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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

Court Usage and Tips

Air Traffic Controller

Sometimes I feel like an air traffic controller, trying to help everyone get a court on a busy morning here at the club.

"Looks like court four will be opening up soon," I'll shout up from my teaching court to someone arriving on the deck. "That group of four started at 8:30."

In these busy times at the Club, there are certain tricks to get a court to play on.

Reservations: Of course, the best option is to make a reservation. Reservations can be made 7 days and one hour in advance. So if you want a court next Tuesday at 9, you can start making a reservation the previous Tuesday at 8. You can have two active reservations at a time.

Drop-in Courts: The second option is to play on one of the drop-in courts. Court 4 & 5 are drop-in courts all day long (except when there are scheduled events like league matches, lessons and the junior program). Court 2 can also a drop-in court much of the day (10am-6pm) when there are not lessons being given.

Playing Time Limit: When people are waiting, play is limited to 1.5 hours. There is no difference between singles and doubles. Of course, if no one bumps you, you can play as long as you want (Happy Days!).

Busy Days / Opportunity Days: Some days are busier at the club than others. From May through August, Mondays and Fridays tend to be a bit quieter (more courts available) than the other days of the week. During the school year, we often have league matches on Mondays and Friday mornings, but during the busy and wonderful summer season, these leagues are on vacation (wouldn't we all like to be on vacation?). Sundays are much more quiet than Saturdays, so if you are not going to church, come down and play.

League Matches and Court Impact: USTA league matches are generally played on the weekends, courts 4,5&6 (so no drop in courts at this time) from 11 a.m. on. Usually there is only one match, but some days two matches are played back to back.

Pool Scene

The Club Pool Is Open

The Orindawoods Pool opened on May 1st. Many people have already enjoyed a refreshing splash on some of the recent warm days. The pool rules are pretty simple at Orindawoods, but they are important. We want to keep everyone safe and having a good time. So:

- Pool hours are dawn to dusk (6 a.m. – 9 p.m.)
- There is no lifeguard, so be safe. We suggest you don't swim alone.
- No running
- No diving
- No glass in the pool area (broken glass is invisible in water)
- No pets in the pool area
- Please remember this is a shared-use facility, not your private pool (though it may seem that way from time to time), so be respectful of others.
- The gas BBQ is for club functions, but there is a charcoal BBQ available for your use at any time.

Enjoy the summer!

Tennis Tip

Playing In The Band

From time to time you will see a player pick up his/her racquet, when in a playful mood, and start playing air guitar with it. Strumming the strings like it was a guitar,

Breast Cancer Awareness

Ace It! 2014

This year's breast cancer awareness day, Ace It!, is June 7th. Don't miss it. We have scheduled Ace It! a bit earlier this year to try to include those of you who would like to participate but start traveling as soon as summer begins.

As always, Ace It! features our Tour of the Pros in the morning, Lunch On The Deck at noon, and the Ace It! Tournament in the afternoon.

Registration is now open. You can pick up registration forms in the Club's lobby, or download an application from the Ace It! page on the Club's website (orindawoodstennis.com).

Guests and Guest Fees

Bringing guests to the club is a privilege of membership at Orindawoods. It is also a responsibility. Each of us is responsible for our guests.

The guest fee is \$10. Some people treat their guest to a day at the club, and others have an arrangement where the guest pays the fee, but the member is the one that is responsible for making that happen. Please make sure that your guest is taken care of.

We know that the vast majority of guests pay their fees. I marvel at just how incredibly responsible our membership is. After all, we all seem to get that Orindawoods is our club. Guest fees are part of respecting the club, its rules and each other, plus keeping the facility in top shape by paying our guest fees and dues. Well done Orindawoods!

Health Tip

On hot days, be sure to drink plenty of water. If you have a match, start drinking the day before (water, that is).

fingering the throat, and mimicking a rock star. You might even belt out a few lines, "Playing, Playing in the band. Daybreak, Daybreak on the land."

