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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

Junior Tennis Month

In this month's we are going to focus on junior tennis, and especially the relationship between parents and their children. Tennis is an amazing sport for families, and if you can get tennis for families right, you will have something to do together, and talk about, for the rest of your lives. And if you don't have young kids or grandkids, read on anyway, because there is a lot here on learning, and how we should treat the little child inside all of us, who is trying to learn this wonderful game of tennis. Enjoy!

Bringing Up Johnny and Susie on the Tennis Court

Raising kids can be scary at times. After all, they didn't come with an instruction book, and there is always plenty of trial and error, while the whole time, you are the parent and you are supposed to know what you are doing.

Like with basic parenting, tennis parenting can both be a mystery and a challenge. It can lead to great moments or great disasters. Having worked in the tennis industry for over thirty years, and being raised on the court by my dad, I can say I have seen many successes and many failures in tennis parenting.

The failures are never for lack of effort, or trying or love, just a misunderstanding of what is required. A simple, basic misunderstanding of the job. After all, like with basic parenting, none of us got an instruction book on how to do this. We just jumped in and started helping, and making mistakes.

Of course mistakes are the key to learning (no mistakes, only lessons), but learning only happens if the mistakes are recognized and adjustments are made.

There are certainly many tennis parents that have gone before, and it is tempting to follow their example, or their advice. And with parenting, some of that advice will work for you, and your child, and some won't.

While there are many ideas out there on how to help your child become the best player possible, I want to present a few of what I believe are the essentials to developing our juniors into the best, well-rounded, fully developed people they can be. That's what we really want for our kids, isn't it?

Four Types of Tennis

If you are trying to improve your tennis, whether you are a kid or an adult, you really need four types of play for ideal improvement. 1) individual lessons, 2) clinics, 3) practice and 4) match play.

So you can, as the parent, be the general contractor for this tennis building project. You can be the practice partner (#3). I can tell you from my experience related below (Patric had a similar tennis upbringing, by the way), it was wonderful to spend so much time with my dad doing something we were both passionate about. How many teenagers have a great relationship with their parents? Not many, and I did.

You can play practice matches against each other (#4), which is harder (more tears when the child is young, more frustration for the older child), but it can still be good. There is much to learn about winning and losing, and competing. If you try it out in a situation (with your parent) where you know you are loved, when the inevitable heart ache and failure comes, and often the corresponding tough behavior, you are at least going through it in the presence of someone who loves and accepts you (more on that later).

But like any good general contractor, subcontract the part you are not cut out for: the coaching (#1) and the clinics (#2). Turn the job over to someone else.

What if you are a good player? What if you are even a pro? Certainly if you have played some, you are better than your 5-7 year old child. Tempting to coach, isn't it? Especially if you are good. Save some money (lessons are expensive). There can be lots of tempting

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). The various options, pricing and information is all available on the webpage.

Ace It! is a wonderful opportunity to support friends, family and others in the community in the fight against breast cancer. We are so thankful for your support throughout the years. Join us again this year, or for the very first time. All levels welcomed.

Summer Social

Monday Team Tennis

Monday Team Tennis starts on Monday, May 5th. There is still time to sign up. MTT is played every Monday evening during the summer.

The cost is \$50 for members, and \$75 for non-members. Dinner is included each Monday. Contact Keith if you want to play MTT this year!

Summer Junior Tennis

The schedule is out for Orindawoods' great summer junior tennis program. The program has been very popular the past few years, selling out every session. So take a look at page 4, and register your kid today. Don't miss out on all the fun!

reasons: "I know what is right for my child," "I want to spend time with my child," "I want them to succeed," "I don't want them to make the mistakes I made," etc... Be careful here. If you do happen to be a teaching pro, clinics with your child and a bunch of other kids could work. Maybe.

I'm not going to say parents never succeed in coaching their kids. In fact, there are many examples of great players who were coached by their parents, at least at some level of their development, at least for some time. But this is a very difficult act for the parent to pull off, especially if they don't really understand the different roles that parents and coaches have in their child's life. Knowing when it is working, and when it is time to hand the job off is just one of the many skills needed if you head down this path. But I can say, from my experience watching thousands of kids over the years, that the odds of success are very low on this style of tennis upbringing. It's a bit like winning the lottery. Someone does win, but what about all the people that lose?

And so much damage has been done to both the tennis player, the child, and the parent/child relationship. On the other hand, a completely uninvolved parent is not a good thing either. Parents need to care about their children, and support them in what the children love to do.

Parenting vs. Coaching: Two Roles, Two People

I don't know if my dad was brilliant, or if it was just dumb luck, but he got this crucial part of our tennis life together right. My dad and I played everyday between when I was 12 and 18. In fact, I rarely wanted to play with anyone else (which probably wasn't the best for my tennis development – too one-dimensional – but it was great for our relationship).

The shocking thing, which I don't think I really even realized it at the time, my dad never coached me. We played, we certainly talked tennis, and strategy, it was our language, but he never coached me. Even when he was the better player early on, he never coached me. He left the coaching to my coaches. We shared tennis books, watched matches on TV. He would talk about how to do things, but it was never coaching, just sharing what he was doing. He led by example, which was tough enough on me (another story), because his standards of being a gentleman, a sportsman, and a mental athlete were very high. My dad loved a challenge and test, he loved competition, and he knew who he was, and that winning and losing was not a reflection of who he was, just what happened.

