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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

October Twilight

Join us on Saturday, October 20th for our last Twilight of the [Indian] Summer season. Due to the darkening skies in the evening, we will play tennis from 3-5, and have our Kinder's chicken and steak BBQ at 5 p.m.. We tried this Saturday format last October and it worked really well, so we are back for an October Twilight encore! Viva la experience!

The cost is the usual \$15 for dinner, and \$17 if your playing tennis too. You do not need to play tennis, you can just come for dinner, but we would love it if you hit a few balls too. Keith will mix and match of the tennis players to get the best matches for everyone.

If you would like to sign up, you can 1) call the Pro Shop (254-1065), 2) register on the website, or 3) e-mail me at orindawoodstc@sbcglobal.com. Don't forget to tell me if you are playing tennis, and if you want steak or chicken for dinner. Thank you, and I will see you on the 20th!

League / Court Schedule

There are plenty of league matches coming up this fall, so be sure to check the Club Calendar (on the website) for the busy days. We also post the calendar in the glass case where the court reservations are listed. League matches usually take 3 courts, so there are always 3 or 4 courts left for member play. It is a good idea to make a reservation at these times if you want to play, as it could be a bit crowded.

In addition to weekend USTA teams, we have two BALL league teams, and one Fall league team. These teams play on the week days, so we will have some league matches this fall during the week. The Senior BALL team plays on Mondays, and the Fall A2 and BALL A3 teams play on Fridays. These are the two days during the week that are less busy than Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday (the busy days), and thus were selected for that reason.

US Open Review & Tips

Serving

In case you were wondering, the serve is the most important shot. If you had any doubt, perhaps you caught the Federer vs. Djokovic final at the US Open. When the second set was on the line, Djokovic had two set points at 5-6, and Federer hit the next 8 first serves in (4 in that game, 4 in the tie-breaker), most of them

Security

The Club House door combination is 3040*. Got that? There will be a quiz every time you have to open the Clubhouse door, so I hope you get it right (especially if you have to use the restroom).

When the staff is at the Club, we will try to have the door propped open, but it may not always be so. It does get shut from time to time (must be those door gnomes).

So why the heightened security, you ask? (It's not the gnomes). As I mentioned in the Club e-mail a week ago, we have had some late-night unauthorized activity in the pool, and are finding necessary to tighten up our security a bit. Sorry for the inconvenience.

We like to keep the Club as welcoming, open and as friendly as possible, so it is discouraging when we have to make things a bit harder for everyone, just because a few are not behaving in a civilized manor. Such is life in the big city these days.

On the bright side, we have been getting our pool furniture washed on a weekly basis.

So, if y'all happen to see me sittin' on the Club deck in the early evenin' light with a shot gun across my lap, you best not be coming by to toss the pool furniture in the pool, smoke a few thousand cigarettes and tossin' back the rot gut whiskey of your choice. I'm done takin' kindly to such behavior on my piece. All others are welcomed at ye ol' swimin' hole. Thanks, y'all.

Save The Date

Reindeer Games

Our holiday tennis social, the Reindeer Games, hosted by Keith, Lysbeth McNeil and Linda Richardi is scheduled for Sunday, December 16th. Mark your calendars and plan to join us for this fun-filled holiday afternoon.

totally unreturnable.

The buzz was all about how good Djokovic's serve is (and Roddick's too, two rounds earlier), but Roger out aces both. Late in the last set, John McEnroe said, "Djokovic has such a great serve, and he only had 4 aces this entire match." (Djokovic ended with 5, Federer 11). Of course, Federer's skill at returning (the second most important shot) comes into play here, but the point is, he is winning the serve vs. return battle in the biggest of matches, at the biggest moments. And it is not just about aces, but how the serve sets up the point that follows this opening shot. This is where Federer really excels.

