



April 2011
Volume 17, Issue 4

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

A Few Little Things

Ball Toss, Serving and Between Points

Sometimes it is the little things that make all the difference in tennis. Between points, there is a certain rhythm that we have discussed before.

1) At the end of the previous point, you need to mentally break from what has gone before. Don't keep replaying the previous point, let it go. Huge reactions, positive or negative, to what just happened are not helpful for getting ready to play the next point. Preparing for the next point is the only thing you have control over at that instant. We can never change the past, but we can change our reaction to it. 2) Relax, take some deep breaths. At this time, you will probably be retrieving the balls to play the next point. Focus on the strings of your racquet, or the ball you are picking up (keep control of your eyes, don't let them wonder). 3) Review your plan for the next point (in doubles, this might involve a quick word with your partner, or some signals, or some positive self-talk). 4) Prep for the next point. This would be your pre-point rituals, like bouncing the ball before you serve, visualizing, how you stand, hopping in place if you are the returner or other players on the court.

Now, here is the point of this article. If you are playing doubles, and you partner is serving, hand or toss them the ball in a way that keeps them in the rhythm of the between points routine.

On the serve itself, rhythm is everything. Think of the motion as slow, slow, quick, slow. Everyone wants to go too fast, too soon. It is crucial to be very calm, and very focused before you serve. Basically, to calm down. So help your serving partner out by not making them make some frantic move to catch your toss back to them. Don't make them chase the ball, or even think about the ball you are giving them.

So often, I see the net player flip the ball back in some casual way, and the server is completely taken out of their rhythm chasing down the ball. The ball should land right in the server's hand, without them moving, stepping, bending or reaching.

As for the actual ball toss on the serve, here are a couple of quick ideas. Think of tossing the ball back to your hitting hand. Without a racquet, practice the first half of your serving motion (both arms) by tossing the ball and then catching it with your racquet hand. The ball loops up, and then drops back to your racquet hand. You should not be chasing the ball with your dominant hand to catch the ball. In fact, if you go through the whole service motion, the toss should come right back to your racquet hand, and that arm should not be going forward, but cocked and ready to turn. (big hint: the sever is not a forward motion or swing, it is a turning motion).

For returning serve, the ball toss is crucial. For maximum efficiency, you want to be up in the air when the ball is struck. That's right, feet off the ground, so that when you see which way it is going, you can turn while in the air and land moving. That means that you want to observe your opponent's toss, and hop when they are about to contact. When you see which way the ball is going (forehand or backhand), you want to land with the foot on the hitting side already turned, and the

Ace It! Registration

Ace It! registration begins in April. You can download an application from the Orindawoods website (go to Events/Ace It!).

Ace It! is our all-day, breast cancer awareness benefit here at Orindawoods. This year Ace It! will be held on Saturday, June 25.

For those of you who have not participated in Ace It! before, it is a fun day of tennis. The day starts with instructional clinics by local pros, followed by a great lunch, and the Ace It! Tournament in the afternoon. All money goes towards supporting some function of the Alta Bates Breast Center.

See you on June 25!

Monday Team Tennis

Monday Team Tennis will start the first Monday in June (6/6) and run for 12 wonderful weeks (we will take off Monday, July 4). If you are interested in playing Monday Team Tennis, please contact Keith (orindawoodstc@sbcglobal.net) or tell him when you are at the Club.

The cost for MTT is \$50 for members, \$70 for non-members. Please pay on opening night.

Spring Junior Clinics

Our Spring Junior program starts March 14. We have a great bunch of kids out there learning the game of tennis. Space is available, if your young one would like to join us. See page four below for all the details.

Indian Wells Weekend

I think half the membership went to Indian Wells this year (March 12-14). It was great to see so many people down there enjoying the great pro tennis. While the tournament has gotten a bit crowded (my fault, I've blabbed about it too much), it is still the best place to see really top notch men's and women's tennis, up close without traveling to one of the grand slams (and the set up at Indian Wells is better than most of the slams for viewing). So tell everyone it is way too crowded, and then just you and I can go next year. OK, we'll take a couple of our friends.

If you missed out on ordering tickets this year, join us in 2012.

