



May 2011
Volume 17, Issue 5

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

Seven Lighted Courts

We are getting to the time of the year when it is staying quite light into the evening hours, and our club goes from a club with two lighted courts that are hard to get, to a club with seven "lighted" courts. Hurray!

There are now other times of the week with court time opening up where it has been hard to get in the wintertime. Monday and Friday mornings are now much more available for play with the end of the BALL and spring league seasons. Those are wonderful times to play tennis. As always, Sunday morning is a quiet time at the Club (especially before 11 a.m. when leagues start).

As for the busy times, weekends starting at 11 a.m. is when league play begins, and there are usually matches on courts 4, 5 & 6 most of the afternoon on most weekends. However, courts 1, 3 and 7 are still available for play most days, with lessons on court 2 (some Saturdays have lessons on court 1 part of the day, after 11 a.m.).

By the way, we are looking into lighting more courts for those dark winter months, but that is a long, involved process and right now we are just checking the costs and planning how money might be available.

Thanks For Your Service

Thanks to outgoing Board members Dick Rogan, Mark Owens and Pierce McKee. Each of these members provided great service not only to the Club, but to all of Orindawoods Association. Orindawoods is a wonderful place to live, as well as play tennis. The fantastic club that we all enjoy is here largely due to the fine work of these Board members, as well as the support of all the homeowners in Orindawoods. Thank you.

The Door To Tennis Success

Think of a time when you walked up to a door and pushed, and the door wouldn't open. You tried it a second time, and still it wouldn't budge. Then you noticed a little sign that said pull (instead of push, as you expected). You then opened the door easily and entered the building. What is tricky, is sometimes a door really looks like it should be a push, not a pull, so without even thinking, we start off with a push, only to find out later, it is a pull.

The same can be said of tennis groundstrokes. The natural, intuitive thought is that forehands and backhands are forward motions, and require swinging or pushing out away from the body. Of course, when you hit something, you swing forward, everyone knows that.

But do they? And is that what is really happening when the best players in tennis "hit" a tennis ball?

With the advent of high-speed film, we can study what the best players are doing much more closely than ever before, and hopefully take that information to improve our own games.

Let's back up a bit, and remember that Force = Mass times Acceleration ($F=MA$). There are several kinds of force in nature that can be used: momentum, leverage, torque. Let's also remember, that tennis is a game that requires a great deal of control, or the ability to aim. You probably don't need to be reminded of that, as the pain of missing shots

Ace It! Registration

Ace It! registration began in April. You can download an application from the Orindawoods website (go to Events/Ace It!).

Ace It! is our all-day, breast cancer awareness benefit here at Orindawoods. This year Ace It! will be held on Saturday, June 25.

For those of you who have not participated in Ace It! before, it is a fun day of tennis. The day starts with instructional clinics by local pros, followed by a great lunch, and the Ace It! Tournament in the afternoon. All money goes towards supporting the Alta Bates Breast Center. See you on June 25!

Monday Team Tennis

Want to put a little fun back in your tennis? MTT is your ticket. Sure, we keep score, but we also eat, party, laugh and heckle our way through 12 Monday nights of fun tennis action.

Monday Team Tennis begins the first Monday in June (6/6) and runs all summer long (we will take off Monday, July 4). If you are interested in playing Monday Team Tennis, contact Keith (orindawoodstc@sbcglobal.net) or tell him when you are at the Club. Registration is open now. Don't miss out on the social tennis event of the season and one of the very best, most fun things we do together here at the Club.

The cost for MTT is \$50 for members, \$70 for non-members. Please pay on opening night.

Summer Junior Clinics

Yes it is time to start talking about summer junior tennis. We have a great program here at the Club, and registration is open. Go to page 4 of the newsletter to get all the details of Patric and Anna Marie's great program!

Classes begin the week of June 13th and run for 8 wonderful weeks. Check out the schedule and pricing on page 4. For more information contact Patric at the Club or at

patrictennis@yahoo.com. Last summer was our biggest and best program ever. Join us for an even better 2011!

