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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

Weather Updates

Winter seems to be here a bit early this year. The Orindawoods Website is a great place to get your essential tennis weather information (i.e. "Are the courts dry?").

Court Cam: As most of you know, we have a "live" (updated every 5 minutes) picture of six of our seven courts, so it is easy to tell for yourself whether the weather is cooperating with your tennis plans.

When NASA was setting up the original Mercury and Gemini space program, they set up weather stations around the world with all the latest state-of-the-art weather equipment. Then their top meteorologist traveled the globe inspecting these advanced weather stations. When he got to the Australian outback site, he came upon a cinderblock building that contained every piece of equipment NASA could ever want. Upon closer inspection, the meteorologist, who was duly impressed with the facility, was forced to make one crucial critical comment, "This site is fantastic," he said to the Australians who built it, "but unfortunately, it is missing the most important tool we weathermen have to forecast the weather." The Aussies were dumbfounded. They had everything, what could they have forgotten? "A window," said the NASA expert.

So the Court Cam gives you a window, right in your own home, of what we look like here. I'm sure we look marvelous.

Keith and Patric's Crystal Ball: In addition, at the bottom of the Home page, Keith and Patric give our assessment of the current conditions and future playing possibilities. Of course it is just our best guess, but hey, we are foolish and willing to give it a try. Just like weathermen.

Weather Sites: Our website also has brief summaries of the weather from both Weather Underground (home page) and Accuweather (on the Court Cam page, with current radar). These are my two favorite sites for forecasting, and you can go directly to either one by clicking on their links.

If you want to do some of your own weather sleuthing, the NOAA site (<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/mtr>) has the best satellite pictures. Check out the GOES image for the Eastern Pacific (loop). It is pretty darn cool, if you like such things. If you can figure out which way those storms are headed, you'll be doing better than all the weather forecasters. There are also all kinds of graphic representations of upcoming weather. UNISYS Weather (<http://weather.unisys.com/>) is also very good, and their forecast maps are great. And the site that is almost never wrong is Snow-Forecast.com (<http://www.snow-forecast.com/resorts.php>). Check out their maps that show where they are expecting snow and rain, and they are almost always right, except for when they aren't, of course.

So, am I a weather junkie or what? Comes with the

Save The Date

Reindeer Games

This year's Reindeer Games will be held on Sunday, December 16 at 2 p.m.. Mark your calendars now, and save the date for a lot of fun tennis and holiday cheer. We had a huge signup last year, and we may even have to limit registration this year, so let us know if you want to attend by registering on the Club website (click on the date in the Club's calendar). Old fashioned reservations are also accepted, by calling the Pro Shop (254-1065).

The event runs like a potluck, so there is no cost, just a lot of fun. It seems strange to be talking about the holidays so soon, but they are almost here. Have you started your shopping yet? Yuck!

Court Alert

Junior Tournament

This year's Orindawoods Junior Championships will be held on November 9-11. This tournament is part of the Contra Costa Junior Tournament Series, with a tournament being held at different clubs almost every month during the school year.

Juniors, if you would like to play in this year's tournament, contact Keith or Patric, or you can sign up at usptajuniorcircuit.com to sign up.

This junior event will probably take up all the Club's courts from about 4:30 on Friday through Sunday. There may be some open times, but open play will be totally on a drop-in basis. Please call Keith or Patric at the Pro Shop to see if any courts are available. If there is no rain, we will probably be done early on Sunday, but if rain forces make-ups, then the courts could be busy all weekend.

The staff and players really appreciate the club member's support of these types of events. Growing up, I played a lot of these events, and none of them would have been possible without members like you being willing to give up the use of the Club for the weekend. You are investing in the future of our game, thank you very much.

Club Repairs and Improvements

We have several repairs and improvements underway. We will have new gazebos soon. We are also replacing the drinking fountain on the deck, as it no longer cools. We will also have an improvement in our court reservation system. More details to follow.

territory, I guess. On the other hand, the weather is the great teacher in the realm of simply accepting what is (back to the view from our court cam "window"). Guessing doesn't work very well. While I write this, one service was predicting 70% chance of rain, while the other was predicting 10%. That is a wide range... just like life. (editor's note: By the way, it rained later that day. 1-0 for Weather Underground vs AccuWeather).