Then again, you might not. Perhaps Elton John is more your thing. "So goodbye yellow brick road, where the dogs of society howl, you can't plant me in your penthouse, I'm going back to my plough..."

The point is, we think of our racquet as a guitar, a string instrument. Something you strum.

Why then oh why, I must ask, do we play tennis like the racquet is a drum? We beat on things (the ball) like we are playing percussion. And sort of like any good drummer, we do it with aggression. But tennis is a sport of touch, and control. Subtle, weak, flexible, and with deft feel and quickness. And while there can be great power, you can only use power if you can control it. How do we accomplish that?

The answer is right there in our soul. A racquet is a string instrument, we are meant to play the strings, and yet we treat it like percussion. We don't trust our imagination, our instincts. The song in our hearts, the lyrics on our tongues. Strings are to be strummed, plucked, picked, and in tennis we do this with the tennis ball. We brush the ball, and with the strings the interaction sings to us our favorite melody.

Two Contacts: There are two basic type of contact the ball can make with the strings. It can be brushed (guitar) or it can be bounced (drum). If we use the drum method, and the ball bounces off the strings, the only way to control the ball's flight is to manage the trajectory and go relatively slow. Basically, only gravity, plus a bit of air resistance is going to bring the ball back to earth.

Spin: On the other hand, if you are playing with a guitar, and you strum, or brush the ball, then the ball spins. Spin can be used to either make the ball rise or fall. Therefore spin either counteracts gravity to some extent, or assists gravity to bring the ball down. In other words, spin is about control. And with control, you can have true power.

Brushing up gives the ball topspin, a downward brush, underspin. Topspin tends to go up first (over the net) and then down fast (inside the lines). It is the ideal spin for tennis. Underspin makes the ball go up as well, but then it tends to hang in the air, resisting the pull of gravity. Underspin can be used quite effectively in tennis, particularly when you can't get much on a shot and the spin helps to carry it deep. Underspin also interacts with the court differently on the bounce. It can catch, skid, slide or stop. All of these different bounces can be useful to experienced players, giving them more control over the point. Because underspin tends to counter act gravity and cause the ball to fly farther, it is more useful in golf or baseball, where distance is often the goal.

I suppose there is a way to make a guitar sound something like a drum. I have seen it. But for the most part, it is better to play a guitar like a guitar, and leave the drumming to the percussion section. It is a better use of your instrument to employ it the way it works best. Soon you will be playing, "we are the champions."

To Move Without Moving

That's all you have to do to play this game well, learn how to move without moving. Isn't that a relief to know? I'll just learn how to move without moving, and I'll have it made. No problem. Wish someone had told me that sooner.

You are probably thinking that either tennis is impossible (might be true) or that I am crazy (another strong possibility). And yet I tell you, if you could learn to move without moving, you would be a much better player.

The great Tao wisdom says something similar, and just as mysterious.

"The master does nothing, and leaves nothing undone." – Lao Tzu

What is this doing, without doing, or moving, without moving? How is that possible? No wonder the game that the pros play looks like a complete mystery to the average hacker. We'd all like to do it, but that seems about as possible as learning to move without moving.

Exactly! Let me explain and show you the way. It really is possible to accomplish.

Playing Catch: Put your racquet down for a moment, and let's examine the simple game of playing catch. You and your partner toss the ball back and forth, taking turns catching and then throwing the ball back to your partner. Notice, that when you catch the ball, there is no movement. Or to be more specific, there is no forward movement. Sometimes there is a bit of giving with the ball (soft hands). After you have caught the ball, you wind up and toss the ball back. The wind up can be an elaborate twisting of your arm (like a pitcher in baseball), or simply your arm rocking back and forth (underhand toss), but there is some tension created to allow the forward throwing motion to work better. This wind up happens after the catch. For the throw, we are moving. The catch, no movement. We need both.

Sequencing: And there is a proper sequence. We must complete the catch before we can throw. The movement can't begin until the non-movement has secured the ball in our grasp.

