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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

Indian Summer

Welcome to fall tennis at Orindawoods. We have been having another great Indian Summer here at Orindawoods, and the club is hopping. Be sure to check out the Club Calendar and Court Scheduler before you come down, there are lots of events and matches this time of year.

Courts 4 & 5 are drop-in courts, except during matches and events, so it is important if you have an inspiration to play on the spur of the moment, that you know what is going on at the Club today.

Tennis Tip:

Thoughts on Errors

Unforced errors. Mistakes. Boo boos. Misses. Fluffed shots. Missed sitters. It all sounds horrible. We lose points, games, sets, matches. Tennis teaches us that errors are bad. And the problem is that we believe it.

In fact, errors are simply feedback. Information. There are no mistakes, only lessons. Or one could say, the only mistake is not learning the lesson, for lessons are repeated until learned. That is how life works, that is how tennis works.

No one likes to miss a shot, but by now (even if you have only played one day in your life, and I'm sure most of you have played a lot more than that), you've probably realized that you are going to make a few mistakes along the tennis road. In fact, you are going to make a lot. In fact, it could be argued that the mistakes in tennis are not painful enough.

"Oh well, the ball went in the net. No big deal, I'll just get them on the next point."

Rock climbers don't make nearly as many mistakes as tennis players, for example (other than the mistake of deciding to rock climb in the first place). Rock climbers have better attention. They observe, they watch, and they are much more aware of the small mistakes, the little details and the potential dangers than we tennis players are.

When we miss a shot, that mistake should simply be feedback for how to adjust on the next shot. If we hit it high, for example, we need to hit it lower, or put more spin on the ball so that it will drop down. We need to become masters of analysis, and self-analysis at that.

It is painful to watch how little we actually do this. In my experience, very few club players are ever late on contact (they may be late in preparing, which causes them to actually panic and be early on contact, but they are not actually late on contact). You would think that if someone were early, one would make a correction, and be late on the next shot. Then make another correction, until they found the middle, perfect timing and contact. This would be looking at a mistake as a lesson, and then problem solving.

In a typical hour lesson, students are rarely late, but early countless times. They try to be late, but they can't do it. 95% of the timing mistakes are early, only 5% late. They are just so afraid of missing, and especially the ball getting by them, that they can't be late, and therefore it takes so much longer for them to learn.

The problem is that we give too much importance to individual shots and points. We try to win every point, instead of learning as a match goes along and playing as well as we possibly can by the end.

One of the key principles of learning is to exaggerate the effect you want.

USPTA Junior Tournament

Each fall we sponsor a tournament on the USPTA junior circuit. This year's tournament is scheduled for the weekend of October 25-27. To register or get more information, go to the USPTA Jr. Circuit's website, usptaplayer.com Registration closes on October 21. Don't miss out.

Fit and Hit

Fit and Hit with Anna Marie continues this fall. Fit and Hit is our great exercise program combining tennis and a strength training using the TRX and TRX Rip Trainer. We have had a core group of participants in this program, and you can really see their improvement both in tennis and fitness of the last several months. Come join us, and hit and get fit!

Fit and Hit will be held on Saturdays at 8 a.m. As always, the cost is \$15 per person (\$20 for non-members).

Pool Scene

With late September and early October being such wonderful weather months here in the Bay Area, don't forget that the pool is open through the end of October.

So there are still many great sunny days to enjoy a dip on the Orindawoods pool. Ping pong and self-serve charcoal BBQs are other poolside attractions. Join us.

Club Upgrades

TAC Chairperson Barbara Rogan and Tennis Director Keith Wheeler continue to work with other committee members, and staff to keep the club in tiptop shape. If there is anything that you see around the Club that doesn't look up to snuff, let us know, and we'll look into it. This past year we have worked hard on some of the little things (as well as the big projects: court resurfacing and new court lights), to make the club it's best.

As always, thanks for your support, suggestions and input. We want Orindawoods to be the best it can be for years to come. Thanks for being such great members and ambassadors for our club and game!

If you were trying to toss a ball in the teaching cart, for example, from ten feet away, you would toss a ball. If you tossed it a bit short, then the next one should be a bit long. Find out what short feels like, feel what long feels like, and then you will be able to feel the middle. This is exactly what gunners do when they shoot artillery. If the shell lands short, then they overshoot the target. Bracket the target. Measure the difference between the two, calculate how far in-between the target is, and adjust the third shot to hit the target. Experienced soldiers know that if a shell lands behind them, and then in front of them, it's time to get out of the foxhole.

