



August 2015
Volume 21, Issue 8

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 BBQs at the Club this Summer

We have planned four Twilight Tennis BBQs for this summer. They are:

July 26	Sunday	Tennis 5-7	Dinner at 7:30	\$20/person
August 9	Sunday	Tennis 5-7	Dinner at 7:30	\$20/person
September 12	Saturday	Tennis 4-6	Dinner at 6:30	\$20/person
October 11	Sunday	Tennis 4-6	Dinner at 6:30	\$20/person

A Twilight is a tennis social. We play "mix and match doubles" for about 2 hours, followed by our Kinder's BBQ dinner. We serve filet mignon or chicken (please select in advance), plus salad and the fixin's. You bring your own beverage (as tastes and price ranges vary). The cost is \$20 per person for members, and \$25 for non-members.

Just to clarify, we do allow 4.0+ players, those folks like to have fun too.

If you have a non-tennis playing member in your family or party, bring them along.

They can just come for dinner. If they are really well behaved, you might consider sharing some of your wine with them.

To Register: contact Keith (orindawoodstc@sbcglobal.net) or click on the Twilight date you want on the club calendar. Be sure to let us know if you want steak or chicken. And if you are playing tennis or sitting this one out. Join us; fun is always a good idea!

Used Tennis Balls

I want to thank everyone who has gotten in the habit of donating your used tennis balls to our **Used Ball Drop**. Most of us only play 2-3 sets with a can of balls, and then we're done with them. They often sit in the bottom of our tennis bags, going flat and weighing us down ("damn this bag is heavy" – twenty balls weigh a lot, if you haven't noticed). Then it is into the trash can with them, and away to the landfill.

Instead of that sad, tragic, dismal end, please give those balls to us, we will use them for the ball machine, the junior clinics and then donate them to a worthy cause (when they are beyond their useful tennis life). Many end up on the bottom of walkers, or classroom chairs in elementary school, or in the mouth of a very happy dog. It's a much better way to go. Ask any ball in town and they'll fill you in (and not landfill you in).

The **Used Ball Drop** is located just inside of the clubhouse door, but outside the entrance to the office. Just drop those used balls there, and we'll find them a home.

Please only donate balls that still bounce. If you have some dead ones (shame on you for waiting too long), we can find them a home, but give them directly to us. The used ball drop is for balls that we can use in the program. Thanks!

Ace It! 2015 Thanks You!

Thank you Orindawoods! **Ace It!**, our annual breast cancer awareness day fundraiser raised \$11,000 this year (on June 20), with about 85 people participating in the event. There were many great prizes (our raffle is legendary, over 40 gifts this year). This year we added a couple of great silent auction items. Many thanks to high bidders Maggie Reaves, Bob Bergman, Val Watkins and Rich Overby. We had a special raffle prize at the end of the day, and Al McLeod won a tennis round robin and dinner hosted by the Ace It! Committee for Al and seven of his lucky friends. Don't you wish you'd treated Al better?

In the morning, we had seven courts of great **clinics** for the participants. Several local pros donated their time and expertise for the cause. Thanks to Brad Reiser, Steve Squire, Jim Coyne, Allison Rhodus, Patric Hermanson, Anna Marie Gamboa and Keith Wheeler.

Hit and Fit

The Best Class Ever

If you have not joined us for **Hit and Fit** (Saturday mornings, 7:30-9 a.m.) you are missing out big time. It's a great workout, you are playing tennis, there is TRX, and you just feel so good after getting some invigorating exercise.

I know exercise can be a dirty word, but this class is fun, it improves both your health and your tennis.

"If I have to run [exercise], at least I want to be chasing a ball."

Led by **Anna Marie** (and Keith as the substitute), this is the very best way to start off your weekend.

We hit forehands, backhands, volleys, overheads, approach shots, sitters... we do it all. Your tennis improves.

And Anna Marie leads us through an entire work out series on the TRX that stretches, strengthens and tones each area of the body.

The cost is \$20 for the 90-minute work out (7:30-9).

To register, click the class you want to take on the club calendar (or contact Anna Marie). You can drop in, but it's best to let us know you are coming, so we can set up the proper number of TRXs and prepare for the class. Join us, it's great!

Like any exercise (like say, tennis), you want to make sure your body is ready for this kind of aerobic workout.

