
To move with quiet strength
And live with intelligence and love

Ed's family asks that if you are moved, please make donations to the Sierra Club in Ed's memory.

August 8

Twilight Tennis BBQ

Hey, let's have a party. A Twilight Tennis Party. We'll play some tennis (5-7 p.m., Keith's magic mixer), and eat a little steak (Kinder's, of course). Have some wine and beer, and chat it up with our friends and neighbors. Our first

Ace It! Thank you

Wow! Another wonderful, successful year for Ace It!, the tennis benefit for breast cancer awareness, here at Orindawoods. This year's event held on June 21st, raised over \$15,000!!!! Thank you to all who participated or contributed. It was a great day filled with laughter, togetherness, fun, awareness and, of course, competition.

Though it was one of the hottest days of the year, everyone "kept their cool", remembering to drink plenty of fluids, get in the shade often, and take a little extra time between change overs.

We did have our first '911' call for a heat related problem, (Sue is fine, thanks to all that helped her, and is back on the courts). Another Ace It! first that June day, it rained!!! One cloud in the sky, and it rained!!! Unbelievable.

Many thanks to our pros Keith, Patric, Philip, Brad, Pablo, Karl and Alison for donating their time in the morning for our informative, yet fun-filled clinics. special thanks to Orindawoods homeowners and Tennis Club members for letting us use the courts all day. Also, a big thank you to Sleepy Hollow, Orinda Country Club and Bentley School for sharing their courts with us for use during the afternoon tourney.

The Ace It! Committee is grateful for the "behind the scenes" help from Barbara, Janis, Lynda, Janine, Kris, Penny, Lu and Nancy. A big thank you for all of our wonderful sponsors, especially Mel's famous Ace It! Ale.

We hope to see you all next year!!!!!!!

--Gina Tracey, Ace It! Chairperson,
Spiritual Leader, Guru

Pool Hours and Rules

The pool is open from dawn to dusk. Remember, no children under 14 without a parent, no glass in the pool area, no diving or running, and be sure to have lots of fun!

Twilight was on Friday, July 18.

Twilight number Two is coming right up on August 8. Remember, you don't need to play tennis to join us for dinner. This is a community party, and we want you to be involved.

To sign up, you can register on the Club's website, or call or e-mail Keith and let him know. Be sure to say if you are playing tennis, and what you want for dinner, steak or chicken. The cost is \$18 for just dinner, \$20 if you play tennis. Thanks.

Other upcoming Twilights: 9/12 and a weekend in Oct. (as it is too dark to have one on Friday night in Oct.).

MTT Update

We are slightly halfway through the Monday Team Tennis Season, and it has been a great one so far. Lysbeth's powerful Team Five jumped out to an early lead, but now the gap is closing thanks to the fine play of Teams One, Three and Four closing the gap. With 416 games being played by each team (1,248 over all), the difference between first and third is only 15 games, or not even two 8-0 rounds. Teams Two and Six are in a close battle for the free lesson.

(Results through 7/7, 7/14 was too late to publish here)

<u>Team</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>PCT</u>	<u>Ave. Wins</u>	<u>GB</u>
Team Five	235	181	.565	58.75	0
Team One	221	195	.531	55.25	14
Team Three	220	196	.529	55.00	15
Team Four	206	210	.495	51.5	29
Team Two	184	232	.442	46.00	51
Team Six	182	234	.438	45.50	53

Tennis Tip

Flexibility

Many years ago I read a book by former gymnast and inspirational speaker Dan Millman (Way of the Peaceful Warrior) which said that the physical part of sport consisted of three parts, strength, speed and flexibility.

Well, I was on board with two of those, or as Meatloaf once sang, "Two out of three ain't bad" ("I want you, I need you, but there ain't no way I'm ever going to love you. Don't be sad, two out of three ain't bad").

In other words, I was strong and fast, but not very flexible. It wasn't that I didn't make some attempts, stretching, yoga and all that. The truth of it is, as Dan Millman warned, is that we tend to do what we are good at (lift weights, run fast), and let those tougher things slip by, hopefully unnoticed (yeah, right).

