



May 2007
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OWTC Pool Opens in May. Stay tuned!

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

Twilight Tennis

We have two Twilight Tennis Parties coming up in the next two months (with more to follow in the summer).

Sunday, April 29. On a Sunday afternoon, April 29th we will play tennis from 3-5 p.m., and then enjoy hors d'oeuvres on the Club deck. This abbreviated Twilight (all the tennis, with out the full BBQ dinner) only costs \$8.

Friday, May 18. Our first full Friday night Twilight, complete with our Kinder's meats BBQ dinner is May 18. Tennis will be from 5-7 p.m., followed by "dinner on the deck." The cost is \$18, add \$2 if you are playing tennis.

To sign-up, register on-line or call the Pro shop (254-1065). Don't forget to tell us if you are playing tennis, and if you want steak or chicken.

Club Reminders

Guest fees are \$5 during Prime Time (8:30-10:30 in the mornings, and lighted courts in the evening). The guest fee is \$3 all other times. We're on the honor system here, as we all want to keep our Club as nice and as inexpensive as possible. Guest fees do help keep the dues down, and if we had to install a front desk/check-in system, dues would skyrocket. Please pay your dues to keep our club friendly and reasonably priced.

Court Reservations are made starting Monday at 8:30 a.m. for the rest of the week (Tuesday-Monday). You can have two active reservations at a time. Once you have played, you can make another reservation. Reservations can be made on-line at the Club's website (you must be registered on the site) or by phone. On-line is faster and has a higher degree of success. Same day reservations must be made by phone.

Register for events and classes on line by looking at the Club Calendar on-line and clicking on the event.

League Matches. With seven league teams (and almost 70 members) playing at this time of year, there is plenty of action coming up. Check the calendar to see when matches are being played. Matches only use three courts (4, 5 & 6), so other courts are available during matches.

Summer Junior Tennis

The summer junior program starts on June 11th and runs eight weeks (through August 2nd). We will feature six weeks of our tennis camps, plus two weeks of our fun-filled Wet and Wild camps, (tennis plus some recreational swimming to cool off).

Numerous children have enjoyed a fun summer on the courts with Patric, Philip and the gang, and have greatly improved their games at the same time. The local high school teams feature several of our graduates.

To get more information, see page four, please call Patric at the Club (254-1065) or check our website's junior page.

Ace It! -- June 23rd

It's time to register for this year's Ace It! Breast Cancer Awareness Day at Orindawoods. Your donation goes to supporting the Summit Alta Bates Breast Center and thus to fighting this scary and dreaded disease.

Ace It! Is an all-day event held on June 23, this year. The morning features clinics with some of the local pros, while the afternoon is filled with the Ace It! Tournament. In between, we serve a wonderful lunch on the Club deck.

Pick up a registration form at the Club, or download a PDF file from the Ace It! Page on our Club website (www.orindawoodstennis.com).

This year's theme is Hope, as it is our fifth year of the event, and the fifth year is huge for someone in remission. Please join us, we all need each other!

Monday Night Team Tennis

It is the social tennis event of the summer. For ten straight Monday evenings starting June 18, our hand-picked teams square off against each other in a battle to find out who is the champion of MTT.

If you want to play this year, all levels of players are welcomed, and the teams and matches are set up to be as evenly matched as possible.

In 2007, in an attempt to control the size of the event and make sure everyone gets to play enough, we will have a "members only" registration period from now through May 15th. After that, we will fill in the remaining spots with anyone who wants to play. I really don't want to tell any members that there isn't room for you in this event this summer, so please sign up in these first three weeks of registration. Last year, we had a bunch of members sign up at the last minute, after we had already accepted non-members, and it made the whole thing a bit large. Not this year.

Register by calling Keith or enrolling on-line on the Club's website. Remember, each Monday includes dinner. Prices are listed on line.

Junior Team Tennis

For the next four Saturday afternoons, the Club will be filled with junior tennis players playing the junior version of team tennis. The action starts on April 21 and runs through May 12 from 2-5 p.m.. Call Patric if you are interested, we might still have space, at least to sub, if not full time.

**Men's Lunch Bunch BBQ
June 21, 12 noon @ Woodhall**

Two Ways To Win, Two Ways To Lose

No matter what style we play (baseliner, net-charger, all-court), we all basically have at least two plans to try to win a tennis match. They simply are: Plan A, you can win the match (you hit a combination of winners and forcing shots that cause your opponent to miss under pressure). Or, there is Plan B; they lose the match (you just hit it in, and they missed – unforced errors).

Quite often, a match will start out with both sides trying to impose their style on the other player or team (Plan A). They are both trying to win the match. After a while, some times a few games, sometimes after a set, sometimes after split sets, one player or team (in doubles) feels that their Plan A is not working.