In the afternoon, we held the **Ace It! Tournament**. Winners were Becky Reiss / Nat Taylor (8.0 MxD), Chris Kline / Rich Overby (7.0 MxD), Thea Smith / Nohemi Sanchez (W 3.0), Asa Forman / Kris Hunter (W 3.5), Maribel Barbers / Renee Hammond (W 4.0), Denis Weil / Marty Aufhauser (Mens).

Thanks to the wonderful Ace It! Committee: Tess Siegel, Lysbeth McNeill, Lynda Lawrence, Barbara Britto Tang, Alisa Riahi, Cornia Ninayahuar and Keith Wheeler. And thanks also to Chris Kline and Sofia Gamboa as our event-day helpers. A special thanks to the many businesses and individuals that donated raffle prizes. Outstanding!

And finally, **thanks to all of you**, for supporting this event year after year with your donations, club and time!

Tennis Tip:

Anticipation

One of the biggest problems in tennis is improper alignment with the ball at contact. Basically, not turning your body to face the contact point, or not getting up next to the ball, so that the ball can be to the side. We often hit the ball too far out in front of us, thus causing the ball to bounce or rebound off our racquet strings, rather than be turned, brushed, or rolled for spin (either topspin or underspin), which gives us more control and thus allowing more power.

The cause of this physical error of positioning and timing is largely psychological. We are drawn to facing the direction where the action is (ball, opponent, even the future action: the target). Just think of any conversation you typically have. You face the person you are talking to (unless you are driving a car -- hopefully). In tennis, the ball or the opponent is almost always on the other side of the net, or at least in front of us. The trouble is, that when we do play the ball, we do that a lot better if the ball is out to the side, relative to the net. In other words, we want to play the ball when it is between the side fence, and us. Not when the ball is between the net and us.

"The ball goes back and forth, but the play is to the side." – Tom Stowe, legendary NorCal teaching pro

The difficulty lies in that the ball travels far too fast for us to face it at all times. When the ball travels towards us, it is in front of us most of the time (probably 99% of the time) and seems to be moving relatively slowly, but when it arrives, suddenly it is to the side. There is no way that we can turn as fast as the ball goes from in front of us, to the side. So the trick becomes, to turn sideways early, before the ball arrives. In other words, there is a brief moment, where we have to **anticipate** the ball's flight and destination, and turn away from the ball.

The Trouble With Winning: This turning to the side seems like a simple concept (most of the best ones are), but it is so difficult to do. We don't turn away from our interest naturally. This has to be trained, and trained hard. Virtually everything else in life is telling us to do the opposite. The more our mind wanders to be interested in the target, or in our opponents, or even the ball itself, the harder it is to turn away from the area of our interest. Basically, the more you want to win this point, hit this ball at all costs, get the ball past your opponent, the harder it is to turn away.

"Watch the ball [at contact]", "move your feet", "turn", and "wait" are probably the four most often heard self-instructions given by top players (including pros) to themselves. They all have to do with alignment, placing the ball in the best possible relationship to your body (to the side).

The Deals: There are a couple of deals that good players make, that are not obvious to the casual observer, or the recreational player, that are a large part of the stronger player's success in tennis.

1. Good players are willing to do a stroke that is more complicated (more chance for making an error) in order to hit the ball better (speed, spin, placement, deception). The deal is, they will accept some errors some of the time, to play better most of the time. So, for example, spinning or brushing the ball is more difficult than hitting the ball directly, but you end up hitting such a better ball that the cost of the few errors when you don't line it up, is worth it to get all the great shots when you do. Getting 65% strong first serves in wins you more points than getting 100% weak serves in.

2. In order to be right most of the time, I accept being wrong some of the time. Let me explain this deal with a story: One of my students said once upon a time, "How come I never play as well in matches as I do in the clinics?"

Answer: In clinic, you know what shots are coming, so you are more ready to hit that shot.

I've actually heard this question many times, and generally, it is true, except for the very best players. The best players seem to play better in matches than they do in practice.

How? They know what shots are coming, and they prepare accordingly. How do they know? They guess.

What if they are wrong? They usually lose the point, or hit a weak shot. **And they don't care.**

Good players are not trying to win the rare, or extraordinary points, they are focused on winning the largest number of average points they can. "Where does the ball usually go? That's where I'll be."

Here's the deal, if you could hit the ball much better on 80% of the shots, would you be willing to hit it worse on the other 20%. Almost everyone would say yes to that deal, but few actually play in a way to make that happen. No one wants to sacrifice the 20%, so they play worse on 100% of the shots by failing to anticipate.

