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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

Ace It! 2010

This year's Ace It! is scheduled for June 26, 2010 and we would like to invite you to participate again this year. This will be our eighth Ace It! Event since we started in 2002. We have raised over \$100,000 in that time for the Carol Ann Read Breast Center at Alta Bates. For those of you who have participated over the years, thank you so much for your support. With your help, we have created a great community feeling of caring and support for our friends, family and neighbors in need. If you would like more information about Ace It!, see some pictures from past years, or sign up for 2010, please go to the OWTC website: www.orindawoodstennis.com and click on the link to Ace It! in the left column.

We will be using the same format for the event this year. A warm-up in the early morning followed by the Tour of Pros clinics, the luncheon on the deck, and then the Ace It! Tournament. As always, you can participate in either the morning, the afternoon, or both. The action starts at 8:30 a.m. and goes until 4 p.m. if you do the whole day. The incredible Ace It! Raffle is included in the price. Come join us for this celebration of life, community and support. We really hope to see you on June 26 for Ace It! 2010!

Summer Junior Tennis Camps

This summer, we will run a full afternoon camp 12 noon to 3:45pm, with an instructional block from 12-2pm, a break from 2-2:15pm and a match play block from 2:15-3:45pm, Monday thru Thursday. Those looking for a shorter class can choose to enroll in only the instructional block or the match play block on any given week. The full afternoon camp (12-3:45pm) will be priced at \$180. The 2 hour instructional block at \$115, the 1.5 hour match play block at \$90. A Lil' Ones class will be offered Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4-4:45pm. The Lil' Ones cost \$30. Those are weekly member prices. To get more information see page 4 or contact Patricia (Patricictennis@yahoo.com / 925-254-1065).

Tennis Tip

Excellence or Average

Most people are average, and in spite of what they say, work their butts off to stay average. In fact, hard as they may try, their actions guarantee an average result.

Jim Collins wrote in the first lines of his excellent management study, "Good is the enemy of great. And that

Monday Team Tennis

Last call for Monday Night Team Tennis! I will be setting up the teams on June 2nd. MTT is our social tennis league played all summer long on Monday evenings. We divide all those enrolled into several teams who play against each other every Monday night (sometimes there are byes).

Matches start each Monday evening at 6 p.m. and finish up around 9-9:30p.m.. We play men's and women's doubles, mixed doubles, and even mixed triples. Dinner is included (a couple times each summer your team will be asked to provide dinner – cost reimbursed). The cost for MTT is \$50 for the whole summer of tennis fun. (limited number of select non-members pay \$70).

If you would like to sign up, either write Keith, orindawoodstc@sbcglobal.net or go to the website, www.orindawoodstennis.com and click on "register for MTT" on the front page. We will be limiting the number of spaces this year so that more people get to play more often. If you want more information, or to see if you fit in, write me or talk to me at the Club. Meet other members! Play MTT!

The Pool Is Open

The Orindawoods pool opened at the beginning of May. Pool hours are dawn to dusk. You need the pass code to get into the pool area for safety reasons. Contact the Pro Shop to get the code. It is the same as last year. Remember, children must be at least 14 to be in the pool area alone. No diving, and no running on the pool deck. Please do not bring glass into the pool area, as broken glass is invisible in water.

Court One Resurfacing

Court one will be closed from July 12 through 29. We will be petromating the court, which is basically putting a new court on top of the old surface. On July 30, we should have a new court at Orindawoods!

Associate Pro Brad Shak

Just a reminder, Associate Pro Brad Shak is available for private lessons Mon-Sat this summer. Check out Brad's great lessons!

is one of the key reasons why we have so little that becomes great."

People work hard to improve, say their tennis, in this case, and they get good, and they are satisfied with that. They all say that they want to get better, but the key is that they no longer take the risks to get to the next level. This is one of the key points I want to make, it takes risks to get better, and it takes risks to excel, like the old saying, "nothing ventured, nothing gained."

But it is more than that. Most people do what everyone else is doing. We are social creatures, and we are drawn to copying the efforts of others that are good. "Keeping up with the Joneses" is the often quoted line. The problem is, if you do what everyone else is doing, you are going to be average. Average is the amount, standard level or rate regarded as usual or ordinary. If you combine all this, doing what everyone else is doing, but trying to do it better, you are going to end up being average precisely because everyone else is doing the exact same thing. Doing what everyone else is doing, but trying to do it better.

We also have a great fear of falling behind ("keeping up with the Joneses" again). It is hard to take risks when you have a fear of losing something. So you just make it on the 3.5 team, for example, and you are hardly in the mood to try some skill you haven't mastered yet, because you could miss and drop back down to 3.0. Of course that skill is the only way you are going to get to 4.0 or even 4.5, but most people get stuck at 3.5 precisely for that reason. They defend what they have, rather than go after what they want.

People who win in sports, or excel in other activities, rise above the norm, and do so, because they are not doing what everyone else is doing. They have found something that works better, makes them exceptional.

