



Orindawoods Tennis News

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

Rain Daze II

GEEZ!

I mean geez!!!!

Really?

Enough already!

How much can you water the lawn before it floods, dies and washes away? Are you more buried in snow if it is 8 feet, or 15 feet deep?

Well, as the Peaceful Warrior Dan Millman says, "Life consists of lessons. And that lessons are repeated until learned."

Rain is one of the great teachers, because, for the most part, it gently reminds us that we are not in control. And we soooooo love to control things. We have our schedules, our appointments, our this and our that, all to achieve a predictable, comfortable little life. Earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, tornados, tsunamis are other reminders, but they are not as gentle. These California / Pacific storms, while preventing us from playing the game we love, are for the most part, just annoying.

But they are pretty darn annoying. Especially this year. Oye vey!

Chill... breath... meditate... acceptance... the world is a loving place...

If you are a fish, duck, swan, or fowl of some kind with webbed feet...

But if you love to hit backhands, then you are just going to have to wait. And Americans love to wait. We are so patient. Delayed gratification, it's our theme song... Yeah, right.

So today, take a deep breath, and remind yourself, "That it is a great day for ducks."

A small consolation, admittedly. But true.

Wait, ... I suppose there is duck hunting.... Hmmmm... hadn't thought of that...Pop, pop, duck drop. Our little misplaced revenge.

Tennis Tip:

Invisible Tennis

Stronger, more experienced players see things that less experience, perhaps less-trained players are not able see. This is the invisible game of tennis.

To the lay person, it looks like nothing is there, but to the experienced tennis warrior, they see concepts, shapes, targets and understand things that the common man doesn't see or even think to consider. We talk a lot about "playing the percentages" and this is a large part of this unseen knowledge or strength that strong players possess. In doubles, concepts like "hit through the middle", and "control the middle" are key here. In the last several months we have talked a lot about positioning, anticipation and reading the game, all concepts that are not obvious to the less-experienced player.

While these strategies and tactics are invisible or unknown to the beginner or lower-level player, we have discussed these at great

Anna Marie To Leave Orindawoods

As many of you know by now, Anna Marie has decided to leave Orindawoods and take a new position at Moraga Country Club. Anna Marie has been a great part of Orindawoods for the better part of seven years. Time flies, doesn't it? Her energy, teamwork and enthusiasm have been tremendous, and we will miss her. And she says that she will miss Orindawoods. With her kids growing up, MCC just offers a better fit for this next stage of her life.

The Club is looking at its options for finding a new assistant pro. In the meantime, Keith will be teaching the Hit and Fit classes, so there will be no disruption there. "We admit, we admit, we must be fit!" The junior program will continue unchanged, as Patric will continue to lead the juniors forward towards tennis excellence. If you had private lessons with Anna Marie, and wish to try to fit something in with Patric or Keith, please contact us.

Anna Marie's last day at Orindawoods was February 18.

Anna Marie, we will miss you. Best of luck in the future!

Hit and Fit

Our wonderful Hit and Fit program will continue. Hit and Fit is a combination of a tennis workout using our playmate ball machine, and TRX strength workout ("Make Your Body Your Machine"). Keith has had the same training as Anna Marie, and will teach the class going forward. Hit and Fit times are:

Fridays 10:30-11:30 \$15 / person (60 mins)

Saturdays 7:30-9am \$20 / person (90 mins)

You can register by signing up on the calendar page on the website. Just click on the class you want to take, and fill out the registration. We look forward to getting into great shape this spring!

Quote of the Month:

"Grace will take you places hustling can't."

length recently. This month, I want to talk about another part of the invisible game having more to do with targets and target areas. And more about discipline, perseverance and sticking to your plan. The way a chess master can look at the board of a game in progress, and see / sense areas of weakness and strength, and adjust accordingly.