At this point, the player has a choice. Do they stick with Plan A and just try to play better, give up and throw in the towel, or switch to Plan B and just hit them in?

The match can really change at this point, and switching to Plan B is certainly not giving up. It is just giving up on Plan A (at least for now). If you are really in love with Plan A, if that is "real tennis" to you, then you might not be willing to go to Plan B ("I'm not a ___in' pusher"). In that case you keep playing Plan A and hope you either play better or they play worse. It is also true that a lot of players don't have the skill or temperament to change, and they are stuck here. "I'm goin' down with the ship."

Here's an example of how a singles match often plays out. Fred was beating George, and both were trying to win the match (playing Plan A), Fred was making more high risk shots than George. Now George switches to Plan B and just hits every thing back to the middle, taking no chances at all. From this point on, George hits almost no winners, but makes very few errors too. If Fred can hit enough winners and force enough errors, he will keep winning. The problem is, that Fred was probably winning because of a combination of his winners and George's high-risk errors. With George switching to Plan B, Fred is no longer getting the benefit of all of George's wild errors. On the positive side, the shots that Fred now has to hit are probably not as difficult, because George is no longer forcing him. George is just hitting the ball in the middle of the court (the only real pressure is that he isn't missing).

At this point, the outcome of the match probably depends on how Fred (Plan A) adjusts his game. He is still attacking, but he has to cut down on the number of his errors, since George is no longer helping him out.

What can often happen in this situation is that Fred is making too many errors, and George suddenly starts to win, or at least he is coming back, big time. In a match with two people that really want to win, often Fred will now switch to Plan B too, and then the match becomes this long war of attrition, with neither player making very many errors or taking very many risks. The points can often last 30-40 shots, waiting for one player to just miss an easy one, as we are all human and make mistakes at some point.

I once had the pleasure (read: Chinese water torture) of watching a match between two sixteen year old boys both playing Plan B. The match lasted three and a half hours and the score was 6-0, 6-1. That's right, 0 and 1. Both were in great shape, and very patient. It was just that on average, one boy's patience ran out after about 45 shots, and the other boy's, after about 50 shots. The "less patient" boy would hit some winners, but make more errors.

Looking back on my competitive career, I remember many matches where I played the first set the way I wanted to (Plan A), lost it, and then played the second and third sets the way I had to (Plan B). I won most of these matches because I wanted to win more than I wanted to play what I thought was beautiful tennis (Plan A). The trouble was, I got very frustrated (even though I was winning), because I hated playing this way. I wanted to play the big game, but I wanted to win more. I remember saying about that time that I switched to Plan B, "I'm not going to miss another shot" (I probably attached a few colorful words in there, that I will spare the sensitive reader at this time). The matches I lost were normally against players whose Plan A was too strong for my Plan B, let alone my Plan A. In a battle of wills, Plan B vs. Plan B, I seldom lost. But a player with a better Plan A, a stronger player, would beat me. In other words, as my coach used to say, there is no substitute for hitting the ball well. "Just focus on hitting the ball well, let all that other stuff go," he would say.

If we look at Federer's recent losses to Canas, and his earlier losses to Nadal and Coria, we see a player trying to win the match (Federer/Plan A) vs. a player that is trying to give his opponent every opportunity to lose (Canas, Nadal, Coria – Plan B).

If the defensive player can just get enough balls back, they can frustrate the offensive player into trying too difficult of shots, and then the offensive player will make too many errors. If the offensive player retains some patience, and hits forcing shots but ones that he can make, then the defensive player is having to hit more difficult shots and run a lot more, and

Quote of the Month

"It is not the years in your life that count, it's the life in your years."

-- Abraham Lincoln

will start to make more errors, and/or get tired. I remember Agassi just running players into the ground. (Agassi was a player who played both Plans A & B, depending on the day). It is interesting that both Agassi and Lendl started out as basically Plan A players, and as their careers developed, came more and more to emphasize Plan B.

So what is it for you, Plan A or Plan B? The best players have a tendency towards one, but actually play both, at least some of the time. What you want to do is optimize your chance to win the most points possible. When someone hits you a difficult shot, your best chance is to just hit it back as safely as possible (Plan B). You will win far more points this way than trying to rip a winner off a difficult shot (Plan A). On the other hand, when your opponent hits the ball in a place where you can hit a strong shot, you will win far more points "going for it" than playing it safe and letting them off the hook.

