



# Orindawoods Tennis News

August 2016 Volume 22, Issue 8

Orindawoods Tennis Club: 925-254-1065; [www.orindawoodstennis.com](http://www.orindawoodstennis.com)

*"I like this place, and willingly could waste my time in it" – Celia, As You Like It, Act II, Scene IV*

## ***Ace It!, A Huge Hit***

Ace It!, our Breast Cancer Awareness Day was a big hit on June 25<sup>th</sup>. With close to 90 people participating in one form or another, we were able to raise over \$15,000 for the Carol Ann Reed Breast Center at Alta Bates. Thanks to all of you who participated, and thanks to all the rest who gave up the use of your Club for one wonderful day of joy, happiness, tennis, love and support.

## ***August Staff Vacations***

The Orindawoods Staff will be taking a few "end of summer" vacations to revitalize for the Fall.

Keith will be gone August 1-7

Patric will be gone August 8-21

Anna Marie will take some time off in the 8/8-21 period, but also be available some.

Get exact dates from each staffer.

## ***Falling Asleep***

I was attempting to take a nap the other day, and just as I started to fall asleep, I entered that half-conscious state where the difference between a day dream and a dream is clouded. I found myself teaching tennis, feeding soft red balls to a young junior student who was hitting overheads at the net. I lifted up another lob, soft, like on a platter for them to hit, and they caught the ball just perfect sending it quickly back at me. No time to react, the ball hit me square in the nose, jerking me awake in my chair, destroying my peaceful slumber. Such are the hazards of dreaming.

## ***Quote of the Month***

"The best thing in life is to win. The second best thing in life is to lose ... at least you're in the game."  
– Bobby Riggs

# ***Twilight Tennis!***

Join us for our second summer Twilight Tennis BBQ on Sunday, August 28th from 5-9 p.m.. We will play tennis from 5-7 p.m., followed by our wonderful Kinder's BBQ on the Club deck from 7:30 to when the cows come home.

Twilights are a great way to meet other players, hang with friends, play fun social tennis, and enjoy a tasty meal, all in one evening. **The cost is:** \$20 for members, and \$25 for non-members. The fee includes both tennis and dinner. Please remember to bring your own beverage, everything else is provided. To register, contact Keith ([orindawoodstc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:orindawoodstc@sbcglobal.net)). Ask for the **Court and Steak Combo!** Or the **Slice and Cluck Special.** (i.e., steak or chicken)

## ***Up Coming Summer Twilight BBQs***

*Sunday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, 5-8 p.m.*

*Saturday, Sept. 24, 4-8 p.m.*

*Sunday, October 16, 4-8 p.m..*

## ***Fall Junior Program***

Believe it or not, the school year is approaching fast, and that means the beginning of our Fall Junior Program. See Page Four for all the details about after-school junior tennis at Orindawoods. Learn the game for a lifetime!

## ***Tennis Tip***

### ***Space and Time***

At Wimbledon last month, there was a match between the Bryan Brothers and Zimonjic and Stephanek. Commentator John McEnroe at one point in the fifth set said, "Stephanek sure is close to the net [on Zimonjic's serve]". John offered no further commentary, just that observation, but why are players like Stephanek, as well as the Bryan brothers so close to the net?

In a fast paced game like Men's doubles, you think they would be further back to buy more time. When in actual fact, the higher the level of doubles, the closer at least one of the players on a doubles team is to the net. Less time, rather than more time, seems to be what they are thinking. Or perhaps, they are not really thinking about time at all.

Maybe what they are considering is space, instead. Or as it is said, "Space, the final frontier." Maybe not just in Star Trek movies, but in the elite doubles matches as well.

This month, let's look at the relationship between space and time, and how it can help your game. Not only your net game, but also your return game, and even your backcourt game.

**Angles:** There are a couple of very important angles to understand to answer this question. Or another way to put this, "Does the net still exist?"

