



# Orindawoods Tennis News

January 2017 Volume 23, Issue 1

Orindawoods Tennis Club: 925-254-1065; www.orindawoodstennis.com

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

## Club Moves Forward A View of 2016 and Beyond

2016 was a good year for Orindawoods. We hope you enjoyed your tennis this year. Looking back, we resurfaced Court One, returning it to the pristine condition of the other courts here at the Club. We had a great social season, with the Tulip Games, Monday Team Tennis (summer), Monday Night Tennis (off season), Twilight Tennis BBQs and the Rain-O-Deer Games.

Orindawoods continued to be a wonderful place for our children to learn the game of tennis, with clinics, classes and lessons running year around. Our community based junior program is aimed at teaching the typical Lamorinda kid the joys, skills and thrills, the ups and the downs, of playing this great game, that you can play your entire life. In October we once again hosted our Junior Championships, which was well attended not only by our higher-level kids, but players from all around the area. Our men's and women's drop-in clinics continue to meet each week. Anna Marie's Hit and Fit has kept some of us in fine shape every Saturday morning, and is expanding to a new Friday class this winter.

Of course we continue to have a highly trained staff. Keith, Patric and Anna Marie have attended conferences and workshops throughout the year, as well as continuing to study and hone their skills through books and online materials. To have three USPTA certified pros on staff is just incredible. Orindawoods provides an amazing opportunity to both learn the game, and improve your game. It is a teaching facility of the highest order. We also have a great junior tennis staff who assist us in teaching the clinics and camps. These dedicated teenagers have for the most part, come up through our program, and are now not only working for us, but giving back to the "generations" that follow them.

Head Pro Patric Hermanson has done a wonderful job with the Pro Shop. We have a full line of Babolat racquets, and the stringing service is top class. If you are thinking about upgrading your frame, or getting a restring, talk to Patric, Keith or Anna Marie and we can get you started in the right direction. These Babolat racquets are the best I've ever played with, and in the Aero Pro (big spin), Pure Drive (big power) and Pure Strike (control), Babolat has three lines of racquets to meet every player's needs.

League tennis continues to be strong here at Orindawoods. We field teams in every season, and while the levels available vary with the interest of the members, there are league matches almost every Monday and Friday morning during the school year, plus most weekend days (midday). The main barrier to even more teams is usually finding a captain willing to lead the troops. It is important to balance the court use at the club between league play and open play. We love leagues, but we also don't want a situation where league teams take up all the courts and severely limit open, recreational, fun, play. This balance has worked quite well for Orindawoods over the years, and we are committed to keeping it that way. In some clubs, large groups have been known to dominate the courts (tyranny of the majority), where here at Orindawoods we

## Orindawoods Tennis Club Fees for 2017

### Club Fees

Initiation Fee: \$100  
Reinstatement Fee: \$300

Monthly Dues \$129

Membership on hold \$25/mont  
h

### Guest Fees

Prime time \$10  
Non-prime time \$10

Team Guest Fee \$50

### Pool Guest Fees

Family \$5  
Individual \$3

### Lesson Fees

Member Drop-in Clinics \$5

### Keith & Patric's Member Lesson Rates

1/2 hour \$40  
45 mins \$55  
1 hour \$75  
Non-members add \$5

Group hour (4 people) \$20 ea  
Group hour (3 people) \$27 ea  
Group hour (2 people) \$40 ea

### Anna Marie's (Associate Pro) Member Lesson Rates

1/2 hour \$40  
1 hour \$70  
non-members add \$5  
Group hour \$75

### Ball Machine

Ball Machine Club \$110/yr  
1 hour Ball Machine \$8

### **Important:**

*If you have an automatic payment set up with your bank, please remember to change the amount so you don't get late charges.*

have been able to protect the rights of every player. While we can't guarantee you a court, we can guarantee access to the ability to get one. There is time and space for everyone if we can be a bit flexible.

Ace It! continued to be a highlight of each year, with the local tennis community getting together to fight Breast Cancer. It's an amazing event, and a real spirit-lifting experience to support women and families in need.