Fortunately, or unfortunately depending on where you are sitting, the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual realms are all related. So being flexible is also a state of mind, not just a physical strength or limitation. If we are rigid in one area (physical), we may have some cross over into other areas (mental, emotional, our beliefs).

Using my own game as the comic foil here, let me explain. As a point or shot progresses, there are times to make certain decisions, and times to wait for more information on other decisions.

So my talented opponent hits me the ball. As it leaves his racquet, ideally I want to be in a flexible ready position (split step) and thinking, is this going to be a forehand, a backhand or an overhead (three choices)? On deciding which side it is going to, at that point I start my turn. It is a big decision, which side is the ball going to. And the resulting action is a big movement (turn the whole body).

This is not a good time to be thinking, "I'm going to hit a topspin drive down the line." I don't have any idea yet if I am going to be

Quote of the Month:

Man alone, of all the creatures of the earth, can change his own patterns.

Man alone is the architect of his destiny. The greatest discovery in our generation is that human beings, by changing the inner attitudes of their minds, can change the outer aspects of their lives." – William James

able to get into position to hit this shot, or any other shot for that matter. I have to wait and see what happens, how I am able to align to the ball, how the ball is going to arrive on my side of the net (slide, kick, fast, slow).

Now as the ball comes toward me, I move on to moving, or positioning myself in relation to the ball and the contact point (see last month's article on positioning, available on the website or possibly lining your kitchen trash can). My feet are moving, and my focus is shifting from external (where the opponent hit the ball) to internal (how I am going to line the shot up). This is still a bad time to think "I'm going to hit a topspin drive down the line."

By this time I have started the big movements of my stroke (coiling, flexing the legs), but I am still adjusting to the ball (especially if my opponent hit the ball hard, slow, with spin, without spin, high, low, crosscourt, down the line, ... i.e. any ball). My hands should be soft, holding the racquet more like an egg than a club, ready to adjust.

In a word, I stay flexible as I approach the ball and my stroke begins.

So to this point, there have been big moves (turn and coil) and big decisions (forehand or backhand). There have been medium size decisions (positioning to the ball), and starting the stroke (the racquet rises, then starts to fall). Now we are getting down to the smaller decisions. The ball is almost on the strings, and you can "feel" (if you are still flexible in your approach and thinking) what shots are possible. Your focus is internal, that is, you are thinking about what you can do, not "where is my opponent," "what is my strategy," "wouldn't it be nice to hit that topspin drive down the line."

This is when you make the little decisions, spin, placement, adjusting to the ever changing ball, whether to play offense or defense.

One way to look at this, is that the ball tells us what shot to hit. As many of you know, I love to ski, and in skiing, I get it: the mountain is in charge. I adjust to the mountain. It tells me where to turn, what to do next. I follow, and use the fall line, to gain speed, and turn, to control my speed by relating to that fall line in a different way (I turn up hill), etc...

In tennis, the ball should be telling you what to do, not you telling the ball what to do. Sound familiar? Probably not if you are like me. I want to make that ball go somewhere, and I make that decision way too early (before they even hit the ball sometimes, let alone when I should be making the big decisions: forehand or backhand, not little decisions).

Fortunately or unfortunately, I'm not alone (misery loves company). As most of you know, Mr. Federer has played a couple of matches against Mr. Nadal recently (French Open on clay, Wimbledon on grass). One of the problems Federer has with Nadal, is that Federer is trying to decide where to hit the ball way too early (don't hit to Nadal's forehand). And, Federer is also trying to decide which shot he is going to hit with, way before he knows what is possible (run around all backhands, even if he can't). In other words, he has a strategy that he thinks will work, but he isn't taking into consideration if he can actually pull it off. He has convinced himself that just good ol' Roger isn't good enough. Now being the great Roger Federer, he is often able to make these shots, but Nadal is so steady, and so fast, that Federer ends up making too many mistakes, even on very fast court like grass.

