



# Orindawoods Tennis News

June 2017

Volume 23, Issue 6

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*

## Monday Team Tennis

Monday Team Tennis (MTT) has begun! We have four teams, and about sixty people competing this summer to be champions of Orindawoods [Monday Night Team Tennis, blah, blah, blah]. Everyone is a winner in MTT, because it's a tennis party that lasts all summer. That's a long party! For results, scheduling, etc... check out the Monday Team Tennis page under Events on the website.

## Facebook and Twitter

Welcome to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Orindawoods! Yes, we have finally joined the rest of the world and are on Facebook and Twitter. So, friend us and you can keep up with what is going on at your Club. There are links on the footer of [orindawoodstennis.com](http://orindawoodstennis.com) to our Facebook and Twitter pages (@orindawoodstc). Check it out.

## E-Mail Change

We are changing our e-mail addresses to a business-based e-mail. There are a bunch of technical reasons why this is a good idea, even though it is a royal pain to do. Our new addresses are:

Keith Wheeler: [keith@orindawoodstennis.com](mailto:keith@orindawoodstennis.com)

Patric Hermanson: [patric@orindawoodstennis.com](mailto:patric@orindawoodstennis.com)

We will still check our old e-mails for a while, but we don't want you or your message to get lost in the switch, so please change our addresses in your e-mail program and in your contacts list.

Sorry for the inconvenience. I've been promised this is better for us all in the long run. After all, we are all getting better or getting worse. Nothing stays the same.

## Court Usage

### Summer Time on Mondays and Fridays

It's one of the best kept secrets, but there are lots of courts available on Friday and Monday mornings in the summer. During the school year, there are leagues on Mondays and Fridays, and people get used to not being able to easily get a court on those days. However, mid-May through the beginning of September, there are no leagues and court time abounds. Come out, enjoy Mondays and Fridays this summer! It's the place to be!

### Court Washing on Fridays

Our summer court washing is beginning at the end of May. On the last Friday of the month, and the first Friday of the next month, we will be washing courts from 12-3 p.m. The last Friday is usually courts 1-3, and the first Friday, courts 4-7. Sorry for the inconvenience, but we strive to keep the Club pristine for you.

## Tennis Tip

### Rotation / Counter Rotation

One of the hardest things to master in tennis is the small, soft, weak, negative / backwards move within the larger, more powerful, forward move. To oversimplify it, your legs and core

## Ace It! June 24<sup>th</sup>

### Our 15<sup>th</sup> Year!

Ace It!, our breast cancer awareness day will be held on Saturday, June 24<sup>th</sup>. Ace It! is a fund raiser to support the Breast Center at Alta Bates hospital. This is our fifteenth year of holding Ace It! In that time, we have raised nearly \$200k. Amazing. Thanks so much!

Ace It! features clinics with the pros in the morning, a fabulous lunch, and the Ace It! Tournament in the afternoon.

**To register:** go to [orindawoodstennis.com](http://orindawoodstennis.com) in the "Events" menu. Or pick up a flyer here at the Club. We want the fifteenth year to be a big hit, an ace, so to speak. Join us!

## 2017 Summer Junior Tennis

Turn to Page Four for all the details, or visit [orindawoodstennis.com](http://orindawoodstennis.com) to get the compete Summer Junior Tennis Program info. Join us!

## Weekly Lessons

### Tuesday Ladies' Clinic

Tuesdays at 9:30 \$5

### Thursday Men's Clinic

Thursdays at 9:30 \$5

### Hit and Fit Friday (1 hour)

Fridays 10:30-11:30 \$15

### Hit and Fit Saturday (1.5 hours)

Saturdays 7:30-9 \$20

The men's and women's clinics are drop-in. Register for Hit and Fit on the Club Calendar. Click on the class to register or contact Keith.

## Pool Scene

The lovely Orindawoods Tennis Club pool is open.

- Pool hours are dawn to dusk.
- Hot tub is open to 9pm (heater shuts off).
- Children under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult.
- There is no lifeguard, so swim at your own risk, and it is best not to swim alone.

The complete pool rules are listed on the website. Enjoy and swim safe!

## Quote of the Month:

*"Mystery is not about traveling to new places, but it's about looking with new eyes." -- Proust*

should be driving you up, to the side and eventually forward while your arm smoothly rotates back, in and down towards contact (on a forehand or backhand groundstroke).