Borg is a great example here from our tennis history. He came onto the scene as the only player hitting heavy topspin and staying primarily at the base line. He dominated tennis for seven years, then burned out and retired in his mid-twenties. After a couple of years, he got the itch to play again and made a comeback. But his time had passed. The problem was that all the kids coming up watching him play, emulated his style, and by the time he made his comeback, the ranks of pro tennis players were filled with people that played just like him. Borg was suddenly average, and didn't win more than the average. By then, a new exceptional player had come along, Ivan Lendl, who hit the ball harder and flatter than all the average Borg-like topspinners. Agassi and Sampras continued in this power tradition, while players like Chang (a classic hard worker who copied the average – tennis is full of these players) spun the ball like everyone else.

This average disease invades everywhere, including strategy. 95% of the pros in America are teaching the average strategy, the accepted norm: serve and volley in doubles. As long as the people you are playing are doing the same strategy, the winner just comes down to who executes better. But there is a better way.

One of the biggest problems with doing what everyone else is doing is that it is playing right into exactly the counter moves that the excellent players are making. Their game is designed to combat and take down exactly what the average player does. Most players on the tour hit two-handed backhands. Federer is #1. He hits a sharp angle slice backhand which is a very difficult shot for two-handers to hit. It skids low, short and away from them. He doesn't lose to two-handers very often. He is exceptional. (Of course most players are struggling to learn that slice backhand again, so the day will come when The Fed isn't exceptional any more). Nadal, who is left-handed (another exception) gives Federer a very hard time because Federer's slice goes right to Nadal's forehand. Federer's exception is neutralized.

Here is a very interesting story. In World War II 5% of the fighter pilots shot down 95% of the enemy

planes. The other 95% of our pilots were the ones being shot down by the other side's 5% ace pilots. Put that way, the need to be exceptional takes on a whole new meaning. In that context, the average person isn't just losing tennis matches, they are losing their life.

In the doubles strategy mentioned above, serve and volley, there are two huge problems. No one is covering the middle and no one is covering the lob. The easiest place to hit a groundstroke is through the middle (lowest part of the net, biggest part of the court

Quote of the Month:

"Good is the enemy of great. And that is one of the key reasons why we have so little that becomes great."

-- Jim Collins



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to hit into) and the lob is one of the first shots a player learns.

So, do you want to win? Everyone one says yes. Everyone wants to win. Pretty much a unanimous answer. But as sports psychologist Alan Fox points out, few people actually behave like they want to win, just like the fighter pilots above. Everyone says they want to be great, but they behave in a way that good is as far as they can get and most just end up average. In other words, shot down. In tennis, they come to the net, because everyone else is. And most of the teaching pros say they should.

If you want to be like everyone else, do what everyone else is doing. If you want to win, or be exceptional, do something different. If the prominent doubles strategy is to divide the court at the front (serve and volley, both players at the net), attack the middle and the back. The teams that do this will be exceptional, and win, until everyone figures out what they are doing, and catch up. Then the winners will find something else to do, and the game evolves.

That means that if you are waiting to see if your strategy works before you take the risk to try it (are the other players playing this way?), then you are doomed to always be average. By the time everyone else is doing it, it is too late to take you to exceptional and winning.

Of course, doing something exceptional doesn't guarantee success. It could be a harebrained idea that doesn't work at all. So there is risk in going for great. But if you don't take risks, then there is no risk at all, you will end up average. All the while you said you wanted to win, but you are average, winning about half the time. Safe isn't safe.

Tennis is an interesting discipline, because in tennis the teachers generally try to figure out what the top players are doing, and teach that. In most other areas, it is the teachers, the inventors, the innovators that are coming up with the new stuff, and then teaching it to the players. Most tennis teachers are just copycats. Almost all players are.

As a teacher, I have always looked to the cutting edge of tennis. I don't pretend to come up with every interesting or exceptional idea or strategy. Whether it is strategy or strokes, I follow the work of a couple of exceptional pros, and add my own ideas to attempt to stay ahead of the average. Since most pros and players are coping the norm, this gives me and my students a couple of year's head start on others. Most teaching pros never change. They are all teaching what worked for them back when they were playing against dinosaurs. One of my friends still teaches 1970s strokes and 1970s strategy. At Orindawoods, our pros work hard to keep on the cutting edge.

If your chief competitor has a great two-handed backhand, what is your response to that? Average thinking would be, I want to hit a two-handed backhand just like that. Why, so you can play them to a standstill? Exceptional thinking follows more along with Federer. What shot can I hit to turn their strength into a weakness.

I like winning, and I like teaching my students in a way that gives them a chance to be exceptional. I know I am not for everyone. Most players say want to win, but act like they want to be average. Most pros don't teach what I teach. That's OK, that gives my players someone to beat. Take the chance, go for exceptional. Don't just settle for being a fighter pilot, be an ace. Your tennis life depends on it. Go for great. Good luck out there!