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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

Bad Memories

Strategy exists because we can't trust our memories. Read that again, that is a huge statement, and gets to the heart of success or failure on the court, as well as in life.

Let me explain. Our memories are not a videotape of the action, or a statistical record of what happened. Memories are highlights of the action. We remember outstanding events, not the mundane, average ones. Brilliant moments, and great failings are the things the untrained mind remembers.

Sportscenter: Our memory would be like watching Sportscenter on ESPN and thinking that baseball was all home runs, strikeouts and the occasional brilliant play. When in fact, it is a slow paced game of building tension, that has little moment-to-moment action. In fact, to take a shot at ESPN and the East Coast bias, you would be inclined to think that the most important action in baseball also takes place in New York (call me bitter).

There are lots of people who prefer to watch the highlights, enjoy the buzz of the great play, the adrenaline rush of the action, rather than sit through an entire game, where very little happens. Yet it is the building tension, the uncertainty and the unpredictability of the game that brings excitement. Just go to any 19th hole in the country, and listen to the four-somes chat over their favorite beverage. It is the highlights that get talked about, not much else.

The Truth vs. The Memories: Memories emphasize one thing (home runs, for example) when in fact, something less visible is leading to most of the results.

Moneyball: The recent movie (and book) *Moneyball* about the Oakland A's, was basically about memory, or impressions, vs statistics. The coaches and scouts were after players who hit a lot of homeruns, or had a high batting average, or stole a lot of bases, all very flashy events. These traditional qualities also priced these players out of the budget of the cash strapped A's. So their general manager and his assistant took a different path and looked at runs scored. To score runs, you need people on base. So how often people get on base became the important quality they looked for. Not as flashy, but an alternative that led to results. Or as Billy Bean said in the movie, "Get people on base, and wait for the other team to make mistakes." Not as flashy as homeruns, but effective. More effective.

Getting Older, Getting Tougher: I teach several clinics. Recently, I noticed that my 3.0 clinics were doing the strategy I was teaching better than my 4.0 or 4.5 players. I thought this was very odd, that weaker players were actually "getting it" better than the more experienced players. That got me to thinking. People say that getting old is tough, and here is one more area where it is more difficult to be older (or to have played longer, an older tennis age). If you have been playing for forty years, there are going to be a lot of traumas. A lot of times that someone made the "impossible" shot against you, or hit the ball by you down the alley for a winner. There are going to be a lot of times when you flubbed an easy shot. The percentages have not changed (these traumas are not happening any more often – still a low percentage of the time), but the pure volume of memories is going to be larger. A lot larger. So it almost becomes harder to follow strategy the longer you play. Or in some sense, to be confident, because there are so many failures. This leads to the thought that it is

Pool Scene

The pool is now open, as you have probably noticed if it is a hot day. There are lots of people splashing around and cooling off. Doesn't that water feel nice?

We don't have a lot of rules concerning the pool, but the ones that we do have are important for the safety of you, your family, and friends. First of all, there is no lifeguard, so you swim at your own risk. Swimming alone is not advised. Children under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult. Please keep the gate to the pool area closed to protect our young members who might run out to the pool and jump in without being able to swim. There is no running on the pool deck, or diving into the pool. These are very dangerous activities that are not allowed. Please, no glass in the pool area. Broken glass is invisible in water, and therefore very dangerous. The pool is open from dawn to dusk.

The pool is kept at 81 degrees to the best of our ability (weather being what weather is: hot, cold, windy, rainy). Enjoy a great summer!

Ace It!

Ace It!, our breast cancer awareness day is **June 23** this year. 2012 represents our 10th Ace It!, created and carried on by local women who wanted to do something to fight this terrible disease.

In that time, we have raised well over \$100,000 in support of the battle against breast cancer. All of the proceeds go to the Carol Ann Read Breast Center at Alta Bates.

As always, Ace It! will feature a morning session Tour of the Pros instructional clinics, followed by the Ace It! luncheon on the Club's deck. The Ace It! Tournament will follow from 1-4 p.m. at the Club and other facilities in the area.

To register for Ace It!, pick up a registration form at the Club, or download one from the Ace It! page on the Club's website (under events).

If you have any further questions, contact Keith at the Club. Hope you can join us for Ace It! 2012!

better to be young and too stupid to know any better.