Most players, if they are early, try to be a little less early because they don't want to be late and lose the point. Still early (still suck, still lose the point). Then a little less. Still early (still suck, still losing). It usually takes 5-10 shots to figure it out this way, if you ever do. There is no sense of what late really is, no real feel for that. So you don't really know how to adjust. The mistake of being truly late teaches you where perfect timing is. Don't fear it.

If you really want to do well in tennis, the goal should be to improve your game as the match, season, year, career goes along. We will make lots of mistakes early on, observe, adjust, learn, grow. You want to be playing your best by the end of the match (season, year, career).

If instead, I make a mistake, get frustrated, chastise myself, scream, yell, defend my ego, pout, get depressed, tank, give up, make excuses ... any and/or all of that ... then of course I'm not paying attention to the lesson, missing the information I need to get better, and setting myself up for a lot more misery, or failure. Of course I could win an Oscar for my performance ("thank you, thank you very much"), but I won't be winning many trophies.

As soon as you have to win this point, this game, this match, this championship... you are in trouble, because you have stopped observing and learning the exact information you need to do just that, play your best and succeed.

Unlocking Doubles

Spotting the Keys

There are certain keys and principles that unlock the mystery of the game of doubles. In addition, there are certain skills that a player must have to navigate the treacherous waters and passageways that make up a successful strategy.

Principles (not a complete list):

- Team that controls the middle, controls the match
- Figure out what your opponent is trying to get you to do, and don't do it.
- Don't change simply because something isn't working "well enough." Change only if you have something better to go to. Most professional players will try "playing better" first, before going to another strategy (i.e. stick with your "A" game).

Keys:

There are a couple of key reads a player must make to give themselves the best chance of winning a doubles match. One involves a read the net player must make, and one involves a read the baseline player must make.

Key Read for the Net Player: If you are at the net, can your opponent on the other side of the net (could be hitting a groundstroke, could be a volley or half volley) hit the ball down the line?

Commentary: Simple question. But the answer is more complicated than it looks, because the ability to hit the ball down the line involves more than just geometry (the alley is open). The skill of the opponent (physiology plus technique), and the difficulty of the shot (physics) are involved. Plus a basic understanding of the percentages of tennis as well. Just because someone can hit the ball down the alley once in a blue moon, doesn't mean from a tactical point of view, they can "hit the ball down the alley." We are talking about covering the alley when the person can make the alley shot on demand, with consistency. Hint: not as many people can do this as you think.

Corresponding Strategy: Hit the ball where it is difficult for them to hit the ball down the alley, and then cover the middle. The easiest shots to hit down the alley are forehands in the outside third of the court (on either side, deuce or add), so try not to give them forehand shots there.

Real Life: Generally, most players give their opponent way too much credit. The team that controls the middle, controls the match (see principles), and most teams are defending the flanks instead, and letting the opposing army march directly up the middle, basically unopposed, to capture your capital and win the war. When in doubt, cover the center, and get close to the net to do it (see below). Just as an example, the Bryan Brothers almost always cover the middle on big points, basically saying, "If you can hit the alley, best of luck to you."

Key Read for the Baseline Player: Is the net player close enough to the net to volley the ball down into the court, or do they have to hit the ball up?

Commentary: There are two types of volleys (overheads as well). There are the ones where the net player can hit the ball from their racquet directly towards their target (Type 1 -- direct). Generally, the net player has to be very close to the net to do this. The second type of volley is the type where the net player has to hit

Quote of the Month:

"Tennis is a game that teaches us that errors are bad.
And the problem is that we believe it."

-- Keith Wheeler



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the ball up over the net first, and then have the ball come back down into the court before it crosses the baseline or sideline (Type 2 – indirect). This second type of volley requires much more skill to execute. On difficult shots, the ball has to be hit softer, with much more spin in order for it to go up over the net, and still fall back into the court. Even if players are able to execute this tougher type 2 volley, the ball is often going slow, can often be short and is generally easier to attack than the type 1 volley. In fact, a Type 2 volley hit to you at the baseline often looks a lot like a perfect feed in a lesson; soft, a bit of underspin, just sitting there for you to execute your flawless groundstroke.