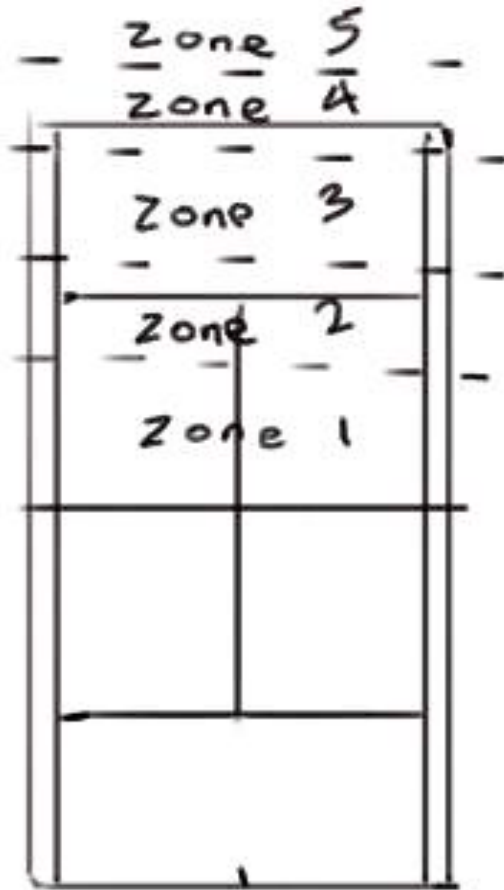


Fig. A

Fig. B

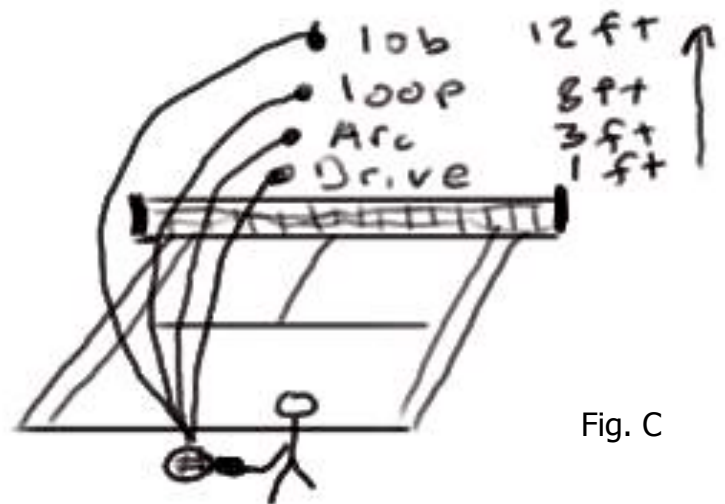
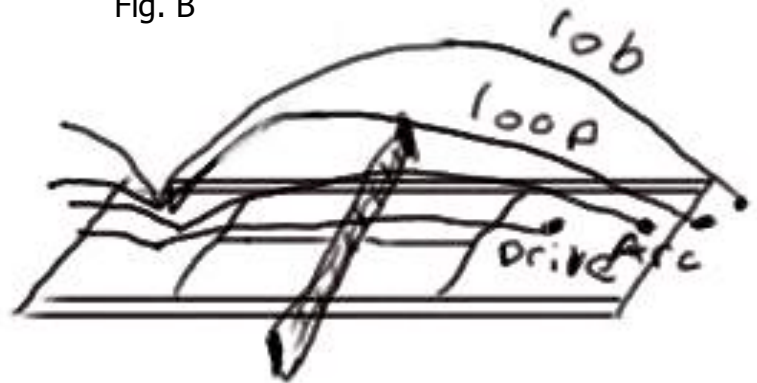


Fig. C

other foot ready to push off. For a right-hander, that means that if the serve is to your backhand, you should land with your left foot turned to the side (90 degrees from forward) and your right foot pushing off so that you can move left as soon as possible. That's how you can get back those big serves and/or hit back bigger returns yourself.

Shot Selection

Heights Over The Net

Think of your best shot, the ball cruising at one hundred miles an hour, three or four inches above the net, flames peeling off the back of the ball, your opponent at the net half ducking and half flailing at your missile, his shot shanked off into outer space, followed by your arms raised in triumph. Pretty cool, huh?

As fun as that is, it is important to realize that shot is not possible in all situations, or even most situations. How sad. So don't compare all your other shots to that standard. When you are in different parts of the court, you want to hit different shots. That is what we are going to discuss here today.