We have done some landscape refreshing at the entry to the club and around the parking lot. Our amazing landscaping contractors, Cleary Brothers, continue to keep the place looking wonderful and Pacific Maintenance Solutions, led by the incredible Julio Hernandez, keeps the place clean and everything thing running smoothly. We are blessed in both of these areas. The Club membership has remained full throughout most of the year, hopefully providing you with plenty of partners to play with. We introduced a new app for your smart phone this fall that makes reserving a court that much easier. Each day we strive to keep our weather information for you up to date so you can tell the condition of the courts. Our court cam, and weather summary (on the home page) hopefully helps you make informed decisions about avoiding the occasional puddles we suffer through in tennis paradise. This December we are adding a weather station on Weather Underground so you can get the weather conditions right here at the Club. Of course Northern California is tennis paradise, one of the few places in the world where you can play outdoors year around. It isn't too wet or too cold in the winter, and too hot and miserable in the summer. We are blessed. Cheers!

I want to thank everyone for their input over the past year, and all the twenty years I have been here. It really helps me to see what is going on, and how we can make the club a better place. I think back on how much Orindawoods has changed in those twenty years, and much of it is due to your input, and continued support. A friend recently came by who hadn't been here in 15 years, and she was awestruck by the change, the beauty of the courts, the lights, the lobby, the Pro Shop, locker rooms, all of it. Of course I can't take action on every suggestion, but within each suggestion, is some piece of information that can make Orindawoods a better place. Even something I disagree with, or is impossible, has a grain of truth that can be used to enhance our Club. As always, we want you to feel welcomed here, like it is your own backyard, and a bunch of your friends have stopped by for a fun time enjoying the game of tennis, or a dip in the pool. "I like this place, and willingly could waste my time in it." – Celia, *As You Like It*

### **Looking Ahead 2017**

In 2017 we plan to continue the great work we have seen in 2016. We have league play coming up with the 40+ Season, and then the 18+ Adult season. Teams are forming. The weekday leagues continue through the school year. The Tulip Tournament will be in April, and then Monday Team Tennis starts in May. Monday Night Tennis continues every Monday night until then (Thanks Denis!). Twilight Tennis BBQs return in the summer, as does Ace It! in June.

The Winter Session for the Junior Program (see page 4) starts January 9<sup>th</sup>. It will be followed by the Spring Session (beginning on March 20<sup>th</sup>), Summer clinics each week in the summer, and the Fall Session with the new school year. We are going to add some junior events to keep the fun rolling in 2017.

The facility is in top shape, and doesn't need any major work for 2017. We will continue to do the little things that make a difference, like adding the weather station. The tidying up the landscaping will be ongoing.

Many thanks to the Tennis Advisory Committee for their continued advice and stewardship of the Club: Darrel Sudduth, Barbara Rogan, Fred White. And to president of the Orindawoods Board, Steve Stahle and CFO Glenn Rogers. Plus Barbara Dawson and the HAS staff that handle the billing and publishing the newsletter. Many make OW work!

The Tennis Staff will continue to grow and expand their knowledge of the game of tennis, and running a fun, successful club. As a mentor once said, "You are either getting better or getting worse, there is no standing still." We are dedicated to getting better.

And as always, I will share my thoughts on our wonderful game, and offer some ideas for each of us improving. And so:

### **Tennis Tip:**

#### ***Gravity, Keeping Loose and Tension Free***

At the USPTA World Conference, Jeff Salzenstein shared that when he was on the pro tour, and trying to improve his serve (he got up to 130 mph), one of the main ideas that he focused on was eliminating areas of tension in his motion. In other words, to have his arm and his body behave more like a loose whip and less like a stiff stick or pole. In an ideal stroke, there are times of tension, of holding, and there are times of being relaxed, even releasing. Then there is the challenge of using the proper muscles to initiate movement, and leaving the rest of the muscles turned off / relaxed. Often when we attempt to stroke the ball, the excess tension in certain parts of the body lead to a blocking of motion. In the worst cases, that tension can lead to injury, as the joints do not move properly, and the force exerted comes up against the tension in the muscles and tendons, and something has to give. Tears and pulls result. Ouch!

**Up Tight.** My Pilates instructor asks me to lift my arm, without engaging the neck and upper back muscles that actually are not supposed to be "on" when raising your arm. I have a very hard time doing that. Let alone sitting in a chair typing this newsletter without turning those muscles on. One might wonder why I have muscle tension headaches from time to time in the back of my head and neck. Much of our culture is "up tight", the shoulders lifted up towards their ears.