The Triangle. For doubles, the first concept I want to talk about is what I call the triangle. The triangle is the space from the middle of the service box at the net, angled back towards the center T, and the center service line (see figure 1). The corresponding triangle exists on the add side of the court on points from that side. I can see that shape clearly on the court, as clear as if it was painted in red. When I'm playing from the back, I'm looking to see if the net person is covering that space. If not, I hit right through there (I am controlling the middle from the base line). If they are covering that space (the net person is controlling the middle) and I may have to hit around them (alley, wide or lob), or take them on. A net player at "x" is probably covering the triangle, a net player at "y" or "z" is not. Think about how many times your opponents are not at "x", but at "y" or "z". A lot. Look for it, feel it, sense it, trust it. Go for it!

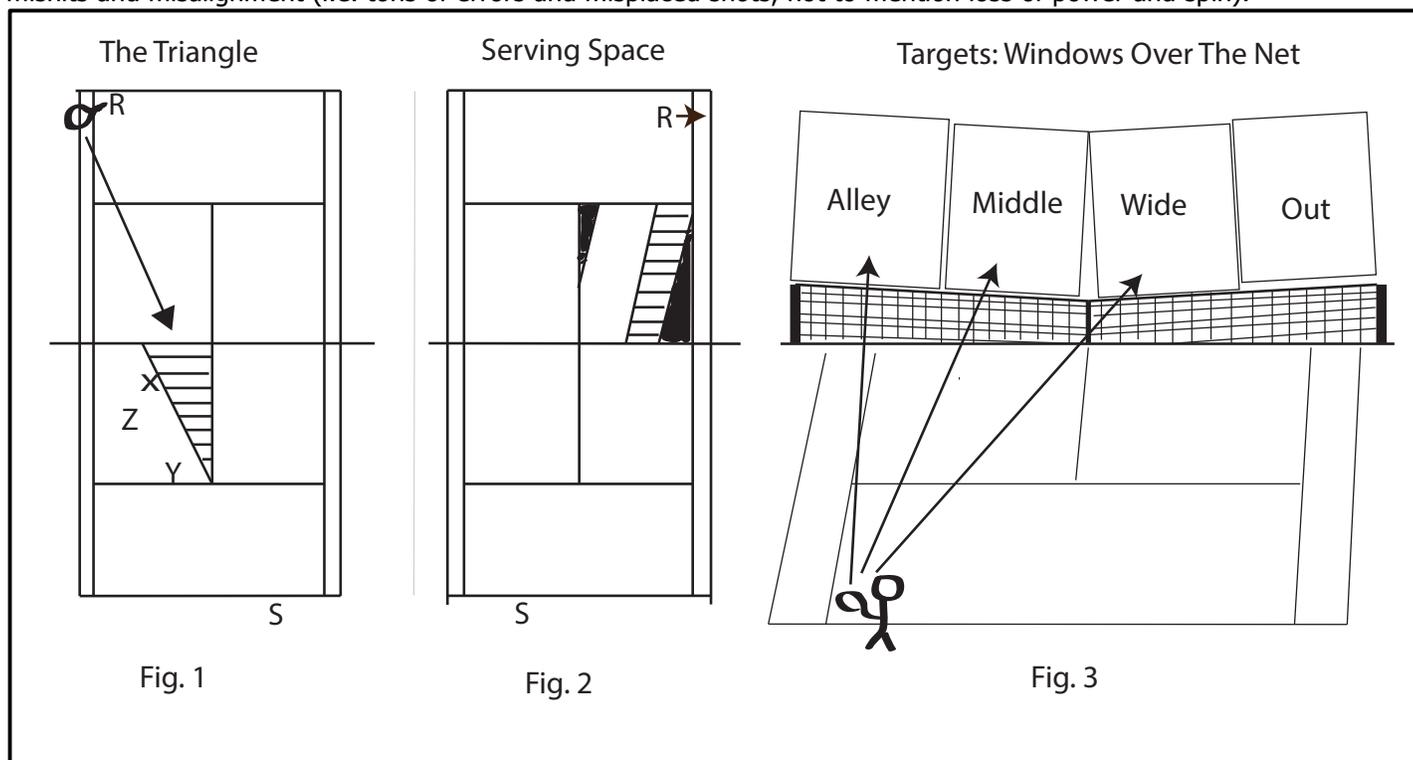
Serving Targets. How big is the backhand area? If it is big enough (horizontal lines, figure 2), I hit the serve there most of the time. If they shrink it down too much by the returner moving out in to the alley making the backhand area too small (black area), I have to go to the forehand side (black area in the middle) to draw them out of the backhand corner, and make the backhand target area larger (restore the horizontal line area). Same is true on the deuce side of the court (but the backhand target area is in the center for right-handed opponents). Don't let them shrink the target area. (And if you are returning, make that space as small as they will let you. -- i.e. ignore rare aces to the FH side).

