



April 2015
Volume 21, 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

New Club House

First of all, enjoy! Yes, the newly remodeled clubhouse is nearly completed. The floors were scheduled to be done on March 20th, and after that, there was just a bit of touch up work to be completed.

As you can see for yourself, the new addition more than doubled the indoor space we have available. More room to dine, relax, stay warm, party and socialize. We are really happy with the way the project turned out, and we hope that you are too.

So mainly, we just want to say, enjoy! And enjoy again!

Breast Cancer Fundraiser

Ace It!

Mark your calendars: this year's Ace It! Breast Cancer Awareness Day and Fundraiser is going to be on Saturday, June 20th.

More details to follow, but don't plan anything that day (tell your USTA Captain, "Sorry, I'm busy doing something important.") If you are a USTA Captain, don't schedule a match that day. If you were planning to get a massage that day, cancel it. We have a massage therapist on staff. If you planning to go to lunch with a friend that day, cancel it and invite them to join you here, we have lunch! If you were planning to play great tennis with good players that day, we've got that covered. If you wanted to take a lesson, cancel it, we have the Ace It! Clinics in the morning. If you need to be seen with cool people like Lysbeth McNeill, you might as well sign up, she will be here. I mean, isn't it obvious. You now have plans for June 20th. Registration will begin in April. Thanks for supporting the fight against breast cancer.

Monday Night Team Tennis

It is almost time for the BIG one, the social event of the year, the tennis spectacular of the summer, the grandest of the grand... Yes, ladies and gentleman, the one, the only: **Orindawoods Monday Night Team Tennis**.

If you haven't played MTT before, that says a lot about you. But it is not too late to remedy past mistakes and past oversights and move forward, progressing nicely with your general, total, over-all, far-reaching, and ultimate coolness. You too can be someone who is admired, and looked up to as a shining beacon of the ultimate tennis player, an Orindawoods MTT participant. Let's face it, not everyone in the world has been given the opportunity to be this cool. Don't mess it up!

Monday Night Team Tennis is our Club's social league tennis event held each summer on Monday evenings from 6-9:30 p.m.. Play will begin on Monday, May 11th and continue into mid August. MTT includes women's doubles, men's doubles, mixed doubles and even triples. Of course we guarantee that the weather will be perfect every Monday night (just depends on whether it is perfect for an Eskimo or a Brazilian – we like to mix it up, keep "everyone" happy). Food is included, with one of the teams providing a fine meal for the entire crowd each evening.

Besides being generally way cool and highly respected, playing MTT is a great way to meet other club members, get out of cooking on Monday evenings, and to spend time hanging out with other pretty people, just like you. And oh yeah, you get to play some tennis too. The game we all love. What could be better?

The cost for MTT is only \$50 for the entire summer. If you happen to be reading this and are silly enough to have not joined the Club yet (hopefully you'll see the light soon), the cost for non-members is \$75.

If you would like to **sign up**, please contact Keith (orindawoodstc@sbcglobal.net).

Tulip Tournament

The annual Tulip Tournament will be held on Sunday, March 29th. We will play from 1 to 3:30pm with a social gathering on the deck to follow. The cost of this season-opening social mixer is \$0.00. That's right, just come on out and play. No charge.

We ask that you bring your own beverage of choice, as tastes and expense accounts can vary a great deal in this realm. If you would like to bring a snack to share, that is also allowed, but not required. We will provide Easter eggs candy, naturally.

We would like to know on who is planning to be here. So please register with Keith (orindawoodstc@sbcglobal.net) or Lysbeth McNeill. You can also register on the Orindawoods Tennis website by going to the calendar, clicking on the event and registering on line.

Keith will mix and match the players, so that everyone gets a variety of partners and opponents. Keith accepts partner requests and partner avoidances for a small, under-the-table fee. Please, small, unmarked bills.

The Tulip Tournament is a great way to meet other players at the Club, have a fun Sunday playing tennis, and hit some balls in the general direction of the other side of the net. Some of you may even choose to be more specific, like in the service box, or down the alley.

In any event, fun will be had by one and all. Join us on Sunday, March 29th and help us kick off the tennis season with a big overhead and large smile!

Ten Things, Indian Wells

Indian Wells, California. Home of the BNP Paribas Open. What an amazing event. All the big stars in tennis are here, even Serena Williams. Thousands of tennis fans roam the grounds, migrating from one stadium to the next in an attempt to catch the best of the seemingly limitless tennis action. Or perhaps it is just a struggle to get out of the relentless desert sun. It was hot this year on the middle weekend. As usual, dozens of club members made the trek south to the tennis Mecca of California, if not the world (more on that later).

Serena Williams, watch over by the triumvirate of world power, Bill Gates, Larry Ellison and John McEnroe (OK, I have a slightly tennis-centric world view), survived an emotional return to the desert after a self-imposed exile. So **lesson number one** from this year's tournament is yes, these are people, not machines. Even the greatest player of a generation can struggle against a relative unknown opponent (playing well), if the emotional mix is off and the stakes are high enough. Serena was able to master both her emotions, and her opponent, to win her opening match in front of a full stadium. But this is how upsets happen, we're people not machines. Even Johnny Mac looked nervous sitting between all that acquired wealth. A Mac sandwich, lots of bread on the outsides (whole lot of a lot of bread).