The 'Woods Way

I'd have to say, I love Orindawoods. Beautiful courts, fantastic people, a dedicated staff, great lessons, a supportive Board, well-thought out events, fun and competitive teams. It is a wonderful mix. What makes all this work?

I think it is something that I want to call, "The 'Woods Way." Orindawoods Tennis Club is a place that is primarily about fun and recreation. A place that you would "willingly waste your time in," if you note the header on every newsletter. It is your own back yard, but you don't have to mow the lawn, just show up and all your friends are here.

The problem, if there is a problem, is that we have to work together, share and have shared responsibilities. Myself, I don't look at this as a problem, but a thing of joy. We wouldn't really have a club (definition: an association of people with a common interest), if we didn't have people. So I like people here, even if sometimes they are on the court I want. We are a "shared use facility", part of the deal. If we had to all build our own courts, it would cost us a lot more than our monthly dues, and we still wouldn't have anyone to play with, so shared use is a good thing.

Sometimes we are all drawn to behaviors that seem tempting at the time, but really are not in our long-term best interest. For example, one of the reasons the dues are relatively low, is that there are lots of other people belong to the Club to help us with paying for the Club. If we play longer than an hour and half when people are waiting (we sign up for a court at 9, but show up at 8 or 8:30 and play for 2 or 2 ½ hours, for example), then we are really playing more than our share. Others wanting to play might get frustrated, and eventually quit the Club because they can't get on a court when a court should really be available. Club's costs go up, your costs go up. Who are we really cheating? Ourselves, in the long run. Short term gain, long term pain.

So I think The 'Woods Way is really about respect, respect for your fellow members, who basically have the same wants and needs as you do. They want to play the game they love, get some exercise, see their friends, do it at a time that fits into their schedule, perhaps get a bit better and be able to do it all at an affordable price. Respect, you know, treat people the way that you want to be treated. I think it might have been called "The Golden Rule" at one time, but I kind of like "The 'Woods Way." It has a good sound to it. Catchy.

One of the areas this respect comes into play that is not always so obvious is guest fees. I don't know anyone who likes to remind their guests (you should only have to do this once, hopefully) that this isn't a public court (paid for by our taxes), but a private facility (paid for by the owners and members). The guest fees we collect are a significant part of our budget, equal to about 5 memberships a year (five less members we have to have to keep the costs the same. Think of it as about \$4 per month lower dues, because that is what it is spread around).

A club has a choice as to how to handle guest fees. Some clubs have an enclosed facility, with a front desk, where everyone has to enter, and guest fees are taken care of right then and there. While in some ways, that is attractive, the minimum cost for that would be \$45,000 a year in staffing, no doubt more (not to mention we would have to rebuild the clubhouse to have only one entrance past a desk, fence the property, etc), and that translates into about \$33 a month higher dues per member. Ouch.

It is better for a club of our size to use the honor system. We are all gentlemen or gentlewomen here, and if we realize that by working together, we all end up with a better club, then this way is the best way to deal with inviting some of our non-member friends over to play for a day. I know my honor and good name is worth a lot more than

saving \$5 cheating on a guest fee. I'll carry my weight.

As manager, I am not stupid, I know some people cheat. I also know that it is relatively few, and that they are only cheating themselves in the long run. Cheapies always pay twice.

Sometimes the costs are hidden, and not always monetary, but they are costs just the same. I knew a person once who cheated when she played junior tennis. One day, she realized that it was far more damage to her to be know as a cheater, than it was to lose a few close points or matches. We all know this, the real question is, when temptation knocks, can we pass it by. And of course, we all have weak moments; those are really not what we are talking about here. Weight watchers has a motto that I love, "perseverance, not perfection." Get it right in the long run, lose the weight, pay your fees. A hiccup here or there, no big deal.

Quote of the Month:

Children's Property Laws

1. *If I like it, it's mine.*
2. *If I can take it from you, it's mine*
3. *If I had it a little while ago, it's mine*
4. *If it is mine, it must never appear to be yours in any way*
5. *If it looks like mine, it's mine.*
6. *If it is yours and I steal it, it's mine.*
7. *If I think it's mine, it's mine.*
8. *If it's broken, it's yours.*

--Jane Seabrook, *Furry Logic*

Some times people don't have cash on them, and bring it the next time. Fine with me. Respect, it goes both ways.

One of the most disrespectful things I see is that somebody wants some service, but they want someone else to pay for it. I call it "somebody else's money." It goes something like this.