In our Hit and Fit class on Saturday mornings, Anna Marie often encourages us to relax our shoulders, because practically everyone "shortens their neck" when lifting. Of course this tightening in the shoulder and neck impedes shoulder function and could lead to rotator cuff tears. If we can reduce this tension, as Jeff Salzenstein suggests, our arm moves better, smoother and we serve harder, and more pain free.

**Semantics.** Language can often subliminally defeat us, as I said "serve harder" in the last sentence, and really, there is nothing "harder" about serving better, faster, quicker. We want to serve "easier" in a sense, less muscles, less tension, more whip, more release. It's a throw -- a release -- not a grab, swat, squeeze or hold.

**Good Bye Pain.** In fact, we should rarely have tennis elbow, because tennis elbow is a result of gripping, of holding tighter, of using muscles to play the ball. Tennis elbow is a warning that we are using the wrong parts of the body to stroke the ball. The pain is a blessing, because it is offering a lesson. But we must understand the lesson.

In a sense, we are like the person standing outside the building of success, pushing, shoving, pounding, kicking and screaming in frustration that he can't get in no matter how hard he tries, and then he notices that there is a little sign on the door that says "Pull." Oh...

**Moving Without Tension.** On the forehand, and serve, the muscles of the forearm and wrist can remain shut off most of the time. Serving, I lift my arm up, and let the racquet hang. Then I let the arm and racquet fall into external rotation, and the wrist / racquet hangs to the other side. When the arm falls down, it bounces back up, straightening and rotating internally. The racquet snaps into the hitting position with the use of few muscles in the arm. When I reach extension, the arm / racquet naturally recoils back to the body, thus the follow through (I don't have to "pull it down"). The only real source of tension on either the forehand or the serve is lifting the racquet up into position in the wind up, or preparation phase. The muscles of the shoulder (rotators) are needed to initiate some of the turning or rotating moves, but they are off for most of the stroke.

**Push / Pull.** There is a natural firing and releasing of the muscle fibers that happens when we move. Sets of muscles work together to move our arm. In a simple push / pull motion, first the triceps contract to straighten the arm (push) and then the biceps fire to pull the arm back in. If we are trying too hard, or are tight, or relying solely on muscles, too many muscles -- often opposite muscles -- fire, and they work against each other. This blocks this natural flow, rhythm and the most efficient way your body moves. We start using both sets of muscles, the ones that straightens the arm, and the ones that bend it, and we are just locked in place. You become slower, and more prone to injury as we fight ourselves.

It is possible to hit a really good shot, hardly even holding on to the racquet. In fact, it is much more likely you will hit a really good shot, hardly holding on to the racquet. When I was fifteen, my teacher hit a ball over a building using 2 fingers.

**Gravity** is always pulling down on the racquet, and everything, for that matter. It keeps our "feet on the ground." We start these shots by using some muscles to work against gravity, to lift the racquet into position. Holding the racquet up means that we have potential energy to use, to fuel the movement of the subsequent stroke. If we stop holding the arm or racquet up, it falls, and we have motion and thus energy we can use to exert force on the ball without tension.

**The Motion.** On the serve, we lift the racquet up by the handle (the racquet head hangs, thanks to gravity and a loose wrist), we then turn the palm inward towards our ear, then we push / straighten the arm up over our head. Initially this push up of the hand from the core, shoulder and triceps causes the racquet head to fall back down (our back), before the muscle, tendons and fascia in the triceps area are stretched and then shorten, propelling first our arm and then our racquet up to straight over our head. A tiny bit of muscle is used to start the arm rotating, which it is more than happy to do on it's own after that (so stop trying!!!!). This straightening and turning is what takes our racquet to the ball and transfers energy onto the ball. If we serve properly, we don't even feel the weight of the racquet, the head of the racquet, as it moves. It is weightless, or has disappeared. Think of snapping a towel, you don't feel the far end of the towel at all, yet in the end, it is going very fast. Contrast this to swinging an object, like a weight on the end of a string, or a racquet. When swinging, the head of the racquet feels heavy, and pulls on our arm. This pulling on our arm is essentially pulling the arm out of



## Orindawoods Tennis Club

650 Orindawoods Dr.  
Orinda, CA 94563

Phone:  
925-254-1065

Fax:  
925-254-1380

Website:  
orindawoodstennis.com

Smart Phone App:  
PlayTennisConnect

**Executive Tennis Director:**  
Keith Wheeler  
orindawoodstc@sbcglobal.net

**Head Pro:**  
Patric Hermanson  
Patric.owtc@yahoo.com

**Associate Pro:**  
Anna Marie Gamboa  
Gamboa.tennis@yahoo.com

**Junior Tennis Staff:**  
Johnathan Wong  
Nathan Sharafian  
Katie Reaves

**Weekend Staff:**  
Nathan Sharafian

**Newsletter Editor:**  
Keith Wheeler

the socket, not such a good idea, and more tears, more injuries (more time not able to play).