Court Washing

The courts will be washed on the first (courts 1-3) and last (courts 4-7) Fridays of the month from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Check the court scheduler for what courts are available for play.

is probably fresh in your mind. Those memories of misses are ever-present with me. Especially the big ones. Ouch!

If we combine the need for force, with the need for accuracy, this makes tennis a pretty tough game to master. In fact, we can pretty much toss momentum, or swinging out the window as a source of useful force. In other words, just giving the racquet speed and letting it go towards the target (the ball) is not going to be a very precise way of making contact and controlling the direction the ball goes after contact. This is why when we watch pro tennis today, the backswings have gotten shorter and shorter (note: by backswings, I mean when the racquet transitions from preparation to its final approach to the ball. Much of what people call backswing is really still preparation and alignment).

So if we can't take a big ol' swing at the ball and get it to go in often enough, we are left with either pushing the ball (moving the racquet out away from our body towards the target), or pulling the ball (bringing the racquet back towards our body). While almost everyone would think that we want to move the racquet towards the target, it is actually the pulling across the ball and then away from the target that makes the racquet accelerate the fastest.

Remember, directing the ball has more to do with which way the strings are pointing, than which way they are moving. This is a very common misunderstanding about control (and force), and is the cause of many, many errors.

If we watch today's modern strokes on high speed film, we see that while the racquet face is pointed towards the ball and the intended target on the other side of the net, there is less push (leverage) and more turn (torque). The leverage, or push with the body seems to more give the stroke stability and control, while the turning, or pulling the racquet, up, over and across the ball seem to be where the real racquet head acceleration comes from.

Please notice that we are talking here about racquet head acceleration, and not racquet head speed. It is speeding up that gives us more force, not going fast. So approaching the ball slowly, and then making a turn (which greatly accelerates the racquet) will be how the modern players impart force on the ball. This is why when we watch top players, they seem to move so slowly, then very quick. The rhythm is slow, slow, quick, slow.

But it is the racquet that moves quick, not so much the body. By turning the racquet and pulling it back over from the right side of our body to the left (on the right-handed forehand), we cause the racquet to accelerate quickly right at the moment that the ball arrives on the strings. This increased force is delivered to the ball, even though the racquet itself is largely going sideways and then back.

One more time: If the racquet head starts coiled back and below the ball, and then you pull the head of the racquet so that it goes up and then back over to the left side of your body, the racquet head will be turning quickly and thus speeding up as it meets the ball in an upwards and sideways brushing movement. It is this acceleration up and across the ball that gives today's strokes such power and topspin (in actual fact, some of the "topspin" is actually sidespin, especially when the ball is contacted very low, or very high relative to the body). In fact, on top-level serves, the ball rotation is only about 30% topspin and about 70% sidespin. The difference is, on the serve, the racquet is turning out away from the body, while on the groundstrokes it is being pulled back across and towards the body. This is the difference between stroking underhand and overhand.

In conclusion, while we may think we want to swing out to the ball, we actually want to pull or brush across the ball to create maximum racquet head acceleration while maintaining control (keeping the strings facing the target). This is not to say there is no forward movement (push or leverage), but there is much less than we would think, and much less than most of us are attempting to do. So enter the room of tennis success by pulling open the door, not pushing in vain a door that won't open that way. Good luck out there!

Know The Court, Know Yourself

About five years ago I really changed the way I taught doubles strategy and tactics. I based this change on really one underlying idea: what are my best shots, and how can I hit those more often. Of course the converse is also important: what are my weaker shots, and how can I hit those less often.