If you are close enough to the net (fig. 1, A), the net virtually vanishes. At least as something you have to worry about hitting over. It is very much still there in protecting you from having to hit low balls. One of the most important questions you can ask is, "can you hit the ball directly into the court, or do you have to hit it up over the net first (fig. 1, B). If you can hit it directly (A), you can hit it almost as hard as you want, but if you have to raise the ball up over

the net first (B), then there is a real limit to how hard you can hit the ball, because it has to come back down before it goes long. Generally, from B we control the speed and distance with spin (usually slice).

So that covers the height dimension. But being close to the net is just as important for the width. Consider a wide serve returned with angle. (figure 2) Notice that every foot the ball moves forward, it moves away from you as well. The greater the angle the farther it moves away from you. If the ball was hit at a 45 degree angle, for every foot the ball moved forward, it would slide to the side a foot too. If you were right on top of the net (A), you could have an easy volley. But if you were three feet farther back (B), the ball would be three feet farther away from you, and out of reach (even if you "had more time"). If you were mid service box (C), where most people stand, you wouldn't even consider that same shot could be yours. Space trumps time, most of the time, in defending.

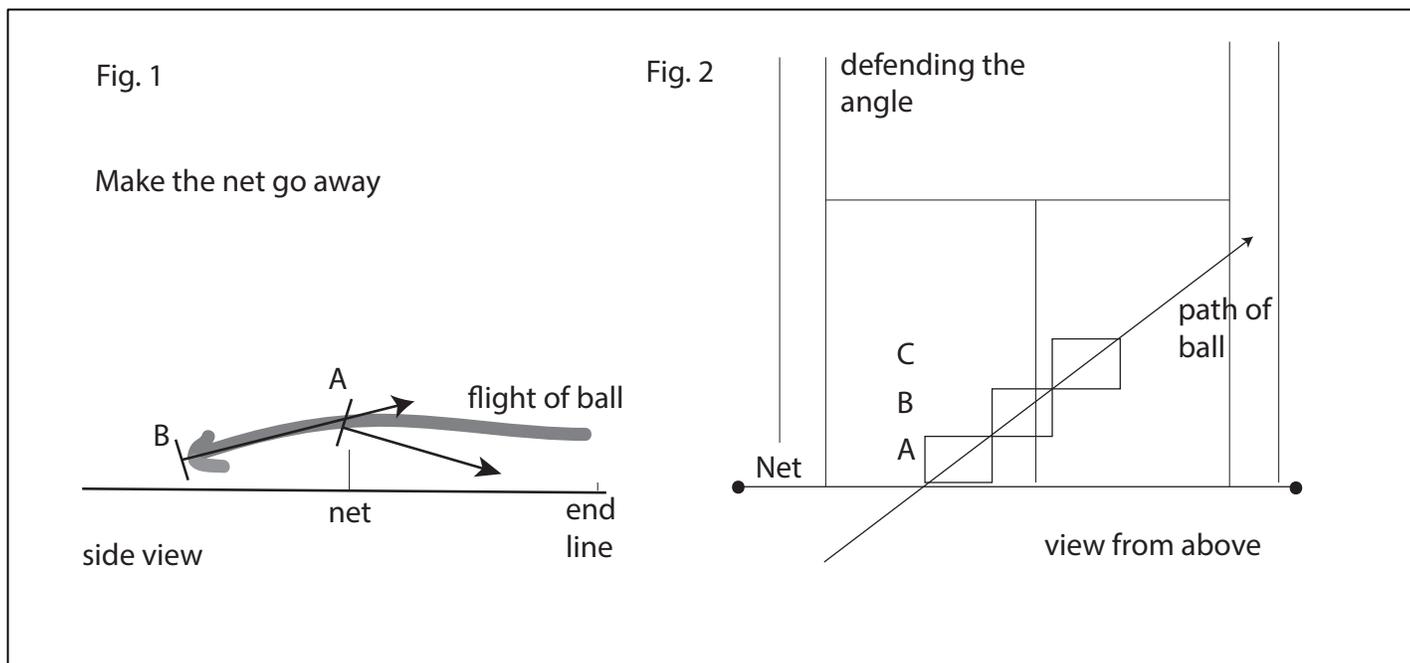
**Time:** Time does matter, but it is more the time that your opponent has to react, rather than the time you have to get the ball. Cover the ball (defend) by managing space. But if you are closer to the net, and thus closer to your opponent, then they have less time to react to your shot. So take time away to attack by being closer to the net.