So what do we have to learn from this? Remember, every point begins with a serve. It is your chance to start the point off in your favor, and you get two chances to do it (two serves). It is clearly in your interest to not waste this advantage over your opponent. Many of us dread having to serve. How many times has the prayer, "Please dear God, let me get this one in" been uttered on the courts of Orindawoods?

Yet the serve is the one shot in tennis that we have complete control over. We toss the ball, we hit the ball, no one is rushing us, and we can place it where we want... if we have the skill. There in lies the rub, eh? If we have the skill. Well, let's go out and get the skill.

Now tennis is a technique sport, not an effort sport. That is why a smaller player like Henin can beat all those "big babe" players and be #1. There are certainly plenty of players out there trying to win the serve just using pure effort, swinging hard, letting it rip, but poor results and sore arms and shoulders certainly point to this not being the solution. In a sport that is skill driven, we come to the serve being the stroke requiring perhaps the highest level of skill. Certainly the service box is the toughest target to hit, being placed behind a formidable barrier (the net) and being of relatively small size. When you think that probably only about 25% of the service box can even be hit by a relatively fast serve (the back of the service box), the target is really quite small indeed.

Acquiring the necessary skill requires both good technique (consult your pro) and lots of practice (consult your basket of balls). As in all other shots in tennis, you have to 1) connect with the ball and 2) have the racquet pointed towards the space over the net that will allow the ball to hit the target. In addition to that, you have to find a way to move the racquet with great force, with out compromising 1) hitting the ball, or 2) aiming the racquet. Again, working with your pro on the proper way to do this is your best chance to learn or improve your technique, and then you still have to practice, because this is a very complicated

movement to coordinate, if you are going to hit the ball with enough force and accuracy to start the point off with your advantage.

On the other hand, a good serve really is within your control, and there is absolutely no reason why each of us can't serve better than we do now. And the payoff in results could be huge for you.

Other US Open Reflections

The mental game is pretty darn important too. In the first set, Djokovic had Federer on the ropes (5 set points), but when Djokovic lost them, he also lost his cool, and his backhand in the process. And the set went away too. Here he was in a tie-breaker, an even match (actually up 3-2), and he was acting like he was losing. If you asked him before the match if he would take his chances in a tie-break with Roger, he would have said heck yes, but here he was in that tie-break, thinking that being in a tie-breaker was a disaster. Not a formula for success.

At 15-40 Federer serving in the third set, Federer hit a ball near the line, but right at Djokovic. Djokovic let it go, thinking (or hoping) that it would go long. But there was

Quote of the Month:

Invictus –William Earnest Henley

OUT of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

no out call. When he asked for the review, it confirmed that the ball was in. It was clearly a case of wishing for a result, rather than staying in the moment and just playing. He suffered a brain cramp, for if he hit the ball, and it was called out, he wins. If he hits the ball and the call is in, as it was, then he is still playing the point and can still win. The only sure loss is to wish it was out, not hit it, and be wrong.

Federer said in his post match interview that after all the titles he has won, and how experienced he is, it doesn't get easier. He was still nervous before the match, with an upset stomach and his hands shaking, but somehow, when he plays, when it comes to those crucial points, he is his own best friend. He doesn't get upset or frustrated, he doesn't rail against the tennis gods, or the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," he focuses on the job at hand. Aligning to the ball, and aligning the racquet to the target.

On another point commentator John McEnroe said, "Federer guessed right, and then he executed."

The mental game is most accurately described as being able to play your shots when the pressure is on. In other words, in a sense, it is to feel no pressure. Or to not let pressure get in the way of doing what you know how to do. How often have you "guessed right" and then missed the shot? I know I have more than I would like to admit. It is not enough to "be right," you have to hit right too.

This US Open final was very close, except for when the big points were played (break points, set points and match points). Federer won almost all of those (12 of 15). This is not an accident, because it just happens too damn often. Twelve grand slam titles, 10 straight grand slam final appearances, etc...

As the announcer said on TV at the conclusion of the match, "Every time Djokovic got close, Federer pulled away."