Starting with that concept, I then looked at my players, what they did well, what they struggled with, and started to coach them so that they were using their strengths more often, and their weaknesses less. I realized that most players volleyed better when they were close to the net and hit forehands better than backhands (this was a tough one, because many people hit good backhands, but often they had a great cross-court backhand, but couldn't hit it down-the-line very well, making their good backhand very predictable, where they had more variety on their supposedly "weaker" forehand). Finally, they hit midcourt volleys poorly (even when they made these shot, they put little pressure on their opponents and were quite vulnerable to a counter attack).

If we divide the court into five zones (see April newsletter – available on the Orindawoods website or your local nearby trash can), there are places on the court where certain shots (shot types illustrated in April newsletter) are more successful than others. I've listed these shots by zones (see Fig. A).

Zone One: volleys, overheads

Quote of the Month:

"In theory, there is no difference between theory and practice. But in practice, there is."

-- Yogi Berra



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Reservations, Club
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more!

Zone Two: overheads
Zone Three: attacking groundstrokes (drive, dip rip, angle i.e balls hit hard, 1-2 ft over the net), swing volleys
Zone Four: rally groundstrokes (arc, loop i.e. 3-8 ft over the net), lobs
Zone Five: lobs, loops
For example, the only shot you want to be hitting in Zone Two is an overhead. So, if your opponent isn't going to lob, don't stand there. Period. And yet people stand in Zone Two all day long. You are just asking to be bad. And many players are. So a strategy that requires you to repeatedly play defense from Zone Two (where most people stand when their partner is receiving) is a bad strategy. And strategies that requires you to approach the net moving through Zone Two hitting difficult volleys (serve and volley, chip and charge) are not very good strategies either. In theory, coming in and getting both players up to Zone One makes sense, but in practice, there are too many difficult shots or situations to be repeatedly successful against smart opponents. Instead, figure out a way to hit a lot of volleys in Zone One, and a lot of groundstrokes in Zone Three.

Look at the same five zones, and label which shots are not so good to play from certain parts of the court (Fig. B). (The tactical correction follows in parentheses).

- Zone One: low volleys, (so stand closer to the net)
- Zone Two: high or low volleys, half volleys, (don't stand there)
- Zone Three: traditional volleys, half volleys, (don't come in)
- Zone Four: offensive ground strokes -- drive, dip rip. (be smart, don't over hit)
- Zone Five: attacking -- drive, dip rip -- or rally ground strokes -- arc, (play defense: lob)

So how this played out, is that I stopped having my players serve and volley, which as a strategy requires them to hit a lot of volleys in Zones Two & Three (not to mention, watch a lot of lobs fly over their heads for winners). I started having the server or returner stay back, which allowed them to hit a lot of forehands in Zones Three and Zone Four. If they had a shorter forehand in Zone Three, they would hit the attacking forehands (drive, dip rip, angle), and if they had a deeper forehand (in Zones Four or Five), they would hit the rallying type shots (arc, loop or lob). Since all serves land short (or they are out by rule), unless the server hit the ball very hard, my players are returning the ball from Zone Three and attacking right away (true in virtually every woman's match below 4.5, and most men's matches on at least second serves). These attacking groundstrokes are very hard to volley, and put intense pressure on the net person (even if they are in Zone One, and make life pretty much impossible for a net person moving up through Zones Two or Three).

If you combine this attacking groundstroke style with your own net person being close to the net (Zone One, where they volley better, and handle pace better), and pinch that net person towards the middle (were the vast majority of the shots go), you have modern doubles (or as some people call it, Dingles, a combination of singles and doubles that is very popular on the pro tour right now). We now see lots of poaching, I formation, stack or Australian, with the back person staying back. Good luck out there!