**How Close?** Stand as close as you can and still be able to play most balls. In fact, one of my golden rules for doubles is: **stand as close as they will let you**. If you are going to stand very close to the net, you basically have two problems (potential reasons why they won't let you), 1) not much time to react, and 2) a lot of space behind you. Space behind you should be covered by your partner in modern doubles. How to do that is a discussion for another day (see June 16 on how to cover the lob). The way you handle having less time is by anticipating where you think the ball is going to go (January 16 newsletter). Most balls that go to your opponent are easier to hit to one side of you than the other. Study their position and alignment and guess. **Through the middle** is a good place to start here, for far many more balls go through the middle than down the line, and it is far easier to hit the ball in the court when aiming for the middle, rather than towards the side line or alley. So guess middle, protect the middle, control the middle... the middle!

**Returning Serve:** The situation is similar in returning serve. The farther back you stand, the more court you have to cover. Standing closer cuts down on the space you have to cover, but also gives you less time. The trick is to figure out what the average serve is like, and then stand where you barely have enough time to get it. This means, of course, you won't be able to return their best shot. That is a good sign. What we want to do well is get their average shot, and destroy their weak shots. Let them be awesome ... occasionally. You own the rest.

**A Competitor:** Amateur competitors have a hard time with this. They are "competitive" and so they want to take down their opponent's best shot. Rub it in their face. But a true competitor plays the percentages, and realizes that they will win more points covering the average shot, rather than the spectacular. They are not drawn in by the sensational, they are not bothered by the loss of a point, or even "the humiliation of the ace". People who like winning, stick to the task at hand: win most of the points, not win the showboat points.

Back to the return, or the volley for that matter. There are times when you might choose to move closer, to give yourself less time, to cut down the angle. The wide serve is a good example of this. Moving sideways is likely to see you aced, while moving forward, cuts the ball off before it can get by you. Much like Fig. 2. Good luck out there!





### ***The World Is Round, So Is a Tennis Ball***

Before 1492, when Columbus sailed the ocean blue (or was that Leif Ericson in 999, which of course doesn't rhyme – ha ha), most people thought the world was flat and if you sailed too far from the shore, you would fall off the edge. At least that was the story, or the legend. All kinds of things have changed since we realized the world is a sphere. Just this week, my step-son Ben flew to London, and he took the polar route. Because, guess what, it is shorter than flying "straight" to London around the fat part of the globe.

In tennis, a court seems to be quite flat (hopefully), so I think most people must think that tennis is a sport played on a flat world. But if you look closely, you will discover that the ball is round. A sphere. Many people have failed to realize this important fact, and have found tennis quite frustrating as a result of trying to hit a flat ball.



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Now no one would actually say the ball is flat, but the way they try to contact it sure looks like they believe it's flatness to be so. That's why their game goes over the edge.

This problem is compounded by the fact that the racquet head hitting area, the strings, is a basically flat surface. So we are left with hitting the round ball with a flat surface (square peg in a round hole?). Or are we? It turns out, that as we discussed in last month's newsletter (July 16), it is more effective to move the racquet in a way that it creates almost a curved surface by moving it around the ball, rather than slamming into it, as if the ball were flat. In other words, we can maneuver the racquet in a way that makes it more match the surface of the object it is connecting with, making that connection more of a blending than a collision. This blending of the balls and strings allows top players to control the ball (with spin) and minimize the hard to control effects of a collision of two very bouncy objects.