Fear, Or "What if". Much of the time, it is quite obvious where the

Quote of the Month:

"The magic number in tennis is 55%. If you win 55% of the points, you are #1. The second magic number: 75% of the points in men's tennis end in errors, 80% in women's tennis. To win, you need to force your opponent into errors."--Craig O'Shannessy



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](mailto:orindawoodstc@sbccglobal.net)

Head Pro:

Patric Hermanson
PatricTennis@yahoo.com

Associate Pro:

Anna Marie Gamboa
gamboa.tennis@yahoo.com

Junior Tennis Staff:

Jeremy O'Neill
Caitlin Powell
Sofia Marino
David Schultz

Weekend Staff:

George Kaiser

Newsletter Editor:

Keith Wheeler

Associate Editors:

Patric Hermanson

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ball is going, and yet we stand in a neutral position, just in case it goes to the other side. "What if" is the trap, and it is a very strong one that sucks many of us into its insidious web. The web of mediocrity.

Control the Action. You can influence where the ball coming back to you usually goes, by where you hit the ball to them in the first place. Hit in the middle, it's very likely it will come back in the middle. Hit the ball wide, and it will most likely come back wide.

Release Yourself From the What Ifs. We are all so afraid of being wrong, that we are never really right. We are so traumatized by our upbringing, and by our education – we are so afraid of being wrong, of making mistakes – that we fall for this con. We have been programmed right out of winning. Let go of the false need to be right.

The Key Question: the question great players understand, and the rest of us don't even recognize is: "What points are you willing to lose, or be at a disadvantage in, so that you can be dominate on the majority of the exchanges?"

The vast majority of balls in tennis travel over the middle of the net, yet everyone covers "what if" the ball goes down the alley. "What ifs" are for losers.

*"In every game or con, there is an opponent and a victim. The key is to know when you are the latter, so you can become the former." – Mr. Greene, in Guy Richie's *Revolver**

The Game or Con. If you are playing the net, and the opponent makes a shot down the alley, and then you decide you need to cover the alley, you have become the victim. The vast majority of the balls go through the middle, but you are covering the alley. You have been conned. You are covering the difficult, the extraordinary, the exceptional, and letting the average float right on by you.

Perhaps after a few games, you realize the error of your ways (realize you are the victim), and start to cover the middle. The middle shot is the high percentage shot for the opposing player. They see you are covering the middle, and start to hit the ball down the alley. They hit some winners, but make more errors, because it is a more difficult shot. You have become the opponent, and have conned them into hitting alley shots, thus making them the victim. It's OK to lose points. Really.

Be The House. Remember, the key to running a casino is to let the victims win. Win a lot. The mark has to win, but just a bit less than half. You let the victim hang themselves by giving them just enough of what they want to keep them falling for the con.

This is why it is so important that you understand the percentages, and understand the game. Are you the opponent or the victim in this exchange? "Wake up Mr. Greene."

A Body In Motion... Here's an interesting phenomena. If you were wrong, and looked left, and the ball went to your right, you have just as good, if not better chance of turning back to the right and making the shot, than if you just stood there in a neutral position waiting -- usually waiting too long -- to see which side the ball is going to. So making a decision, even if it is wrong, is better than making no decision at all.

Why do people wait too long to decide? Because they are so heavily invested in having to be right. That's why they are standing neutral to begin with, and afraid to commit.

What if (can't believe I even wrote that) you can't tell which way the ball is going? There is truly a 50/50 chance of the ball going right or left. First, this rarely happens. Few players position themselves well enough to do this, but if it does happen, what do pros do? When they hit their opponent a sitter, do they stand there, or guess? What about a goalie on a penalty kick? Do they guess? Of course they do. It is better to be right on one side, than wrong on both (by doing nothing and not having enough time to react).

Does Learning to Lose Make You a Loser? My doubles partner once said, back in college, "you can never really win until you learn how to lose." I thought he was talking about losing matches, but really, he was talking about being able to be wrong. Yeah, to even lose matches, but to allow yourself the freedom to decide, to take educated guesses. To take chances. Your job is to decide, to anticipate, not to be right or wrong.

Right and wrong, winning and losing, is for the fans. This is the huge difference between fans and players, and why you have to know who you are today. Are you a player or a fan? The outcome of the game is far too important for the player to get caught up in results thinking (i.e. winning and losing, right and wrong). The performer needs to keep preforming, staying in the moment, making decisions. This is truly the best

way to achieve results, to let results go, and only “count your money when the dealing is done.” Fans are often more nervous than performers, because the performer isn’t focused on results, only action.