## Orindawoods Tennis Club

650 Orindawoods Dr.  
Orinda, CA 94563

Phone:  
925-254-1065

Fax:  
925-254-1380

Website:  
orindawoodstennis.com

Smart Phone App:  
PlayTennisConnect

Twitter:  
@orindawoodstc

Facebook:  
Orindawoods Tennis Club

**Executive Tennis Director:**  
Keith Wheeler  
keith@orindawoodstennis.com

**Head Pro:**  
Patric Hermanson  
patric@orindawoodstennis.com

**Junior Tennis Staff:**  
Johnathan Wong  
Nathan Sharafian  
Katie Reaves  
Sydney Bell  
Lauren McCormick

**Weekend Staff:**  
Nathan Sharafian

**Newsletter Editor:**  
Keith Wheeler

You power the ball with your legs and core, you cushion and control the ball with your arms and your hands. Or spoken another way, you propel the ball with your body, you catch the ball and aim your shot with your arms.

**Philosophically speaking**, your opponent sends their energy towards you, and you absorb it, neutralized it, transform it, and then add your energy and send all that force back at them. In other words, you thwart their attack, and then launch your counter attack. This is tennis. Over and over again.

The shoulder (what an amazing joint) has a duel function. As part of the core, it drives up, out and forward to provide power, but it also houses the arm, which rotates back to provide cushion, catch, touch and feel.

**Control.** The primary problem in tennis is not power, it is control. Tennis is a game of control. The player who can hit it the hardest, and keep it in, is the best player. Tennis is like baseball in that when hitting we want to avoid all the fielders, but in tennis all the homeruns (balls hit over the baseline, let alone the fence) are outs. We can only hit the ball so hard. We must keep it in the court.

The best way to do this is to counter rotate, within a large rotation forward. We cushion our contact so that the ball spins, and doesn't travel too far.

Of course, we want the ball to travel forward. Just not too far. So, at some point, the larger, forward force of the legs and core, overpowers the backwards catching rotation of the arm and hands, and then everything is thrown forward, propelling the ball. We have absorbed the energy of their shot, dissipated it, and replaced it with the energy of our shot. The timing (see Foundations of Your Game below) is crucial, because we want the folding back to still be happening when the ball arrives on our strings, and then while it is there, have the backward rotation come to a rest, and the forward power take over and dominate.

**Follow-Through.** But even at contact, we must make sure there is not too much forward power, by retracting the racquet backwards on the follow-through. Yes, the follow through should not go forwards, but bring the racquet back, over your shoulder (on the forehand, for example). Notice the tip of the racquet on a proper follow through, it is going backwards, away from the target.

So, if we take an overview of the entire stroke, the tip of the racquet should be rotating backwards most of the time, relative to the handle of the racquet. A stroke contains couple of negative or backward motions inside of a bigger, positive or forward motion with the body.

These counter moves are not easy to master, but are the key to real success in tennis. Being able to hit the ball hard, and keep it in. But then, didn't you know how difficult tennis was from the first day you played, balls bouncing everywhere.

### Foundations of Your Game

When you are building / practicing your game, it is helpful to think this way: 1) There is an ideal stroke, try to stick to that ideal form as much as you possibly can. 2) If you stick to that stroke, in order to contact the ball, you will have to move your feet (footwork) to get you in position so that the flight path of the ball comes to your contact point. Form informs footwork. 3) Now all that is left is to time the movement of your stroke so that you get a desired contact (see Rotation / Counter Rotation above) as the ball arrives.

These three parts, or foundations to your game, are in this particular order of importance. So if you had good form, and you got in the right place, then mistimed the ball, that would be a far better error (much closer to an awesome shot), than if your stroke and footwork were bad, but your timing was good (you very well could hit the ball, and miss the court).

In order to consistently make shots in tennis, you need the good form. At contact, the racquet face must point toward where you want the ball to go. The stroke comes first. Then to keep the racquet facing the target, and hit the ball,

you need to move to where the ball is passing you. Thus, footwork is second in importance. Then, and only then, does timing (the movement of the racquet) matter. But then it matters a lot. If you consistently have the proper form, and move your feet, you will understand where to move to, and then the proper timing. Power derives mainly from timing.

It may sound shocking, but most players are pretty darn coordinated (largely consists of timing), even beginners. If you tell someone to hit the ball over the fence, they probably can do it in a couple of tries. Coordination is not the problem. What they lack is form and footwork. And there is no reason to have footwork, if you don't have form. You just reach out and hit the ball, but when you reach, what you are losing is the strings won't be pointing towards the court. That's a huge problem, if you like winning. Focus on form, commit to form. Footwork and timing will follow.