Wisdom: Unless, as you age, you also acquire wisdom. Wisdom and strategy are very closely related. Maybe strategy is wisdom. We could even say that wisdom is being able to see the truth, perhaps in spite of the obvious and yet, wrong conclusion. "For every situation in life there is an answer that is clear, simple and wrong." Maybe you start to recognize that one point, here or there, doesn't really matter that much. And that covering what happens most of the time (the middle, see last month's newsletter), is the better way to go.

So Odds. Roughly about 20% of the time, something is going to go in your favor. You're brilliant, lucky, blessed, what ever. You win, often to your surprise. And 20% of the time, something is going to go in your opponents favor. These numbers vary a bit, but they are a given. These 40% are not the points that decide the match. It is the 60% that is left over in between these 20% bookends for each side that decides the outcome. Strategy, and playing the percentages or odds, is how you win more than your share of the 60% that is left. You don't win these remaining 60% by focusing on what happened when you were brilliant 20% of the time, or they were lucky their 20% of the time. It is almost as if you pretend those points never happened. Just let them go. They are for the highlight reel. You can catch them all on ESPN tonight, on the 19th hole or up on the club deck after the match. Don't be taken in by the highlights, the memories. Focus on the odds. You don't have to be right every time, just more often than not.

A Story: An old Cherokee told his grandson "My son, there's a battle between two wolves inside all of us. One is Evil. It is anger, jealousy, greed, resentment, integrity, likes and ego. The other is Good. It is joy, peace, love hope, humility, kindness empathy and truth." The grandson thought about it and then asked his grandfather, "Which wolf wins?" The old Cherokee simply replied, "the one you feed."

So when we play, do we feed or give credence to our memories of highlights, or do we stick with wisdom, our strategy, and our plan. "Don't forget in the darkness, what you knew in the light." It is your choice.

I remember a story about the Great One, Wayne Gretzky. It was said that what made him the best hockey player ever was that all the other players chased the puck around the ice, while Gretzky stood and waited where the puck was going to end up. That's wisdom, that's strategy, that's greatness. Good luck out there.

Overheads and Serves

The Best Advice: When I was a boy spending my summer at tennis camp, I received the best coaching I ever got on hitting overheads. I was a kid, the instruction was simple, and it worked so well. The coach said, "Just reach up and touch the ball." Nothing about hitting the ball, or hitting it hard, or swinging, or follow-through, or anything. Just reach up and touch the ball. Not only did this stop the embarrassing swinging and missing, but I seemed to suddenly start hitting the ball in the sweet spot every time. Even without a follow-through, the balls would go relatively fast, and for the first time, I never seemed to miss.

Of course after a couple, I would get cocky, think I could blast it, take a swing, and then once again, I would be all over the place. Argh!!! Reign in the ego, put the ambition on ice. It was back to reach up and touch the ball, and the shots would start going in again.

Why does "reach up and touch the ball" work so well? First of all, the focus is on contact, not on power, or winning the point, or crushing the ball. Just contact. But there is a surprising amount of power, without trying. It isn't that the ball is booming, it is just going way faster than you would think it would go just touching it. And again, of course, as soon as you try, misses galore. And often, due to miss hits, not really that much more power. Ugh!

Back to reach up and touch the ball, and the surprising power returns. Why? If we study where power comes from on an effective server or overhead, we find the surprise. About half the power comes from extension (in other words, reaching up). The other half of the power comes from internal rotation of the arm in the shoulder (or turning your racquet to touch the ball with the strings).

Two Keys To Power: So when you reach up and touch the ball, you are actually doing the two things that lead to the most effective power (effective power is power that you can get on the ball and in the court). Extension is up, touching is turning. Ka-pow! Most people think to get power you have to swing forward. Most people try to get control by swinging towards the target. Both are completely wrong (and why there aren't very many good overheads around the club, or in tennis). The ball is above you, swinging forward is moving the racquet away from the ball. Doesn't make sense. The stroke should go up, not forward. Reach up and touch the ball (extension). Turning the strings toward the ball is touching the ball (rotation). Control comes from pointing the strings towards the target (not swinging towards the target). So when you turn the racquet to touch the ball, you can make contact when the strings are facing the target you want (left, middle, right). But as soon as you go forward, you are pulling away from the ball (and hitting the top of the frame or hitting the ball into the net). So reach up and touch the ball.