In tennis, we don't think of catching, but we do catch in tennis. The root of the word "tennis" from French is to catch. We just call catching in tennis by a different name. We call it "contacting the ball on the sweet spot." Just like in catching, it is

very hard to make contact in the center of the racquet if the racquet is moving around too much. Slow down, "catch."

In tennis, there is a wind up as well, but with a slight twist (ha ha). When throwing a ball much of the wind up takes place after the catch, but in tennis, the wind up is before the catch. We turn

Quote of the Month:

"Are the pros better because they are superior athletes, or is it because they have found a better way to play?" – Brett Hobden



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sideways, wind our arm up, and then we hold it still for the catching (hitting the sweet spot). Then once the ball is on the strings we release all this wound up tension in the turning of the arm. Unlike throwing, in a proper tennis stroke there is very little forward movement (swinging your arm), but tons of rotational movement (windshield wiper). Your new mantra:

“Touch and turn.” – Brett Hobden, master teacher of the modern game

Let me repeat for emphasis: In tennis, there is little forward movement, but lots of turn.

The irony here is that swinging your arm forward is much slower. We think forward is fast and powerful, but we are wrong. The internal rotation of the shoulder is quicker (better) throwing. In fact, this is what a pitcher or shortstop does in baseball as well (so we don't really even understand throwing, let alone stroking a tennis ball). Internal rotation of the shoulder is much faster than swinging your arm. And besides, we don't want to hit the ball, we want to roll it by brushing the ball (see article above, strum the strings).

Going forward is the error of choice: The trouble is we get seduced by the forward and backwards nature of the game, the ball going back and forth between our opponents and us. This leads us to believe, mistakenly, that we should go forward too.

“The ball goes back and forth, but the play is to the side.”

-- Tom Stowe, legendary NorCal Pro

Almost every mistake I make in tennis is from going forward. I would say this is true for all players, even the top pros. They just don't do it as often.

First of all, going forward is not catching, and it is movement, not non-movement. I need to be still to center the ball on the sweet spot, and then I need to move the racquet in a way that imparts spin (brush, strum, guitar) and not collision (drum, percussion).

Moment of Truth: The defining question is, at the exact moment of impact, is your racquet going up (no movement forward, catching the ball), or forward (colliding with the ball).

You could have the perfect wind up and stroke going all the way up to the last ¼ inch of the ball's flight, and if you lapse into forward at that moment, all the ball will feel is collision and not brushing. The ball will bounce out of control, rather than spin. You can be so close to perfect (as many of us are) and still suck. Isn't that the truth?

Why would I do such a silly thing? Why would I move, when I wanted to be catching (non movement)?

Two Basic Mistakes: There are two basic categories of reasons why I might do this. The first is fear-based: the ball is coming too fast and I'm afraid it might get by me, or the ball feels too short and I fear I won't reach it if I don't go forward (it will bounce twice or get too low to hit).

The other category of reasons I might go forward has to do with ambition (I want the ball to go forward fast, or to a certain location, or by my opponent) but I haven't caught the ball before I send it back. And forward is the result. Basically, I'm sending before I receive. This leads to miss hits and errors. (and dropped balls and errors in baseball and football).

Watching the ball. Notice that the great players keep their heads down, even after contact. Watching the ball is part of this, seeing contact is part of this, but I believe the real reason is so they don't think forward thoughts. Forward thoughts are those thoughts above that might cause them not to catch, but swing forward. They keep their focus (we focus with out eyes - where our eyes go, our brain follows) to the side. “The play is to the side”.

We know what we want to do, but the fear keeps creeping in, and we don't do it. Or the ambition screams “hit it!”

At the moment of truth, do we have the will to have our racquet catch the ball (no movement), then send it back (movement)? It just comes down to will, in some ways.

“Just do it right” -- Tom Stowe.

Practice exercise to learn / train non-movement/movement. Walk up to the net with your racquet and a ball. Put your left hip up against the net (if you are right handed). While holding the ball in your left hand, do the wind up for your forehand stroke, and bring the racquet forward toward the net. Now using your left hand, place the ball between your racquet and the net, and hold the ball there on the tape of the net for a second or two. Feel the tension required to hold it there. Since the net is in the way, there is no way you can go forward from this position, but you can go up, which will have the effect of rolling the ball over the net strap. The exact action we need to brush the ball. So there you have it, a catch

(no movement) and a throw (brushing the ball, like a string instrument). Repeat often, until the wind up, catch and brush becomes a habit. Good luck out there!