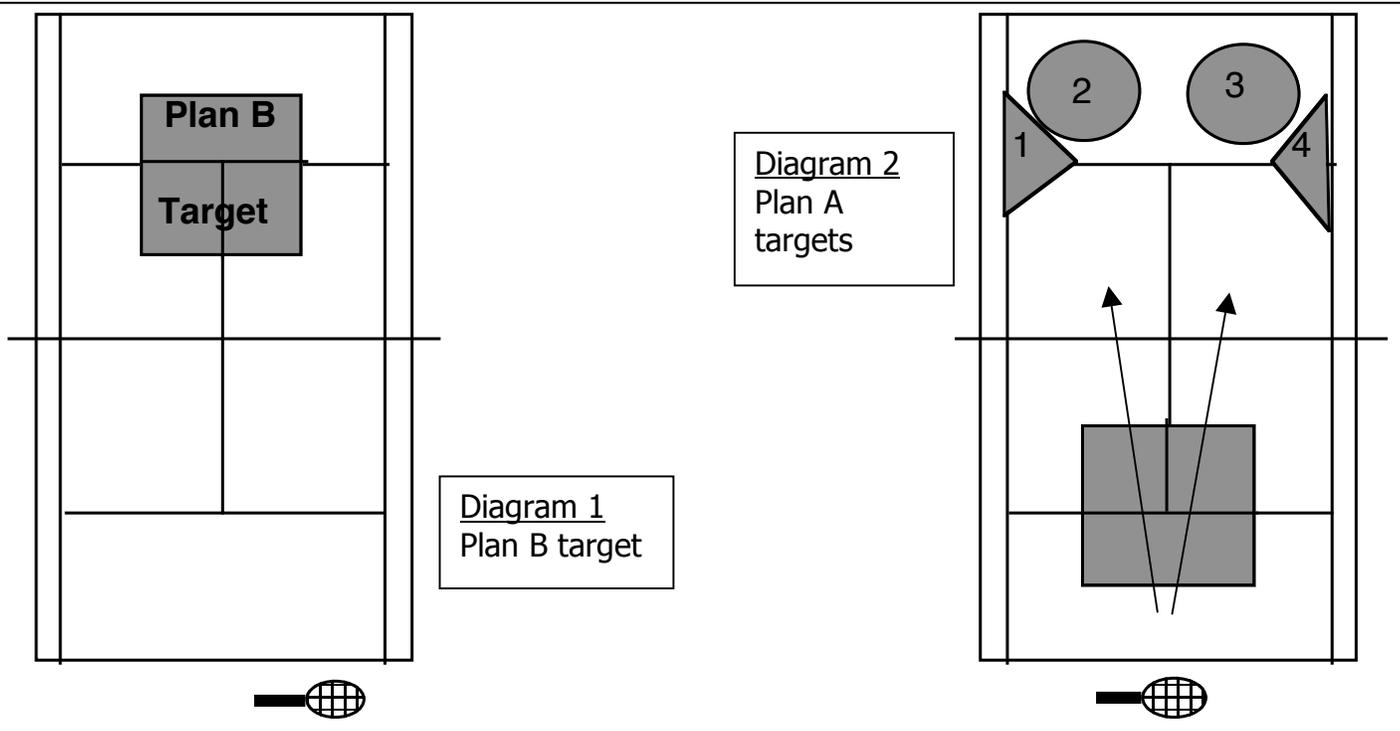
Here is how this works. When you are in trouble, you aim high over the net, for the shaded area in Diagram 1. By the way, singles or doubles, it doesn't matter. When you have to get it in, aim for the middle. In doubles, don't worry if the net man can hit it, just hit it in (this is the essence of Plan B, invite them to miss). On the other side of the net, when you receive a ball in this middle area of the court (in the shaded area), this is your time to try to win the point (Plan A). In singles, there are four basic places to aim using Plan A (see Diagram 2). In doubles, hit it down the middle to split the other team, unless you are very close to the net, then you can angle.

The easier the shot coming to you, the more you can go for it. The more difficult, the safer you play it. To make it really simple, always hit a shot you can make. Federer is normally the master of this ability to recognize what shot can be played offensively, what shot needs to be played defensively. He can actually switch plans from one shot to the next in a single point, not needing a couple of shots to adjust his game and strategy. The player, like Federer, with the most flexible mind, and thus game plan, has the best chance to optimize his chances of winning. The more appropriate your response is to what you are offered, the better you will do.

We all have players that try our patience, who really test us. For an offensive player (Plan A) like Federer, a player who retrieves a lot of balls, like Canas, Nalbandian or Nadal, is tough. For a defensive (Plan B) player, the opponent who hits us such tough shots that we have trouble just getting the ball back, can be very frustrating. I remember Hingis (playing Plan B) getting so frustrated playing Venus or Serena (Plan A), because the Williams' shots that went in were just so tough to even get back. Hingis felt she was playing smarter tennis, but couldn't make the shots and was still losing. This made her try Plan A, where she was clearly outsize and outgunned.

So what style do you play? It is best to have a bit of both, but one will dominate. To play Plan B, you have to cover the court well (quick, well-positioned, or both), have a lot of patience and a great deal of stamina. Do you like long rallies? Do you take real pleasure in frustrating your opponent? If yes, Plan B could be for you.