The Serve Too: Now we step back to the baseline to serve, and guess what, same deal. The ball is up over your head, or should be. Stop swinging, stop swinging forward, stop trying to hit it hard, stop swinging towards the service



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box. Extend up, and turn to touch the ball. Numerous students have gone from working on the overhead to the serve, and found the same magic works there. In fact, this works so well, this is one of the main ways I teach the serve now. I start with a few overheads, players get the feel of reaching up and touching. Then we head back to the baseline and work on the serve. The magic often follows the player right back to the serve.

Distance: The challenge is that the target (service box) appears to be farther away, and that makes you want to swing or hit forward even more. But the truth is, that hitting an overhead from about the service line to the opponent's baseline, and hitting a serve from your baseline to the other service line is about the same distance. One is farther away is the net, but you don't want to hit down on the overhead either (another common mistake). So reach up and touch the ball. Hard to believe, but that's all it takes.

Guests

Guests are great. As members, we get to have our friends over to our wonderful Club for a match. Guests fill out foursomes, they are fun to be around, they play good tennis, they make you laugh, improve your life or game, and on and on. There are a myriad of reasons. Not all our friends can be members, that's just a fact. Maybe they live too far away, or would only use the Club with us, once in a while, maybe they dropped in from out of town, or they don't have the funds to join right now.

On the other hand, our Club is great because of the support of its **members**. People who believe in Orindawoods, who pay the dues to keep it running and make the club as wonderful as it can be. I like to call it my economic vote. I support the places I like.

If a guest is at the Club too much, they should join. Period. The people who use the club should help support the facility, programs, staff and benefit they are enjoying.

So **how much is too much?** I get this question asked of me all the time. And the answer is in some ways tricky, and other ways amazingly simple.

We're all adults here, and I am pretty darn sure when a guest realizes they are using the facility too much and should be a member. Same holds true for the member who is inviting the guest.

I admit there are some sociopaths in our society, who don't really understand right and wrong, and do what ever they want. These few people aren't that hard to pick out. People who consistently get their line calls wrong (or should I say, in their favor when that favor is unwarranted) is a good indicator, and easier one to spot than most other instances in society where behaviors are more subtle, and clearly not so obvious.

It is our club. We all try to make the Club as wonderful a place as possible. And for the most part, each and every one of you does a great job. We follow the rules because we respect and care for each other. We treat everyone with respect, and we self-police around here. After all, we play a game where we make our own line calls, and do so with integrity and respect. Respectful behavior comes with the territory.

I admit, it is tough to fill a foursome sometimes. Some members are of such a select group (too good, too bad, too young, too – shall we say -- wise, too short, too tall, too beautiful, too.... Well you get the idea) that they need to play with guests because there is no one else for them to play with. So guests are important, and allow many of our members to play when they wouldn't normally be able to.

Make no mistake, the only reason we allow guests is because it helps members. Sorry to be so direct, blunt and seemingly heartless, but we don't allow guests for the people who are the guests. **The guest privilege is for the members.** If it doesn't serve the members, and the long-term best interests of Orindawoods, the privilege is gone.

So what's the answer? Everyone is different. Every case is different. I like to take each situation on a **case-by-case basis**. Rules are the worst way to police people, because they have no flexibility or sometimes even any connection with reality. Yet sometimes rules are necessary. The challenge is, we want to be fair to everyone. Fair is not always equal (rules aim for equal), but it is always fair. There are special circumstances in life.

Having said that, if someone is here more than **once a week** as a guest, they better have a good reason, and the staff should know what that reason is. I don't like feeling bad about someone because I think they are potentially cheating. And other members, your friends, don't like feeling bad about you or your friends either.

Some would argue that once a week is pushing it. I can see their point as well. Again, I come back to what is fair. There are plenty of members using a once-a-week guest and it works for them, and for the Club at this time. There are other groups who have plenty of choices for subs, and can pick a member over a non-member, and then I think once-a-week is too much.

And as for **policing**, our club is not set up in a way where it is easy to police. We don't have a front desk that everyone passes through. There is not a fence around the perimeter, and the staff is set up to help people, not be policemen and scare everyone and tell them they better toe the line. No one wants to belong to a club that is run like a prison, a fort or POW camp, rather than our own back yard. We're successful largely because **we are welcoming**. And that goes for everyone, not just the staff.