It would be beneficial to those of us that play tennis to stop thinking of the contact as a point where a flat object connects with the ball, and more like the way a NBA player dribbles a basketball, with the hand moving around the ball (cupping), creating spin for control.

If you hit the back of the ball like it is a flat surface, you are touching the ball in one point. But if you roll around the ball, like orbiting a sphere, then you touch much more of the ball. This gives you far more control. Again, think of palming a basketball when you dribble it. Much more control than if you simply slap the ball, like a beginner would try to dribble. Touch more surface area, more control.

Now if you start out by touching the inside of the ball and wrap around the ball to the back, and then continue that circle forward, on the opposite side of the ball, this would give you the most "hold" on the ball, the best connection, and the most control. Look at this idea deeper. If you touch the inside of the ball, and you need to get around to the back of the ball to direct it forward, then it follows that the first move after contact is actually backwards, and around the ball, not forwards as most people think. No wonder so many people have trouble controlling the ball. They are going in the wrong direction! The body and the racquet should only go forward once you are rounding the ball, from that inside position to the back, and then forward. Too much forward, too soon, is the biggest mistake in tennis, and you lose all feel and control of the ball by doing so, and the ball just slams away. The only way to control this bouncing contact is to go slow, and thus, is born, the pusher. And pushing, the dread and shame of every player.

A good image of contact is like an ice cream scoop in a tasty pint of your favorite Mocha Almond Fudge ice cream. You don't jam the end in, but scoop around the desired ice cream. Same is true for the ideal stroke.

As we discussed last month, it is easier to understand the racquet slamming into, or hitting the ball (flat surface / flat ball), but it is very hard to play that way. It takes more imagination and self-control to cup the racquet face around the ball, to scoop around the ball and sling it forward, but it is much easier to control the ball and play the game (spherical ball, spherical swing path).

It's time to stop thinking the tennis world is flat, and accept that it is round, and behave accordingly. Join the twenty-first century. Good luck out there!



# ***Fall Junior Tennis At Orindawoods***

**August 29th – December 9th**

The 2016 Fall Junior Program Clinics begin the week of August 29th and will continue thru the week of December 5th. There are no classes the week of November 21-25. The 14-week program will be run by Head Pro Patric Hermanson and Assistant Pro Anna Marie Gamboa. Little Ones and Future Stars will be taught using aspects of the USTA 10 and under Development Program.

<b>Orindawoods Clinics</b>	<b>Ages</b>	<b>Days</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Cost Per Week One day / Two days</b>
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<b>Little Ones</b>	<b>Ages 4-6</b>	<b>Tues and/or Thurs</b>	<b>3:15-4pm</b>	<b>\$160 / \$260</b>
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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.

<b>Future Stars</b>	<b>Ages 7-10</b>	<b>Tuesdays</b>	<b>4-5:30pm</b>	<b>\$320/ n/a</b>
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The Future Stars Group is for our 7 to 10-year-old players. The players will be working with 10 and under balls on 36', 60' and full courts. Stroke instruction, tennis games, and match play are all part of the curriculum as we work our way up to the green dot balls and the full court.

<b>Tennis Development</b>	<b>Ages 11-14</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>4-5:30pm</b>	<b>\$320/ n/a</b>
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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 ages 11 thru 14.

<b>Tournament Training Invitation Only</b>	<b>Wednesdays</b>	<b>4:30-6:30pm</b>	<b>\$410 / n/a</b>
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The Tournament Training Group is an invitation only class. Contact Patric about setting up a try-out.

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

**Pricing:** 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 the 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, or look on orindawoodstennis.com at the bottom of the home page for a court update.

**Tennis shoes required** (no "black soled shoes" that mark the court surface).

**Cell phone** use during class time is limited to emergencies or with consent of a coach.

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

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