Fifty-Five Percent. In his recent, great statistical work, Craig O’Shannessy says that the magic number to dominate your level in tennis is 55%. Win 55% of the points, and you are #1. 54% you are top five, but not #1. The margins in tennis are ridiculously small.

Winning 55% puts you, on average, at about a 6-3 score in a set. 6-0 would be winning about 70% of the points. That doesn’t happen very often, as all the adult leagues are set up to have everyone be of roughly equal level. You see 6-0s more in the juniors, or in the adult open or age group tournaments, which allow all comers, and are not rigged to be close or even, by making restrictions that make everyone be of roughly the same level.

It’s Not Normal / Don’t Be Normal. But back to our 55% number. Can you live with losing 45% of the points? If you can’t, I’m pretty darn sure, you will lose more than that.

Your game plan should be designed that you lose points (about 45%). You lose a lot of points, so that you have a distinct advantage on the majority of the points. This is so hard. Normal people hate losing a single point. That’s normal. Normal wins maybe half the time. Maybe. You’re average, 50/50. Don’t be average, don’t be normal.

Forced Errors. The most obvious strategies that everyone comes upon is 1) to try to hit winners, or 2) play it safe and let them miss (unforced error). But the stats show that only about 25% of the points end in winners, and only about 30% end in unforced errors. That means 45% end in a forced error. Your best chance to win 55% of the points is to try to **force errors**. Our work needs to be focused on obtaining forced errors from our opponent.

“Cover the middle”, “hit the ball in the middle”. “Only hit shots you can make”. “Angle gets an angle, middle to middle.” “You hit the easy shots, let them hit the hard shots.” “Make them hit running shots, or change direction.”

These are simple ideas. So easy to understand, to even dismiss as too simplistic (start asking the evil “what ifs”), but so hard to execute. Yet, here lies the key to success. Make less errors, force more errors.

Anticipation: So this is where anticipation comes in. Your opponent is trying to force you into errors by hitting you difficult, but not impossible shots. If you are more ready for those difficult shots you will most likely make less forced errors. In other words, those shots will be less forcing, because you are ready, you are anticipating where they will hit. You have converted their attempt at forcing errors into them waiting for you to make an unforced error, a much more rare occurrence. And you return hits will be better, thus forcing more errors from them!

Just don’t attempt stupid shots – shot selection is the big challenge for the advanced player).

Playing smart tennis is difficult. It goes against so many things that we have learned in other parts of life. Knowledge, focus, patience, desire... they are all required to succeed. Think exceptional thoughts.

“Accept the things you cannot change, change the things you can, and have the wisdom to know the difference.” – Reinhold Niebuhr

You can’t change were they hit the ball; you can change how you wait for it. **Anticipate.** Good luck out there!

Summer Junior Tennis At Orindawoods

Daily Clinic Schedule:

Orindawoods Clinics	Ages	Days	Time	Cost Per Week Member / Nonmember
Full Clinic				
Afternoon Clinic	Ages 7-16	Monday-Thursday	12noon-3:45pm	\$205 / \$230
Half Clinics				
Instruction Block	Ages 7-16	Monday -Thursday	12noon-2pm	\$130/ \$145
Match Play Block	Ages 7-16	Monday-Thursday	2:15-3:45pm	\$105/ \$120
Lil’ Ones Clinic	Ages 4-6	Tuesday & Thursday	4:00-4:45pm	\$40 / \$45

Two Remaining Weeks

Session 7 July 22-30 **Full Clinic** ___ **Half Clinic:** Instruction block ___ Match Play Block ___ Lil’ Ones ___
 Session 8 August 3-6 **Full Clinic** ___ **Half Clinic:** Instruction block ___ Match Play Block ___ Lil’ Ones ___

Contact Head Pro Patric Hermanson to see if there is still space available in the class you would like to participate in.

Fall Junior Program: The Fall Junior Program will start the second week of school, on August 31. Look for the class schedule in the next newsletter. The format will be similar to past years, with elementary age kids on Tuesdays (4-5:30), advanced kids on Wednesdays (4:30-6:30), and middle school aged kids on Thursdays (4-5:30). Little ones (4-6 yr olds) have class on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:15-4. For further questions, check in with Head Pro Patric.