## Practice

I was teaching our Hit and Fit class a couple of weeks ago, and watching the players work through the drills, hitting ball after ball. At that movement, it struck me how much better the players who took the class weekly had gotten. Shots that had been challenging a few years earlier, looked automatic now. These were shots that look easy (on TV), and are actually quite difficult. Shots the pros make all the time. It's the classic 3.5 sitter. Midcourt, nothing on it. Shots that are oh so easy, when you are playing a tennis video game. Not so easy in real life.

**The classic two-foot putt.** In golf, you should make a two-foot putt every time. And don't. Why not? The pressure. The world is watching. Expecting. And the embarrassment and shame if you miss a shot you "should" make.

The pros make these "easy" shots because they practice them until there is nothing left to do but make them. In the past couple of months, I have talked about footwork, and mental/emotional focus and strength, and this is where that all comes into play. Making those easy shots. Making any shot look easy, comes from taking that extra step, from staying focused, emotionally calm, going through a practiced, predetermined routine. Feeling, sensing, timing.

**Boring?** Tennis offers many challenges, but one of the biggest is the illusion of sameness, and the resulting boredom. Someone serves, someone returns, there is a volley or groundstroke, ... repeat. And then repeat, and repeat, and repeat. Two hours of serve, return, volley, ... blah, blah, blah.

It can all look the same, and our eyes glaze over, and our mind numbs. And we dump another volley in the net, or blast another sitter into the back fence. If it is boring and mind-numbing, why are we missing so many shots? Easy shots! Not enough practice?

**Practice can be boring too.** Hitting the "same shot" over and over again on the ball machine. It's repetitive. I mean, how many things can you do on a tennis court? There is the serve, then the forehand, the backhand, the forehand volley, the backhand volley. The overhead. The list is quite limited, even if you argue that there are seven different kinds of forehands, etc... Maybe boredom is a weak excuse for not bothering to see. To look, to observe.

At some point, if you are blessed, you start to see that every ball is different. There's nuisance in the game. You recognize that those varying balls require judgement, then footwork and timing to make all those different shots look the same, to the casual, bored, often distracted observer. The master sees and knows each ball is different, and the casual observer (who isn't observing at all) sees every shot as the same. "If you've seen one forehand, you've seen them all," to badly misquote Ronald Regan.

**How do we get there?** To see, to feel, to know that difference. Practice. There is something terribly satisfying about making a "gimmie." Because as player, the person who is actually out there, we know that there are no gimmies.

I remember sports psychologist Jim Loehr saying once that there are no cocky golfers. Every golfer knows that no matter how well they are playing, they are one shot away from total disaster. One shank into the pond, and the score for their round goes to hell. You can add a couple of strokes to your score with one mistake, and that mistake can compound. For a scratch golfer, a 72 can become a 79 in one shocking instant. One little lapse of attention. Ugh!!!

Tennis isn't scored that way. One hideously bad shot doesn't hurt our "score" that much (our pride can be another matter). But again, there is a sense that tennis is full of mistakes, so nothing is all that crucial. Make an error? No big deal. This attitude can lead directly to more boredom and lack of attention. There is no sense of urgency.

They say that the biggest high in life is free climbing, mountain climbing without supports. You must be completely focused, or die. Even focused, you could die. That's a rush. Rock climbers pay attention. They are not bored; their mind doesn't drift.

I'll take their word for it. That's a bit intense for me. Tennis is hard enough. The consequences in tennis don't seem dire, after all the game of tennis is full of errors, so what is another? And yet, we end up bleeding to death (losing the match) from a thousand little cuts. Remember one thing, dead is dead. It's dead every time.

**Mastery** comes from hitting tons and tons of balls, and deciding that you are not going to make any more stupid mistakes, that you commit to taking that extra step, getting in the proper position, and refine your timing. You start to see the "same ol' ball" as different, just similar. You adjust to the nuance, without losing the shape of your swing. And in making that distinction from the previous ball, you start to act appropriately for this unique ball. This is presence, living in the moment. It's satori, being one with what you are doing.

When you practice effectively, you are practicing seeing, doing, being. Tennis is a meditation. You are training your mind to hold your attention on the process. You are learning to resist distraction, temptation, frustration, fear. You are learning to win. One moment at a time. Win each moment by staying with each moment. So simple, so difficult.