Lesson #2: Doubles is king (except for the people running things, who worship a different deity). It is very hard to get into a stadium that is hosting a doubles match. Or even more to the point, a stadium where there is a singles match followed by a doubles match. Get there early or don't get in. Many fans will even suffer through a WTA singles match, to wait for a doubles match. There seems to be no discrimination in doubles between men's and women's, the fans love the fast action, lighter feel and interesting tactics. Great stars of yesteryear like Martin Hingis, Leander Paes and dare I add Roger Federer, are still great at doubles. And the fans love them.

Lesson #3: Of course Roger is the main draw anywhere he goes. Crowds six people deep surround the practice courts, just to catch a glimpse of the greatness of Roger. People held their cameras up over their heads to hopefully snap a picture they can't even aim from their sightless position where they are standing on their tiptoes. We all sense and fear the end is coming for The Roger, and yet the level of play is still amazing. Go Roger, go!

Lesson #4: Spin, spin, spin. Those of you who read my columns each month know how much I believe the game has become about chasing spin. The amazing power these players display can be distracting, and awe-inspiring, but it is only made possible by the spin. And now there is so much spin it is impossible to miss it, no matter how fast the ball travels forward, if you are watching tennis live (TV still looks like a video game). To watch Rafa hit a ball makes you think, "That can't be right, a ball can't actually move like that." (again, largely missed on TV, with its overhead angle that tends to flatten everything out). Rafa's rotation grabs your attention, the rapid, downward arc of the ball, because it is so much more than what anyone else is doing. And it is shot after shot. No flukes.

This reminds me of when you play at a higher level than you are used to. You have to watch the bounce closely, because balls that look like they are going out, spin in. The trajectory is one our minds are not used to, and you could miss the call. Expecting one thing and getting something else throws us off (see Quote of the Month).

All the pros spin, not just Rafa, and spin a lot. Most mistakes come when a player goes too big, too flat. And the best players, after such a mistake, "take a bit off" and spin the next one in. Of course, they may actually be "going for it" more, swinging faster, but brushing the ball more. Over and over again we saw a 118 mph serve with spin be a lot more successful than a 135 that was hit or miss. Federer and the other top players exemplify this so well. They don't hit the fastest shots out there, but their rally balls are faster than other player's control ball, plus it has more spin.

Lesson #5: There is more spin in the men's game than the women's game, and therefore that opens up more of the court. There are more angles, more movement in men's tennis. The women's game is still more power, more straight ahead. The increased spin allows the men to move the ball around much more to the sides of the court, because the spin keeps the ball from going wide (with spin, you can shorten the distance of your shot, which is essential to play angles). This leads to more variety in depth as well in the men's game, and more up and back play.

Lesson #6: World-class shopping. And not just El Paseo and all the Rodeo-Drive-style boutiques, I mean you can actually find a huge selection of tennis apparel, right on the grounds of the Tennis Garden. Few can escape without picking up a new outfit. No wonder our Club is so well dressed. And if the tennis shops don't get you at the Tennis Garden, they get you coming and going to the airport at the outlet malls. Trying to find tennis clothes back home can be a struggle (Dick's, Sports Authority and Sports Basement are all worthless), but not in the desert. Let's go shopping!

Lesson #7: Who's driving the bus? If small stadiums are packed, overflowing, with desperate fans waiting outside in long queues hoping to get in and catch a glimpse of some sterling doubles action, while large cavernous stadiums sit 5-10% full hosting some boring singles match between who-cares and so-what, why don't they flip flop the two?

You get the feeling that who ever is doing the scheduling doesn't bother to actually walk around the grounds and see what the heck is going on. A doubles match could fill stadium 2, 3 or 4 (if it was the Bryans, Rafa or the Fed, stadium 1), and the boring singles match between who-cares and so-what could fill stadium 9 (seats about 500). Why not put the boring, three-and-a-half-hour-long singles match on court 9 where it deserves to go and die in relative solitude, and let in all these fans who want to watch doubles in a court big enough to

Quote of the Month

*Time flies like an arrow.
Fruit flies like a banana.*



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house it? It seems like a no brainer, but I'm sure there are contracts and lawyers involved. I'm sure singles must be contractually preeminent, and I'm even more sure that the WTA and ATP must have equal court time. I'm all for equality, just not for stupidity.