He sent me to tennis camps, put me in tennis classes, and hit millions of balls with me, bought us a ball machine so we could practice, supplied me with racquets, shoes, clothes, string, but no coaching. He even got us into the high school gym so we could play on the wood floor when it was raining outside. A poor man's indoor court.

I don't know if not coaching me was intentional (brilliant), or he just didn't feel qualified (dumb luck). In fact, he seldom disciplined me when my behavior was, shall we say, like a teenage boy: wanting it all, and the frustration of falling terribly short of that impossible standard.

Needs: It really comes down to the needs of the child. What do they need?

A Parent: They need a parent, someone who loves them unconditionally. Who will pick them up when they fall, be with them with love and acceptance on their worst day at the tennis office. Someone who can say, I don't like your behavior, if need be, but I still love you. And the focus is on the love, which is never withheld.

A Coach: And your child needs a coach. Someone who is focused on their performance. On what they do. A coach makes corrections, praises what went well, works on what didn't go so well. A coach may have to push the child some, even use methods that make them seem like the enemy.

I remember working with my baseball coach in the summer when I was an incoming freshman in high school. We were using the batting tee, working on my swing. Hitting the ball into a chain link fence. He knew I was torn between my love of both baseball and tennis, which were played during the same season in high school, and I would have to choose. He was the varsity baseball coach, but he respected it would be my choice. This particular hitting session, he could see I wasn't giving my best, or wasn't focused, or just plain wasn't hitting very well. He started talking about how I was more into tennis, that I would never be a good hitter, that I just didn't have what it took, etc... Under certain circumstances, perhaps most, this would have been really bad coaching. But he knew me, and he understood the situation, and I started pounding ball after ball. I was so pissed that he would say that, and I was going to prove him wrong. Bam, bam, bam. When I was done, nostrils still flaring, I finally dared to look back and up at him, and he had this wry smile on his face, followed by a "well done". I think right then, I learned how to "man up" or rise to the occasion. I never forgot. Those same words from a parent, on the other hand, could be devastating. Our parent is our home base, the place you can always go, the place that has to have our back. A parent saying that "you'll never cut it" is devastating, and are words that should never be uttered out loud.

It should be said, a good coach is also very concerned with who the student is and is becoming, as a person but has a different relationship from the parent's role. The coach knows the parent has the love and acceptance part covered, so they

know that they can push.

One of the great coaches of our time, Robert Landsdorp (he coached Austen, Davenport, Sampras, Sharapova) is really harsh with his players. Too harsh for my standards, and most civilized people, but the results are there. I've seen many parents employ

Quote of the Month:

"Never confuse a single defeat with a final defeat."
– F. Scott Fitzgerald



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similar methods, and not only ruin their child's tennis, but also their relationship.

I can tell you that as a pro, coaching a kid where the love and acceptance (as a tennis player) is not being given by the parents is a real mess, and never really succeeds. If the love and acceptance has to come from the coach, then you can't really push the kid.

This situation is easy to recognize, because as soon as you push, and say anything other than they are wonderful (or this is all fun and games), the kid's game, and sometimes their emotions, fall apart. This is a big "uh oh" for coaches, push and get a meltdown.

I don't think it is a coincidence that both Patric and I were raised by fathers who were parents first, playing partners second, and never coaches. And that we both still play tennis. We both still like tennis. There were tons of other players when I was a junior who were better players than I was, and quit tennis as soon as they got out of their parents' control. They just played to get their parents' approval. But it was conditional love, not the real thing.

I feel really blessed in this way, and very lucky. I have a sneaking suspicion it wasn't dumb luck.

A Couple of Other Thoughts:

There are some really great resources on this topic (see below), but I want to share briefly three ideas.

- 1. The odds** of becoming a great tennis player are extremely slim. Only 4% of the kids that play are good enough to play college tennis. One or two players from college tennis a year have any luck at all on the pro tour. So learning tennis, just like learning anything else as a kid, is about raising your kid to be a fully functioning, happy adult. That's the real game, that should be the goal (see Loehr below). Follow that path, and you can't lose.
- A great idea on motivation from Wayne Bryan: **side door motivation**. Expose your kids to examples of what they are interested in. If it is ballet, take them to the ballet, tennis, take them to tennis matches and tournaments (like Bank of the West at Stanford, Stanford or Cal college tennis, or the BNP Paribas in Indian Wells). Side door motivation, it is worth a thousand words, or all the yell you can do to try to get your child to move their feet.
- Another great motivational tip from Wayne Bryan: Never let them play as much as they want. **Keep them hungry** and wanting to come back for more. Never play to exhaustion, keep them hungry and fresh.

Here are some of the really good resources I have found for raising kids in tennis. The first two are about how to do it, and the Agassi book is a good example of a failure in tennis parenting (that Andre was able to overcome). Andre is an interesting example, as he did become #1 in world, very rich, and very famous. And he had a very bad relationship with his father. It's likely none of Agassi's success would have come without his father, but the cost (of their relationship) and what it did to Andre might not have been worth it. Virtually everyone treated this way hates tennis (which Andre did), quits (Andre almost did, and certainly checked out for years), and has a severely damaged relationship with his/her parent. Lousy odds.

And it is so sad how many people think they can beat the odds and pursue this course, at least some of the way.

My favorites:

Wayne Bryan	<i>The Formula, Raising Your Child to be a Champion</i>
Dr. Jim Loehr	<i>The Only Way To Win</i>
Andre Agassi	<i>Open</i>

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