Windows Over the Net. It is human nature to aim our shots towards the court on our opponent's side, but realize that if the net was solid, you couldn't see the opponent's court (unless you were right on top of the net – btw, good place to be). In other words, when you are looking / aiming at the court, you are aiming at the net. Not good. It is better to "see" windows over the net. Then if you hit through those windows, the ball will drop into the court. Aim for spaces over the net, not at the net. (figure 3). For doubles, notice that the "middle" shot corresponds to the triangle. This is the crucial window over the net. The net person should control it, but often they don't. Aim there if they don't.

Stroking patterns. On any stroke in tennis there is an ideal stroking pattern. It follows certain lines of movement. We need the flight of the ball to intersect those lines at contact, but if we orient our stroke too much to the flight path of the ball, and not the ideal lines of the stroke we hit far inferior strokes. Common mistakes are that we try to line up to the ball too soon, or too much (as in just blocking the ball). This leads to all kinds of problems.

So the experienced, well-trained players, have a desired shape for their stroke, which they can visualize and execute under pressure. They can "see" the contact point, and the "line" of their stroke. They move around (footwork) so that the flight of the ball intersects the path of the racquet. They do not radically change the desired path of the racquet.

For example, if we trace the movement of the tip of the racquet of an advanced player on the forehand, it moves far more inside out (i.e. it extends to the side), and then back again (follow through back across the body), than in a straight line "forward" towards the ball. Yes, the racquet moves mostly to the side rather than forward. When the ball comes, if you can't "see" this pattern in your mind's eye, you'll just lose form and chase the ball. Chasing results in mishits and misalignment (i.e. tons of errors and misplaced shots, not to mention loss of power and spin).



Form Informs Footwork

It's a simple, but crucial concept. First you insist on stroking the ball with the proper form (see above: "stroking patterns"). Don't waver and give into temptation to chase the ball. Stick to your stroke. Second, you move to where you have to move to be able to execute that proper stroke and connect with the ball too. Your form tells you where you need to move.

It is that simple. And yet, for most of us, it is so rare that we do this. The undisciplined player will change their stroke, rather than move their feet. This is the trap we fall into. It's the trap our opponent is setting for us. They are trying to get you to chase the ball with your arms and hands.

It's an established fact: **The more we move our arms, the less we move our feet.** And everyone finds it much easier to move your arms than your feet. Arms are smaller, quicker and much easier to maneuver than legs. Legs are big, heavy, relatively slow. We'd much rather move our arms. There is just one little problem, it doesn't work well for tennis. Big, huge, fat, bummer. Totally.

Commitment: The problem is, we aim the shot using our hands and arms. The racquet must, at contact, be aligned to our target. Not just find the ball. Strange as it seems, I would rather stick to my stroke (aiming) and miss a shot, than flail at the ball, trying to rescue my bad positioning by moving my arm (changing my stroke). You see, if you want to excel, mistakes are not a bad thing. If you have good form, and you misjudge the flight of the ball and miss, you now know where you should move to next time. It's not a mistake, it is a lesson. Your ideal stroke gives you a frame of reference. Yes, you lost that point, but it will be a one-time occurrence, a "one off". Whereas if you chase the ball with your arm, you haven't learned anything about where you need to move. You are no closer to understanding the proper relationship between you, your stroke, and the ball. This invisible relationship is essential for playing well.