The court can be divided up into five zones to help us with this discussion (see Diagram A). We're going to talk mainly about zones 3 & 4 today. Zone 3 is commonly known as no-man's-land if you are coming into the net and trying to volley. However, if you are stepping up into zone 3 to hit a groundstroke, I like to call it the Kill Zone. This is where the huge shots in tennis are being played from these days. Zone 4 is right around the baseline, where most rallies happen.

Groundstrokes hit from Zone 3 and Zone 4 should be different. A ball struck from Zone 3 should be attacked. A ball struck from Zone 4 should be played with consistency and safety in mind. By the way, a ball played from Zone 5 is all about safety and consistency, and is almost always a loop or a lob.

If we look at heights over the net (diagrams B & C) we can see there are several types of shots we can hit. The drive, the arc ball, the loop and the lob. In Zone 4, you can play any of these, but the drive is risky, and doesn't pay off very well, so except for rare exceptions, play the arc, loop, or lob from Zone 4. Zone 3 is all about the drive, or it's cousin, the dip rip, which we will talk about at another time. If I loop or lob from Zone 3, it is very likely to hit

Quote of the Month:

"Don't worry about what other people think. They are probably more concerned about what they are having for dinner than how you played today."

-- Alan Fox, sports psychologist



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the ball long. If I hit an arc ball from Zone 3, unless I really hit is slow, it will also go long. An arc ball is designed to go over the net 3-4 feet, and travel about 70-75 feet. The court is 78 feet long, but if you have come inside the baseline ten feet with your momentum moving forward, the court is now only 68 feet long, and an arc ball will go long. Bummer. How many times in my life have I hit that shot? Arggh! When we come into Zone 3, we have to aim lower, and hit harder. And we need to attack (hit more towards the net player in doubles, his/her side of the court). That is, hit drives.

How to change your basic arc shot into a blistering drive or even dip rip is better shown on the court in a lesson, than here on paper, but I will leave you with this. You don't want to swing forward. A forward swing from Zone 3 will put the ball either in the net, or long, but not in the court. We need to learn to turn the ball with a smaller turn that the normal arc follow-through over the shoulder. This is where we see the inverted follow-throughs of pro tennis. Think of Federer "putting the racquet in his left pocket." So the stroking goes from a very long, slow, arcing turn on the lob, to a very quick, small, turn on the drive or dip rip. And of course, the loop and the arc are somewhere in between. For more power, we don't swing harder, we turn more and sharper. Racquet head acceleration is the key to harder, lower strokes as we move forward from Zone 5, to Zone 4, to Zone 3. We'll leave the volleys (Zone 2 and Zone 1 for another day).

The drive is an appropriate shot in Zone 3, but not in Zone 4. The lob is great in Zones 4 or 5, but pretty risky in Zone 3 or Zone 2. So the point is, that one shot is not better than another shot, in and of itself. Shot selection in tennis is situational, and the goal is to be appropriate to the situation we are in. Let me say that one more time: be appropriate. Appropriate. Did I mention, be appropriate?

That means that we need to develop not just our favorite, flame-throwing, rocket-launching forehand (see the glory shot described in the first paragraph), but also the other shots that are more appropriate in other parts of the court. Most of us learn to hit an arc ball. That is the basic shot taught in lessons, and is the overall most useful shot. But when you are playing, you are going to get short balls (Zone 3, need to drive), and deep balls (Zones 4 or 5: arc, loop or lob). You may even have to volley (Zones 1 & 2), though some players only come to the net to shake hands. Some players say that they never lob, like it is some strong moral stand. But if you don't lob from Zones 4 or 5, you are a fool. The lob is not evil, in and of itself. Smart players use every tool.

The swing volley is an interesting shot, because it takes a ball hit by your opponent that is going to land deep and force a shot from you from Zone 4 or 5 (most likely a lob), and turns it into a shot from Zone 3. Since the swing volley is hit from Zone 3, the stroke is much more like a drive or dip rip than like a "normal" arc stroke. The swing volley is therefore a nice shot to have in your repertoire, as it can let you decide where on the court to play, rather than your opponent. And to choose between offense and defense.

Another interesting point is that serves have to be hit lower over the net, like the drive, as they need to land in the first part of the court (the service box). That means that they require a lot more turn, than swing, to keep them low and dipping. Both the serve and the dip rip should be hit with a motion that drags across the ball, rather than forward or up and down. A left to right turn on the serve, a right to left brush on the dip rip. Once again, best to see that demonstrated out on the court. Or just turn on TV, and you'll see all the shots on display by the pros. Good luck out there!