But no one wants to feel like they are being taken advantage of either. Or feel that they are paying dues, and others are skating by on a guest fee or two. So if you have a friend who is around a bit too much, invite them to join, or don't use them as a sub as much. Remember, **the guest wouldn't be here, if you didn't invite them**. After all, it is the member who is responsible for the guest, responsible for who they are, and paying the fees.

And oh yeah, **guest fees are \$5** per player. If someone is a guest and plays on our teams, the fee is \$40 for the season, and that is just for matches. If they are here any other time, they have to pay a guest fee of \$5.

Having a guest is an important and beloved **privilege of membership**. It is great to share our club with others from time to time. Let's not spoil the privilege by inviting non-members too often.

2012 Orindawoods Summer Junior Tennis Program

Welcome to the 2012 Orindawoods Summer Junior Tennis Program. Our summer Program consists of eight one-week (Monday-Thursday) camps led by Head Pro Patric Hermanson and Associate Anna Marie Gamboa. Our camps will suit the beginner, just starting out, as well as the advanced player preparing for summer and fall tournaments. Non-members are welcome in all of our classes for an additional fee.

Our **Full Afternoon Camp** is for kids 7-16. Players will be separated according to age and ability. The Full Camp will run from 12:00 to 3:45pm and consist of an *Instructional Block* from 12:00-2:00pm, where we will be developing the strokes, strategy and the footwork used in today's "modern game of tennis." Tennis games will also be a daily part of this block. There will be a break from 2:00-2:15pm. Campers should bring a snack for the break. At 2:15pm will begin the *Match Play Block*, where the campers will play supervised matches. The coaches will help the students understand how to use their strokes and strategy to enhance their match playing capabilities. Our younger campers will work with many aspects of the USTA Ten-and-Under Tennis Program, making it easy for even the younger beginner to play matches. The Full Camp day will finish at 3:45pm.

If you are looking for a shorter tennis experience, you can sign up for our **Half Camps**. Pick what you are most interested in and join just one of our two tennis blocks, the *Instructional Block* or the *Match Play Block*. We also have **Lil' Ones** classes twice a week for our very cute 4-6 year old players!

Weekly Camp Line Up

| OW Camp | Ages | Days | Time | Cost per Week Member / Nonmember |
|-------------------|-------------|--------------------|---------------|---|
| Full Camp | | | | |
| Afternoon Camp | Ages 7-16 | Monday – Thursday | 12noon-3:45pm | \$185/\$210 |
| Half Camps | | | | |
| Instruction Block | Ages 7-16 | Monday – Thursday | 12noon-2:00pm | \$120/\$135 |
| Match Play Block | Ages 7-16 | Monday – Thursday | 2:15-3:45pm | \$95/\$110 |
| Lil' Ones Camp | Ages 4-6 | Tuesday & Thursday | 4:00-4:45pm | \$35/\$40 |

Summer Sessions

Each week features the camp line-up shown above. We will offer the following weeks for camps this summer:

| | | |
|------------------|--|---|
| Session 1 | June 11-14 | Full Camp, Instruction Block, Match Play Block, Lil' Ones |
| Session 2 | June 18-21 | Full Camp, Instruction Block, Match Play Block, Lil' Ones |
| Session 3 | June 25-28 | Full Camp, Instruction Block, Match Play Block, Lil' Ones |
| Session 4 | July 2-5 (no classes on Wednesday July 4, price will be pro rated for this week) | |
| Session 5 | July 9-12 | Full Camp, Instruction Block, Match Play Block, Lil' Ones |
| Session 6 | July 16-19 | Full Camp, Instruction Block, Match Play Block, Lil' Ones |
| Session 7 | July 23-26 | Full Camp, Instruction Block, Match Play Block, Lil' Ones |
| Session 8 | July 30-Aug. 2 | Full Camp, Instruction Block, Match Play Block, Lil' Ones |

Registration

To register, pick up a form at the Club, download a form from the Club website's junior page or e-mail Head Pro Patric Hermanson (patrictennis@yahoo.com). Make checks payable to Orindawoods. DISCOUNT: 10% off the second child's registration in the same week. The discount is taken off the smaller of the two clinic costs. Tennis shoes required (no shoes that mark the court).