Trapped. And worse than that, since you flailed this time, you are much more likely to flail next time you are out of position as well. It's a bad, bad, bad habit. Your play will be inconsistent at best, most likely terrible. And feel frustrated.

Perseverance. Those few shots that you missed early on will actually be helping you to prepare for a strong finish. Due to the nature of tennis scoring, tennis is a game where you want to finish well, and you need to finish better than your opponent. You must win the last point, game, set. I've won matches where I lost the first set 0-6, and I've lost matches where I have won the first set 6-0. Tennis is about finishing; it's about improving as you go along. Building to a crescendo.

Let your form inform your footwork, and help you to move better and better as the match goes along. With better positioning, your play will improve as the match progresses. There is no short cut around this -- no easy, lazy answer --you have to do the work. Again, **form informs footwork.** It's so worth it!



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On Missing Anna Marie

It's difficult when a member of the family leaves, to go out and pursue their dreams. As the ones left behind, you are proud, happy for them and glad you could help them get ready for the next stage of their life. And you are a bit sad as well, for the time together never seemed long enough.

Orindawoods is a close-knit family. We like it that way. It's more meaningful, and the times we spend together are rewarding, real, and more fun. We learn more, we feel deeper, we relate better.

In a world that seems more isolated, we all crave a place that feels more like home. The home we either had, or the one we all deserve. Where there is fun, and yet deep concern and meaning. It doesn't always work perfectly, there are family squabbles, and different points of view, but there is a general commitment to keep this place sacred. Where we learn, grow, become what we can be, until it is time to move on. Our own back yard.

Each person that works here, each member that belongs, each homeowner who lives here, adds their little bit to the whole that is Orindawoods. We each bring something that makes the collective whole a bit better than it was without us.

Anna Marie brought something to Orindawoods that only she could offer. Just like you. The next person, will bring their special offering. And we will all be the

better for it. And yet, we will miss those that have had to move on, and the absence of their gift. And we think fondly of them, remember the good times and wish them well on their future journeys. Best wishes to you Anna Marie.

Spring Junior Tennis Program At Orindawoods

The 2017 Spring Junior Clinics began the week of **March 20**, and will continue thru the week of **May 29**. Program leader for the 10 week session is Head Pro **Patric Hermanson**, supported by our excellent junior staff. **NOTE:** Students continuing from the Winter Session, the dates and prices will be different, as Winter make-up classes will extend into the Spring Session. Ask Patric for pricing.

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

<u>Level</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Time(s)</u>	<u>One day/week</u>	<u>Two Days</u>
I	Lil’ Ones (Ages 4-6)	Tues/Thurs 3:15-4pm	\$140*	\$220*
<p>The Lil’ Ones class 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.</p>				
II	Future Stars Group (Ages 7-10)	Tuesdays 4-5:30pm	\$255*	N/A
<p>The Future Stars Group 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.</p>				
III	Tennis Development Group (Ages 11-14)	Thursdays 4-5:30pm	\$255*	N/A
<p>In the Tennis Development Group we will work on refining technique, improving footwork and developing strategic awareness for successful match play. This class is for beginning through intermediate players</p>				
IV	Tournament Training Group	Wednesdays 4:30-6:30pm	\$325*	N/A
<p>The Tournament Training Group 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.</p>				

***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 check orindawoodstennis.com 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.

The Summer Junior Program will be structured in one-week-long clinics, and start June 12th. Join us!

An old Cherokee is teaching his grandson about life. “A fight is going on inside me,” he said to the boy.

“It is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves. One is evil – he is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.” He continued, “The other is good – he is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. The same fight is going on inside you – and inside every other person, too.”

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather, “Which wolf will win?”

The old Cherokee simply replied, “The one you feed.”