With the proper rhythm, gravity and a slight bit of momentum move the arm / racquet in a whip-like motion.

**The arm action is: lifts, bends/ drops, straightens / turns, and returns.** It should feel like very little is happening, and you are moving the handle of the racquet (often by releasing and letting gravity and the stretch shorten cycle of the muscles work) and can't feel the head at all. Search for any areas of tension and release it.

**Two Motions In One.** The sever is essentially two separate motions put together. 1) a lifting and raising of the arm in the vertical plane towards the ball (which is up over your head). There is some energy or power delivered to the ball from this upward motion, not unlike a shot put. But there is very little forward motion in this part of the stroke. This motion primarily makes the tip of the racquet go from pointing down by our side to pointing towards the sky, over your head. To where the ball is. This motion is for **finding the ball**, and turning the racquet towards the court (**aiming**). If you do the proper motion without the racquet in your hand, it looks like you are just raising you hand up over your head (think shot put again here). Or punching the sky. There is no forward swing. 2) the forward action, or propulsion forward of the ball (horizontal plane) comes from the **rotating of the arm**. Think of a flag on a pole when the wind changes direction. The racquet is the flag. This movement of the racquet makes it appear that we are swinging forward (the tip goes from pointing down, to backwards, to pointing up, to pointing forwards and finally down), but the best servers are not swinging at all, not swinging their arm. They are **punching up**, and **rotating their arm**.

**On the forehand**, we lift the arm / racquet, with the tip pointing towards the contact point, then we drop arm using gravity (we relax and stop holding the arm up), and externally rotate the arm as it reaches our side (palm facing out), then let the continued momentum of the drop straighten the arm out and up to the side. When the arm reaches full extension (contact), the arm recoils (the knuckles rolling up and back over your shoulder) in the follow-through. The whole time the wrist is loose and the arm relaxed. A great exercise is to bounce a ball to your side, reach out and grab it from underneath (palm facing skyward), and then allow the knuckles to roll back taking the ball over your left shoulder. This is the exact forehand motion. Again like on the serve, the back to forward movement of the racquet tip is caused by the rotation of the arm, and not swinging the arm forward. Good luck out there!

---

## Winter Junior Tennis Program At Orindawoods

The 2017 Winter Junior Clinics begin the week of **January 9<sup>th</sup>**, and will continue thru the week of **March 13<sup>th</sup>**. Program leaders for the 10 week session are Head Pro **Patric Hermanson** and Assistant Pro **Anna Marie Gamboa**.

-“Thank You Discount” of 10% for any player continuing on from the Fall Session-

<u>Level</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Time(s)</u>	<u>One day/week</u>	<u>Two Days</u>
<b>I</b>	<b>Lil’ Ones (Ages 4-6)</b>	<b>Tues/Thurs 3:15-4pm</b>	<b>\$140*</b>	<b>\$220*</b>
	The <b>Lil’ Ones class</b> 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>II</b>	<b>Future Stars Group (Ages 7-10)</b>	<b>Tuesdays 4-5:30pm</b>	<b>\$255*</b>	<b>N/A</b>
	The <b>Future Stars Group</b> is for our 7 to 10 year old players. The players will be working with Quickstart balls on 36’ and 60’ courts. Stroke instruction, tennis games, and match play are all part of the curriculum.			
<b>III</b>	<b>Tennis Development Group (Ages 11-14)</b>	<b>Thursdays 4-5:30pm</b>	<b>\$255*</b>	<b>N/A</b>
	In the <b>Tennis Development Group</b> we will work on refining technique, improving footwork and developing strategic awareness for successful match play. This class is for beginning through intermediate players			
<b>IV</b>	<b>Tournament Training Group</b>	<b>Wednesdays 4:30-6:30pm</b>	<b>\$325*</b>	<b>N/A</b>
	The <b>Tournament Training Group</b> is an <u>invitation only</u> 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 rain, illness, vacations, etc.

Sibling 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). Cell phone use during class time is limited to emergencies or with pro consent.**

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