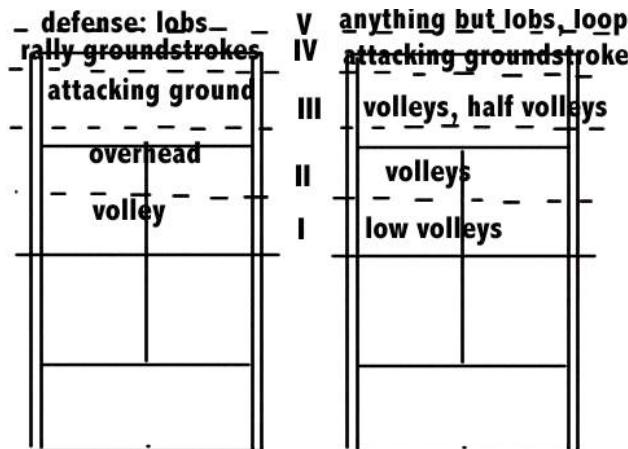


Fig. A positive

Fig. B avoid

Orindawoods Junior Clinic Tennis
Spring 2011: March 14th – June 3rd

The 2011 Spring Junior Clinics began the week of **March 14th**, and will finish up the week of **May 30th**. Program leaders for the 11 week session are Head Pro **Patric Hermanson** and Assistant Pro **Anna Marie Gamboa**. Coach Patric and Coach Anna Marie incorporate aspects of the USTA Quickstart Program into the Level I and II classes. If you get a late start, we will pro-rate the price.

<u>Level</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Time(s)</u>	<u>One day/wk</u>	<u>Two Days/wk</u>
<u>I</u>	<u>Lil' Ones (Ages 4-6)</u>	<u>Tues/Thurs 3:15-4pm</u>	<u>\$135</u>	<u>\$220*</u>

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.

<u>II</u>	<u>Future Stars Group (Ages 7-10)</u>	<u>Tuesdays 4-5:30pm</u>	<u>\$260*</u>	<u>N/A</u>
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The Future Stars Group is for players with no tennis experience to those who have played a year or two.

<u>III</u>	<u>Tennis Development Group (Ages 11-13)</u>	<u>Thursdays 4-5:30pm</u>	<u>\$260*</u>	<u>N/A</u>
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The Tennis Development Group is for our beginner to intermediate junior high schoolers, and for the younger players who can hit the ball back 4 to 5 times per rally and can serve the ball in from the baseline.

<u>IV</u>	<u>Tournament Training Group</u>	<u>Wednesdays 4:30-6:00pm</u>	<u>\$260*</u>	<u>N/A</u>
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The Tournament Training Group is an invitation only class. Contact Patric about setting up a try-out.

<u>V</u>	<u>Friday Traveling Team Tennis</u>	<u>Fridays 4:00-6:00pm</u>	<u>\$45**</u>	
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Home and away matches will be take place at clubs in Lamorinda during the season which runs from the beginning of April to the end of May. Talk to Patric or Anna Marie if you are interested in participating.

***Non-members should add \$25 (Lil' Ones, only \$15).**

****Non-members participating in the Friday Traveling Team Tennis program should add \$10.**

We have factored into the cost of the clinics, the potential of two weeks of missed classes due to rain, illness, vacations, etc.

Special Discount: 10% discount off the cost of second sibling. Discount taken off the lower of the two costs.

Incident Weather: In case of questionable weather (rain), please call the Pro Shop for a court condition update. Tennis shoes required (no black soled shoes).

For more information or to sign up, please check out the club website or call Keith or Patric at the Pro Shop, or you can also e-mail Patric at patrictennis@yahoo.com.

2011 Weekly Summer Tennis Camps				
Camps	Ages	Days	Times	Cost per week Member/Non-member
<i>Full Camp</i>				
Afternoon camp	7-16	Monday-Thursday	12noon-3:45pm	\$180 / \$205
<i>Half Camps</i>				
Instruction block	7-16	Monday-Thursday	12noon-2:00pm	\$115 / \$130
Match Play block	7-16	Monday-Thursday	2:15-3:45pm	\$90 / \$105
Lil' Ones Camp	4-6	Tuesday & Thursday	4-4:45pm	\$30 / \$35

There will be a camp each week, June 13 through the week of August 1. Contact Patric (patrictennis@yahoo.com) to sign up or to get more information or call 925-254-1065. Enjoy!