"Keith, can we get a new whata-you-call-it?"

"We don't have any money in the budget for capital expenses," says Keith.

"Well, we really need one. They are really nice. Come on, the owners can afford it."

Orindawoods actually runs on a pretty tight budget, because a percentage of the operating costs are paid by the owners. Most of these people do not play tennis, and so, we want to keep these costs down as much as possible.

If I went to someone else's club to play tennis, I would expect to pay. Those courts didn't get there by magic, and they aren't maintained that way either. I think some people don't expect to pay guest fees because perhaps they are used to playing in parks, where the money is collected much differently (taxes), and the courts are often not as nice.

Being a citizen of this great country of ours, we all learn that our government does things we don't agree with from time to time, but we are still a citizen, part of the team, and still pay the freight (taxes). It is true here at the Club too. Every program might not be for you, but it is part of the package deal that keeps the costs down. Others are paying for something that you enjoy, that they don't use. It balances out to us all having a wonderful club.

Above, I've included the Children's Property Laws here as the quote of the month. It is pretty funny, and of course, we all have a child inside us, but we are grown ups now (most of us), and we can learn to share, The 'Woods Way.

Tennis Tip

Tell Me Where The Winners Are

Everybody likes to hit winners. Winners are fun! And everyone seems to like being a winner too. Winning is fun. Putting aside one of my favorite lines from Vic Braden that "half of all the people that played tennis today lost," an irrefutable fact, how can we maximize your winners, and your winning?

One way to maximize winning, as sports psychologist Allen Fox once quipped, is "I don't play anyone who is any good. As soon as they show signs of beating me, I drop them."

Of course this path is often taken in tennis, but to get the really satisfying wins, you have to risk losing. Forgone conclusions are not very challenging. Roller coasters are a cheap thrill, but nothing matches surviving a major car wreck for a thrill. Trust me, that is the kind of event that changes your life. Of course no one dies in a tennis match, but the fact that you are playing someone who you are evenly matched with, and could lose to, certainly raises the stakes. Those stakes make success sweeter, and defeat more painful. In other words, you are more alive.

As for winners, it all comes down to risk versus reward, doesn't it? It is certainly possible to hit a lot of winners, and lose almost every match. That is because in chasing those winners, we are playing too risky of shots, and missing way more than we make. On the other hand, we can play it too safe, and lose matches too because we didn't take our opportunities to finish the point.

Since most of us play doubles, I can make this very simple: hit down the middle. Looking at the drawings on the next page, we really have five target choices (some of us only have two: in and out): the edge on the left (target A), right at the opponent on the left, between the two players (the middle, target B), at the opponent on the right, or on the edge on the right (target C).

Hitting towards the players only produces winners when you are either so close, or hit the ball so hard, that they don't have enough time to return the shot. Hitting towards your opponent is actually the best shot when you are not in position to hit a winner, and you are thus not able to hit to the edges or between them. This mainly happens when you are at the baseline, or in a defensive position at the net. Aiming between them is good, but from that distance, it is unlikely that it will get by both of them. If you try to hit winners from defensive positions, especially to the edges (A and C), you will miss too much. Missing too much = losing.

If you are in an offensive position, hitting to the edges can produce winners (Figures 1 & 2, targets A and C). If it is a crosscourt shot (Figure A, target A), it has the added benefit of going away from your opponent. We often hear, "angle gets an angle" (a shot hit out wide to you from an angle, should be returned with an angle). A down the line shot (figure 1, target C) to the edge is less effective, but it does have the advantage of getting past them faster (shorter side of the triangle). The big problem with hitting to the edges, is you can miss wide (the net can be higher too). On a cross court shot, the distance you have to hit before the ball goes out, is often significantly shorter than if you go towards the center (figures 1 & 2, target B). This really limits how hard you can hit the ball on the angle, thus giving them more time to run it down, and thus less winners.