So how close was this match? Clearly Djokovic can play, and he pushed Federer to the edge, but then something special happens. It was a close match, but Djokovic (and Roddick two rounds early), never even won a set. Is a match really close until your opponent wins two sets, only needing one set to win? When the opponent wins two sets (in a 3 out of 5), that is when you are on the ropes. Nadal had Federer on the ropes at Wimbledon (two sets all, 4 break points in the fifth) and yet Roger still won.

So players seem to keep challenging Roger, and players seem to be getting closer, but the guy keeps winning 3 grand slams a year and is a finalist in the fourth.

And therefore there is something incredible about this guy, who can serve big when it counts, and win most of the crucial points, way more than the law of averages says he should. Reminds us of Sampras, or Becker at Wimbledon. When others feel the pressure, and the frustration, this guy feels the challenge, and the opportunity.

And believe me, we can learn this too, by controlling what we think, by thinking thoughts that help us. But I am not saying it is easy. Good luck out there, and think a good thought next time you are in a jam. What do you have to lose? Just like Djokovic playing that ball he thought was long. Nothing to lose, everything to gain. Go for it!

Tennis Tip

Hitting the High Ball

There are basically two types of high balls, the high volley and the overhead. These are two very different strokes, and the key to your success starts with picking the right type of shot.

If we look at the movement of a stroke, we need to remember that primarily the movement of the arm and body is to align the racquet so that the ball will hit it ("No Bertha, the arm movement isn't primarily for power"). In other words, first you need to find the ball. The second most important thing is that after finding the ball, you need to find the court with your shot. You find the court by aiming the face of your racquet towards where you want the ball to go. Remember, first find the ball, then find the court.

OK, now that we have established these basics, let's think about those high balls. If a ball comes to you as a lob, that is, a ball that has gone up and is primarily falling as it approaches you. That means that your swing (to find the ball), should be primarily rising. Thus, on an overhead, you drop the racquet head behind you on the backswing, and raise it up to meet the falling ball. The primary motion is to go up to the ball (raise your shoulder, raise the racquet head). It is not, what most people think, to swing forward or down. You hit the ball forward or down (finding the court) by pointing the racquet face that way, not by swinging that way. The swing is up, to find the ball. The power (if you must know) comes for coiling your



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body, and then extending up to the ball and thus uncoiling. Of course, some power is created by hitting the ball with a trampoline (your racquet strings, not the frame, Bertha).

Now for the second type of high ball: you get a high ball that is not a lob, but coming more directly towards you. Your best response here is to move your racquet in a straight line towards the ball, a volley, rather than drop the racquet head and swing like an overhead (this would be too tough to time). So when the ball comes to you more directly, pull your entire racquet back, like you are drawing back a bow to shoot an arrow, and then move the entire racquet forward to meet the ball. At all times, the head of the racquet should stay even with the handle, or in other words, the shaft of the racquet should always be perpendicular to the ground. You never want to let the racquet head move independently of the handle, or wave back and forth. When you hit a high ball long, this is usually what has happened, you have let the head drop back and trail the handle, thus the racquet is pointing too much up at impact. This same motion is also what causes most balls to go in the net, it is just that in that case, you have brought the racquet head too far forward and now it is in front of the handle, and pointing down. The point is, waving the head in a swinging motion is bad. (Remember the basics: when you are bad, you lose. Losing sucks.)

Remember, move the handle and the head together, and keep the racquet always pointing straight ahead. Most of the power on this shot is from you moving forward with your body, please don't swing the racquet head.

Good luck out there with those tricky high balls!

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. **The Future Stars Group** is for players with no tennis experience to those who have played a year or two. **The Tennis Development Group** is for our junior high schoolers and for the younger players who can consistently hit the ball back 4 to 5 times per rally and can serve the ball in from the baseline. **The Tournament Training Group** is an invitation only class. Contact Patric about setting up a try-out.

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).