If you like to decide things a bit more quickly, if you like winning the point, rather than surviving it, if you like imposing your will on your opponent, instead of waiting for their will to crack, then Plan A is for you. To play Plan A and win, you need to hit the ball well. You will be hitting more difficult shots (closer to the lines and the net) than





Orindawoods Tennis Club

650 Orindawoods Dr
Orinda, CA 94563
USA

Phone:

925-254-1065

Fax:

925-254-1380

Website:

www.orindawoodstennis.com

Executive Tennis

Director:

Keith Wheeler
orindawoodstc@sbccglobal.net

Head Pro:

Patric Hermanson
PatricTennis@yahoo.com

Associate Pro:

Philip Laubscher

Junior Tennis Staff:

Wing Fai Doud
Chris Michaels
Sarah Smith
Emily Jorgens

Weekend Staff:

Cortney Krakow

Newsletter Editor:

Keith Wheeler

Associate Editors:

Kristie Wheeler
Patric Hermanson

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players playing Plan B, so your skill level must be high. Plan A players tend to take more lessons and have "better strokes" than Plan B players. You have to have the nerve to go for it, knowing that you will make more errors, but also cause more trouble for your opponent.

Doubles can be tricky, because you might be a B, but your partner is an A. You love it (envy it) when they hit a winner, but it drives you crazy when they make an error. It can be a real eye roller. Or if you are an A, and you blast a serve down the middle and the returner just pops the ball up to your B partner at the net, and they just hit is softly back into play, not putting it away. You go crazy, as the point goes on, and all the time you are thinking, "This point should be over." Eventually the ball comes to you and you miss it. Your B partner turns and looks at you like "why did you try that stupid shot?" and you glare back, "Get a real game!"

On the other hand, this A/B combo can be the best team, if you can put up with each other's weaknesses, because an A/A team usually makes too many errors and have a hard time falling back to Plan B when in trouble. A B/B team doesn't have anybody to put the ball away. If you have an A/B team, generally it is best to get the A player up to the net, and the B player staked out on the baseline.

In singles, it is generally an advantage to play defensively (Plan B), and take advantage of the relatively rare offensive opportunities (a bit of Plan A). Having said that, the top players are usually offensive minded (Federer, Roddick, Lubacic, Sharapova, Venus, Serena). The vast majority of the next thousand players favor Plan B. If you have the skill to hurt your opponent, and not make many errors, you are much more in control of the outcome than the person who just gets it back.

In doubles, because there are twice as many people covering a court that is only 25% larger than singles, the advantage swings in favor of the more offensive, Plan A-minded team, within reason, and using some common sense. The average doubles point lasts only 3-4 shots, while a singles point often reaches double digits.

And finally, for those of us who love to watch tennis on TV, it has been a long time since an offensive player won the French (Noah won, Edberg and McEnroe got close), which is played on slow, red clay. On the other hand, it has been quite infrequent that a defensive minded player (Hewitt, Agassi) won Wimbledon on lightening fast grass. The hard court tournaments, played on a surface much like ours here at the 'Woods, are more up for grabs. These changing surfaces in tennis is why questions like, "Can Federer win the French?" or "Can Nadal win Wimbledon?" are so intriguing. It is a great testament to both players that they have gotten so close on the surface that doesn't favor their type of play.

Good luck out there!

Summer Junior Tennis at Orindawoods

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|--------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Week 1 | June 11-14 | Tennis Camp |
| Week 2 | June 18-21 | Tennis Camp |
| Week 3 | June 25-28 | Wet and Wild Camp |
| Week 4 | July 2-5 (no class on 7/4) | Tennis Camp |
| Week 5 | July 9-12 | Tennis Camp |
| Week 6 | July 16-21 | Wet and Wild Camp |
| Week 7 | July 23-26 | Tennis Camp |
| Week 8 | July 30-Aug. 2 | Tennis Camp |

Tennis Camp Weeks' Schedule:

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| Lil' Ones | Ages 4-6 | Tues & Thurs | 11:15-12noon | \$30/\$35 non OW |
| Tennis Clubbers | Ages 7-10 | Mon-Thurs | 12noon-1:30p | \$90/\$100 nonOW |
| Big Boomers | Ages 11+ | Mon-Thurs | 1:30-3:30p | \$115/\$130 non |

Wet and Wild Weeks' Schedule:

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|--------------------|
| Tennis Clubbers | Ages 7-10 | Mon-Thurs | 12noon-3 pm | \$165/\$180 non OW |
| Big Boomers | Ages 11+ | Mon-Thurs | 1:00-4 pm | \$165/\$180 non OW |

Contact Patric for more information: 254-1065 or patricTennis@yahoo.com

**Spring Junior Tennis Clinics are ongoing,
and there is still some room available.**