Lesson #8: Madison Keys and the balance. Madison Keys seems to have found the balance that the great players, the successful players on the women's side find. Consistent players on the WTA Tour are a dime a dozen. Everyone can rally. That is one reason why so many of the matches are less than interesting, unless you watch them from a purely mental, competitive, war-of-attrition point of view. Madison (like Serena, Maria and Ana, and others who have graced the top levels of the women's game) finds the balance between risk and reward is the place to be. Sometimes they are a bit out of control, and other times too hot for their consistent opponent to handle, leaving for canon fodder the rally dollies that populate the ranks below. A missed shot is just the price of doing business for the top players. You can't miss too many, but to miss too few and "play it safe" doesn't lead to the best results either. Strike the balance!

Which side of the line these purveyors of power fall, of course determines the outcome of the match. Serena has a bit more nerve and sense of mission than Ana, as did Venus and Graf. She knows that if she plays consistent, she is not as effective as if she seemingly teeters on what seems to be the edge of control, only to come up with the big shot that no one can handle enough times to put her over the finish line.

It is the player that goes beyond consistency, and flirts with the measured attack, who has a chance for the top rung. Madison looks a bit wild at times, but she has the game to go far. Madison, a rare pleasure to watch in the women's singles realm.

Lesson #9: Serving. A good serve changes everything, a great serve can be about the only thing (that matters). I watched a match between Melzer and Isner. In every way but the serve, Melzer is better. Better technique, better footwork, better conditioning, a body that isn't falling apart, and yet, Isner, 6-3, 6-4. The serve is just too damn good. Now Isner has to break occasionally, so he does have other skills, but the free pass on the service games puts huge pressure on the other guy every time, just to keep up.

How big is the serve in doubles? Virtually every point in a men's doubles match features the returning team playing two back. If the first serve is missed, the receiver's partner goes forward. This is becoming common in women's doubles as well. Not as much power, but a well-placed serve sets up the whole point, and a well-placed serve, with the net person working in conjunction with the server, is almost impossible to beat.

There are so many amazing athletes on the tour, and so many players with great skills, but someone who has the serve, moves towards the front of the line, while others look fantastic but can't seem to quite break through. Isner and Raonic are always threats, the Melzers never are (and I really like the guy).

If you have a good serve, and a great return, like Novak or Rafa, that immediately puts you in play for the top spot, because the servers are so good, that the few that can offer a defense are the only ones who have a chance to separate from the field.

Lesson #10: Food. It's good, there are all types. Grab a dog or a Caesar salad. One of my closest friends, who is a big foodie, says he comes to Indian Wells for the tennis, and not the food. It is the one trip he goes on where he doesn't think fine dining first, where he doesn't plan every meal, or know all the top chefs in town (though he probably still does). Of course we all come for the tennis, the finest fare of tennis the world can offer. The food is what we eat. The quality is generally good so that it doesn't stick out as a problem. As long as lunch or dinner isn't horrible, our attention is on the tennis.

The BNP Parisbas Open in Indian Wells may be the finest tennis event in the world. If I was offered a trip to Paris, would I want to just sit in a tennis stadium all day when Paris, the Left Bank, the Louvre, the cafes call? What, do I look crazy? New York? No way, I'm headed for Manhattan. London, are you kidding me? Sure, I'd want to say I went to Wimbledon, but one day would take care of that. Even in Melbourne I would want to get out and see the country. No Indian Wells is the perfect spot. The best players, and while the shopping is great, and the food good, and have you ever seen so many green acres wasted on golf courses, the only real reason to be here is Rodger Federer is playing doubles on the next court over, and I hope I can get in. I better line up for 2016 now.

Spring Junior Program 2015
March 16th – June 5th

The 2015 Spring Junior Clinics began the week of March 16th, and will continue thru the week of June 1st. There are no classes during the Spring Break week of March 30th through April 3rd. Program leaders for the eleven-week session are Head Pro Patric Hermanson and Assistant Pro Anna Marie Gamboa.

Level	Class	Time (s)	One day/week	Two Days
I	Lil'Ones (ages 4-6)	Tues/Thurs 3:15-4pm	\$145*	\$230*

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 using age appropriate balls and court size.

II	Future Stars (ages 7-10 years)	Tuesdays 4-5:30pm	\$275*	n/a
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The Future Stars Group is for our 7 to 10 year-old players. The players will be working with Ten-and-under balls on 36' and 60' courts. Stroke instruction, tennis games and match play are all part of the curriculum.

III	Tennis Development (ages 11-14)	Thursdays 4-5:30pm	\$275*	n/a
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In the Tennis Development Group we will work on refining technique, improving footwork and developing strategic awareness for successful match play. This class is for beginning through intermediate players.

IV	Tournament Training	Wednesday 4:30-6:30pm	\$370*	n/a
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The Tournament Training Group is an invitation only class. Contact Patric about setting up a try-out. Players already in the program will be promoted when they are ready.

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

We have factored into the cost of the clinics, the potential of two weeks of missed classes due to the 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. Conditions are also listed on Orindawoodstennis.com. Bottom of the home page.

Tennis shoes required (no shoes that mark the court),

For more information please check out the club website or call Keith or Patric at the Pro Shop. To sign up, e-mail Patric at patric.owtc@yahoo.com or call the Pro Shop at (925) 254-1065.

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