A Few Brief Thoughts on April 15 And Similar Concerns

I was at a church service the other day, and the program was on fundraising for the congregation. No one's favorite topic, but it got me to thinking. I remember my dad saying that he didn't mind paying taxes, because it paid for our wonderful country and its defense. OK, my dad is a bit crazy at time, but he has a point. Recently one of my favorite restaurants in Montclair went out of business. I wished I'd gone there a bit more often, bought a bit more pasta, enjoyed another glass of wine. Maybe I could have kept it going. Another of my favorite restaurants isn't as full as it used to be. I want to cast my economic vote, and support that place because I want it to be around forever. These are tough times, and a tough economy, and we appreciate that you are supporting Orindawoods Tennis Club. The Club is doing well, but it is important to support the things that we believe in. The things that bring us joy and comfort. Thanks!

**www.
orindawoodstennis
.com**

*Reservations, Club
calendar, weather and
court updates, lesson
programs and much
more!*

**Orindawoods Junior Clinic Tennis
Spring 2011: March 14th – June 3rd**

The 2011 Spring Junior Clinics begin the week of **March 14th**, and will finish up the week of **May 30th**. There are no classes during the Spring Break week of April 4th thru 8th. Program leaders for the 11 week session are Head Pro **Patric Hermanson** and Assistant Pro **Anna Marie Gamboa**. Coach Patric and Coach Anna Marie will incorporate aspects of the USTA Quickstart Program into the Level I and II classes. If you get a late start, we will pro-rate the price.

Level	Class	Time(s)	One day/wk	Two Days/wk
I	<i>Lil' Ones (Ages 4-6)</i>	<i>Tues/Thurs 3:15-4pm</i>	<i>\$135</i>	<i>\$220*</i>

The Lil' Ones class is for the always adorable 4-6 year olds. We will be developing the coordination and balance of these young players as well as giving them an introduction to tennis.

II	<i>Future Stars Group (Ages 7-10)</i>	<i>Tuesdays 4-5:30pm</i>	<i>\$260*</i>	<i>N/A</i>
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The Future Stars Group is for players with no tennis experience to those who have played a year or two.

III	<i>Tennis Development Group (Ages 11-13)</i>	<i>Thursdays 4-5:30pm</i>	<i>\$260*</i>	<i>N/A</i>
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The Tennis Development Group is for our beginner to intermediate junior high schoolers, and for the younger players who can hit the ball back 4 to 5 times per rally and can serve the ball in from the baseline.

IV	<i>Tournament Training Group</i>	<i>Wednesdays 4:30-6:00pm</i>	<i>\$260*</i>	<i>N/A</i>
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The Tournament Training Group is an invitation only class. Contact Patric about setting up a try-out.

V	<i>Friday Traveling Team Tennis</i>	<i>Fridays 4:00-6:00pm</i>	<i>\$45**</i>	
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Home and away matches will be take place at clubs in Lamorinda during the season which runs from the beginning of April to the end of May. Talk to Patric or Anna Marie if you are interested in participating.

***Non-members should add \$25 (Lil' Ones, only \$15).**

****Non-members participating in the Friday Traveling Team Tennis program should add \$10.**

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.

Inclement Weather: In case of questionable weather (rain), please call the Pro Shop for a court condition update. Tennis shoes required (no black soled shoes).

For more information or to sign up, please check out the club website or call Keith or Patric at the Pro Shop, or you can also e-mail Patric at patrictennis@yahoo.com.

2011 Weekly Summer Tennis Camps				
Camps	Ages	Days	Times	Cost per week Member/Non-member
<i>Full Camp</i>				
Afternoon camp	7-16	Monday-Thursday	12noon-3:45pm	\$180 / \$205
<i>Half Camps</i>				
Instruction block	7-16	Monday-Thursday	12noon-2:00pm	\$115 / \$130
Match Play block	7-16	Monday-Thursday	2:15-3:45pm	\$90 / \$105
Lil' Ones Camp	4-6	Tuesday & Thursday	4-4:45pm	\$30 / \$35

There will be a camp each week, June 13 through the week of August 1. Contact Patric (patrictennis@yahoo.com) to sign up or to get more information or call 925-254-1065. Enjoy!