**Mutation:** If you hit enough balls, eventually you will do something that feels "better", "different" more "evolved," and your game will move to the next level. Just like that, through feel and not conscious thought. This is how a lot of improvement happens. It is not linear, and we don't know when these breakthroughs happen, but when they come, we

learn, grow and develop. This is no doubt how the game has evolved. Players, playing around, found a better way to hit a forehand. Tennis history is full of innovators. In my tennis lifetime: Borg, McEnroe, Lendl, Graf, Agassi, Sampras, Hingis, Federer, Roddick, Serena, Nadal, Djokovic. Each finding an answer to the generation who went before. Then the rest of us copied the results of their experiment, as best as we can.

**How Much Practice?** About every third time you play, you should practice. That is what the experts suggest. Practice can take the form of hitting, or working out on the ball machine, or taking a lesson or clinic. Of course practice matches can be involved too, but you need to feel the freedom to grow, and experiment, and experience the hitting of the ball (and not be so focused on results). It's nice to have a practice buddy, that you can work out with, and it is clear that the results are not what you are about when you are together, but game development.

I've watched Nathan (Sunday staff person Nathan Sharafian) learn to play the guitar in the past couple of years, and so much of it, in addition to the lessons, is just doodling around, and finding a new feel, or way to make a certain sound. Errors are how we learn. Do something, see what happens, make an adjustment. You need some space in your tennis life to feel free to "play around" like that, to get maximum development. It is as important to "play around" as it is to play competitive matches and work on handling the pressures and frustrations of attempting to win. We need both. Good luck out there!

## **Orindawoods Tennis Club Summer 2017 Junior Program**

*Here at Orindawoods Tennis Club we look forward to providing your child with an exciting and challenging tennis experience. We are experts in fun! We pride ourselves on our positive and nurturing tennis learning environment. If you want to learn or improve your strokes, strategy and footwork then sign up for our Instruction Block Clinic. If you want to improve your ability to compete and manage your points, sign up for our Match Play Block. Want to get the all-around experience? Then sign up for the Full Afternoon Clinic and get both of the above blocks at a great price! For the 4-6 year olds, we have the Little ones Clinics on Tuesdays and Thursdays. – Patric.*

### **Clinic Schedule:**

<b>Orindawoods Clinics</b>	<b>Ages</b>	<b>Days</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Cost Per Week Member / Nonmember</b>
<b>Full Clinic</b>				
Afternoon Clinic	Ages 7-16	Monday-Thursday	12noon-3:45pm	\$220 / \$245
<b>Half Clinics</b>				
Instruction Block	Ages 7-16	Monday -Thursday	12noon-2pm	\$140/ \$155
Match Play Block	Ages 7-16	Monday-Thursday	2:15-3:45pm	\$115/ \$130
Lil' Ones Clinic	Ages 4-6	Tuesday & Thursday	4:00-4:45pm	\$45 / \$50

### **2017 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 12-15	<b>Full Clinic</b> ___	<b>Half Clinic:</b> Instruction block ___ Match Play Block ___ Lil' Ones ___
Session 2	June 19-22	<b>Full Clinic</b> ___	<b>Half Clinic:</b> Instruction block ___ Match Play Block ___ Lil' Ones ___
Session 3	June 26- 29	<b>Full Clinic</b> ___	<b>Half Clinic:</b> Instruction block ___ Match Play Block ___ Lil' Ones ___
Session 4	July 3, 5 & 6*	<b>Full Clinic</b> ___	<b>Half Clinic:</b> Instruction block ___ Match Play Block ___ Lil' Ones ___
Session 5	July 10-13	<b>Full Clinic</b> ___	<b>Half Clinic:</b> Instruction block ___ Match Play Block ___ Lil' Ones ___
Session 6	July 17-20	<b>Full Clinic</b> ___	<b>Half Clinic:</b> Instruction block ___ Match Play Block ___ Lil' Ones ___
Session 7	July 24-27	<b>Full Clinic</b> ___	<b>Half Clinic:</b> Instruction block ___ Match Play Block ___ Lil' Ones ___
Session 8	July 31-Aug. 3	<b>Full Clinic</b> ___	<b>Half Clinic:</b> Instruction block ___ Match Play Block ___ Lil' Ones ___

\* Three days only. No class on Tuesday, July 4th

### **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