Summer Junior Tennis At Orindawoods

Welcome to the 2014 Orindawoods Summer Junior Tennis Program. Our Summer Program consists of eight one-week (Monday – Thursday) clinics. In addition to taking our young players’ games to a new level, our four-day clinics are full of good fun and good friends. Our energetic and professional staff led by Head Pro Patric Hermanson and Assistant Pro Anna Marie Gamboa has put together a positive and challenging instructional environment that will allow the students to grow both as tennis players and as people. Our clinics will suit the beginner, just starting out, as well as the advanced player preparing for the summer and fall tournaments. Nonmembers are very welcome in all of our Summer Tennis Clinic classes.

Our **Full Afternoon Clinic** is for kids 7-16. Players will be separated according to age and ability. The Full Clinic will be 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. Players should bring a snack for the break. At 2:15pm the *Match Play Block* will begin, where the kids 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 students will work with many aspects of the USTA 10 and under Program, making it easy for even the young beginner to play matches. The Full Clinic day will finish at 3:45pm.

If you are looking for a shorter tennis experience, you can sign up for our **Half Clinics**. Pick what you are most interested in and join just one of our two tennis blocks, the *Instructional Block* or the *Match Play Block*.

Underneath the moniker of **Half Clinics**, we are also listing the Lil’ Ones Clinic. This clinic is for the 4-6 year olds, and will run on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 4-4:45pm.

We hope to see you this summer at Orindawoods! Make sure to sign up early!

Clinic Schedule:

Orindawoods Clinics	Ages	Days	Time	Cost Per Week Member / Nonmember
Full Clinic				
Afternoon Clinic	Ages 7-16	Monday-Thursday	12noon-3:45pm	\$195 / \$220
Half Clinics				
Instruction Block	Ages 7-16	Monday –Thursday	12noon-2pm	\$125/ \$140
Match Play Block	Ages 7-16	Monday-Thursday	2:15-3:45pm	\$100/ \$115
Lil’ Ones Clinic	Ages 4-6	Tuesday & Thursday	4:00-4:45pm	\$40 / \$45

2014 Enrollment Form

Last Name _____ E-mail _____
 Child’s Name (1) _____ Age _____ Child’s Name (2) _____ Age _____
 Address _____ City _____ Zip _____ Phone _____
 EMERGENCY CONTACT: _____ Phone _____

Session 1	June 16-19	Full Clinic ___	Half Clinic: Instruction block ___	Match Play Block ___	Lil’ Ones ___
Session 2	June 23-26	Full Clinic ___	Half Clinic: Instruction block ___	Match Play Block ___	Lil’ Ones ___
Session 3	June 30-July 3	Full Clinic ___	Half Clinic: Instruction block ___	Match Play Block ___	Lil’ Ones ___
Session 4	July 7-10	Full Clinic ___	Half Clinic: Instruction block ___	Match Play Block ___	Lil’ Ones ___
Session 5	July 14-17	Full Clinic ___	Half Clinic: Instruction block ___	Match Play Block ___	Lil’ Ones ___
Session 6	July 21-24	Full Clinic ___	Half Clinic: Instruction block ___	Match Play Block ___	Lil’ Ones ___
Session 7	July 28-31	Full Clinic ___	Half Clinic: Instruction block ___	Match Play Block ___	Lil’ Ones ___
Session 8	August 4-7	Full Clinic ___	Half Clinic: Instruction block ___	Match Play Block ___	Lil’ Ones ___

Total Clinic Costs:

Child (1) cost: _____ + Child (2) cost: _____ - Discount for Child (2) _____ = _____

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.

Mail to: Orindawoods Tennis Club, 650 Orindawoods Drive, Orinda, CA 94563