So the best place to find winners is in the middle. A shot to the middle is not right at the players, and it can't be hit wide (wide as in, out -- at least, let's hope not). The net is lower too, a nice fringe benefit. Add to all that confusion, your opponents not knowing who should take it, and you have a safe, effective place to play the ball. Of course hitting winners in the middle works best when you are hitting the ball from the middle (fig. 2, target B), so there is a



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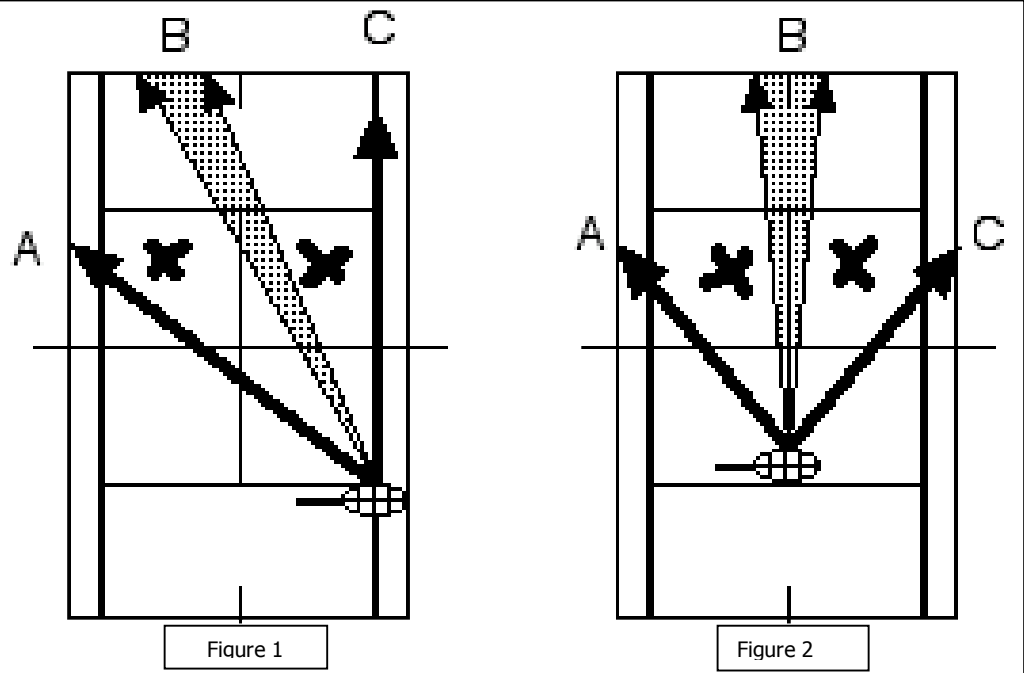
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clear path between the opponent players. If you are on the side, but still feel you can be offensive on your shot, try this:

The next best thing to hitting winners, is to force your opponent into errors. If you can get your opponent to reach, or move sideways, there is much more of a chance they will miss (or hit a weak shot) than if they can get their weight moving towards their target. It's just physics and physiology. The best way to get someone to reach is to hit it away from them, that is, where the shot is angling away from them. That would be just to the middle of the player right in front of you (fig A, target B), or to the outside of the player cross-court from you (figure 1, target A). Again, the middle shot is best here, for the same reason, because it is safer. Touring pros love this shot in doubles. It is their shot of choice on the wide ball.

Hit the middle, hit more winners, make fewer errors, force more errors from your opponent, win more often, play better people because you are a higher level... sounds like a win, win to me. Good luck out there!



Orindawoods Junior Fall Clinic Schedule 2007

The 2007 Fall Junior Clinics began the week of **August 27th**, and will continue thru the week of **December 10th**.

Program leader for the 15 week session is Head Pro **Patric Hermanson**. There are no classes the week of **Nov. 19-23**

Class	Times	1 day/wk	2 days/wk
Lil' Ones (age 4-6)	Tu-Th 3:15-4	\$145/\$160	\$225/\$240
Future Stars (7-10)	Tuesday 4-5:30 pm	\$295/\$320	n/a
Tennis Development	Thursday 4-5:30 pm	\$295/\$320	n/a
Tournament Training (invite only)	Friday 4:30-6 pm	\$275/\$300	n/a

The member price is the first price listed, while non-members pay the second amount. Prices will be pro-rated for a later start, so you can still join the action.

We have factored into the cost of the clinics the potential of two weeks of missed classes due to rain, illness, vacations, etc

Special Discount: 10% discount off the cost of second sibling. Discount taken off the lower of the two costs.

Incident Weather: In case of questionable weather (rain), please call the Pro Shop for a court condition update.

For more information or to sign up, please call Keith or Patric at the Pro Shop **(925) 254-1065**, or e-mail Patric at patricTennis@yahoo.com. Tennis shoes required (no black soled shoes).