If we are flexible, on the other hand, we approach the ball with an open mind, soft hands, and adjust to the ball's nuances. There is a rhythm to each point, and a time for big movements, big decisions, and small movements, small decisions. In tennis, we are not in control, just like the mountain is in control in skiing. Our opponent has some say in the matter, as well as wind, sun, court surface and other elements.

In golf, the ball just sits there. There are some adjustments, like to the lie of the ball, but you have plenty of time to make those adjustments. In tennis, you have to be very flexible, always willing to change nearly everything, and things happen fast. Flexibility is rewarded.

We don't care who is on the other side of the net. Our relationship is with the ball, with staying flexible and open to its ever-changing state, rather than trying to impose our wants and desires on it.

Of course the irony of the Federer situation, is that I believe he has been, in his career, the most flexible player ever. Playing defense when defense is required, shifting immediately to offense when that is a better



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way to win the point. What has happened, is that Nadal has gotten in his head, and he is forcing the play, chasing a strategy, rather than trusting his game. It is a lesson for us all.

Sometimes we just read our own press too much. I became a young football fan in the late sixties, and my team was the Baltimore Colts. Practically unbeaten, the champs of the far superior National Football League, they played the upstart New York Jets of the AFL in Super Bowl III. The Colts were so invincible in the NFL with their two-deep zone defense and figured no upstart could beat them, but Joe Namath and the Jets knew how to play that zone, and pulled off one of the great upsets in football history, rather easily, actually, as I sat in tears.

We do the same thing during our Saturday morning tennis game. We have a great forehand, we pass people down the line all the time, and we think there is no stopping us, but now our focus is external, and we are not really watching that tricky serve coming towards us. We have decided before they even hit the ball we are going for the down the line, but we are all lined up for our down the line, standing still and rigid, and the ball kicks just a bit unexpectedly, and we lose the shape of our swing, flail at the ball, and hit it wide.

After this happens a couple of times, we start to lose confidence, and after a couple of hours, we wonder if we can even play at all (“Where is my flipping forehand today!”). The truth is, we may be a pretty darn good player, but our thinking, our decision making, is out of rhythm with the game. Start big, big decisions, big moves, then position, little steps, keep adjusting, stay flexible. Finally, only as the ball arrives at your strings, do you hit the best shot that you can, to where you are capable of hitting it.

“But what if it is right to them?” I hear this all the time. Have some faith in your game. A ball hit well, right to them, is far better than a ball hit poorly, often missed, away from them. Tennis is a game of errors, or avoiding errors, not primarily a game of hitting winners. As my coach Doug often said, “hit the ball well, winning and losing will take care of itself.”

Stay focused on that. There is way too much worrying about the other guy (even by Mr. Federer), and thus way too much hitting the ball poorly.

Stay flexible (who knows, maybe I’m back to yoga). Change is inevitable. No ball ever comes the same way twice. As the zen teaching says, “be like a young sapling and bend with the wind, rather than an old stiff tree that is rigid, and snaps and breaks in the storm.” Good luck out there!

Orindawoods Junior Summer Camps Schedule 2008

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The summer program begins on June 16 and runs for 8 one-week sessions. Six of the weeks are Tennis Camps (weeks beginning 6/16, 6/23, 7/7, 7/14, 7/28 and 8/4) and two weeks are our Wet and Wild camp (6/30 and 7/21). The weekly schedule is determined by which type of camp it is:

Tennis Camp

Class	Days	Time	Member	Non-member
Little Ones	Tuesday and Thursday	11:15-12pm	\$30	\$35
10s Clubbers	Monday-Thursdays	12pm-1:30pm	\$90	\$100
Big Boomers	Monday-Thursday	1:30pm-3:30	\$115	\$130

Wet and Wild

Tennis Clubbers	Monday-Thursday	12pm-3pm	\$165	\$180
Big Boomers	Monday-Thursday	1pm-4pm	\$165	\$180