Corresponding Strategy: If the net player is far enough back that they have to hit the second type of volley, hit the ball through the middle of the court, preferably hard (could be low). Don't hit away from the net person. You want the net person to attempt to hit a Type 2 volley. That's where the weakness and mistakes are. If the net person is close enough to hit direct, Type 1 volleys, then you need to consider lobbing or hitting away from them, to the backcourt player. Or occasionally, overpowering them.

Real Life: most baseline players consistently misread this situation, or even more so, don't know to look for it. Very few net players get close enough to hit Type 1 volleys consistently. Either they are afraid of the lob, or how hard you can hit the ball (and take their head off), and so they back up, or start too far off the net. This is human nature, and it is a failure to understand how the game works. Controlling the net means being close and getting more Type 1 volleys than the other team. Again, the Bryan Brothers say this is the key to doubles: more easy volleys (they call it the "secret sauce" of dubs).

Skills: in order to be effective once you read the keys to the game, you are going to have to have a very specific set of skills. It doesn't matter if you know how to exploit your opponent's positioning choices, if you don't have the shots to make them pay for their weaknesses.

From the Baseline:

1. Can you hit the ball down the line? In other words, can you aim? This is essential with the forehand, and a nice bonus with the backhand. It is much harder to hit the ball down the line with the backhand, due to physiology. But don't worry, there are other skills you can have with the backhand to protect yourself and thrive.
2. Since most opponents will attack your backhand (so if you are not able run around it and hit a forehand), you need to be able to lob off the backhand side (especially if you can't hit down the line consistently – and few can, under pressure).
3. A cross-court backhand is also essential for the ad court player (both hard through the middle, and soft with angle are important variations).
4. If you can hit a backhand up the middle from the deuce side with pace, that's a good one to have too (otherwise you better know how to lob on the deuce side, and both would be ideal).
5. A forehand with pace and spin (in addition to being able to spot it - #1 above).
6. Be able to hit a bounce overhead off your opponent's short lobs.

From the Net:

1. You need to be able to get close, and hit a good volley on the middle side of our body. In other words, you need to position yourself so that you are hitting more Type 1 (direct) volleys, than Type 2 (indirect volleys). This is your #1 job.
2. If you get in close, you have to be able to hit high volleys that come with pace.
3. Establish ground rules with your partner that they are taking the lobs. This means that if your partner comes in, they need to be ready to go back if the opponent's lobs. This is essential to covering and controlling the middle (your #1 job).
4. If your partner is hitting a bounce overhead behind you, move to the side, and get close to the net. Then cover the middle after the overhead passes by you (#1 ...).
5. You need to read your opponent's shotmaking: can they hit the ball up the line? Don't be afraid of being wrong, be afraid of standing there and doing nothing (and being wrong most of the time). Anticipate. The more you do this, the more information you will get on you opponent's skill, and the better you will be at anticipation as the match goes along. Bryan Brothers call this half the battle. Don't be afraid of guessing. If you are close there is no time to react, so anticipate.

OWTC Fall Junior Tennis Program: September 2nd -December 13th

The 2013 Fall Junior Clinics began the week of **September 2nd**, and will continue thru the week of **December 9th**. There are no classes the week of **November 25-29**. The 14 week program will be run by **Head Pro Patric Hermanson** and **Assistant Pro Anna Marie Gamboa**.

The Level I and II classes will be taught using aspects of the USTA 10 and under Development Program. We will use appropriate size courts, balls, racquets and nets for your child's level of skill.

| <u>Level</u> | <u>Class</u> | <u>Time(s)</u> | <u>One day/week</u> | <u>Two Days</u> |
|--------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| I | <u>Lil' Ones</u> | <i>Tues/Thurs 3:15-4pm</i> | <i>\$150*</i> | <i>\$235*</i> |

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.

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|-----------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--|
| II | <u>Future Stars Group</u> | <i>Tuesdays 4-5:30pm</i> | <i>\$300* N/A</i> | |
|-----------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--|

The Future Stars Group is for our 7 to 10 year old players. The players will be working with 10 and under balls on 36', 60' and full courts. Stroke instruction, tennis games, and match play are all part of the curriculum as we work our way up to green dot balls and full court.

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|------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------|--|
| III | <u>Tennis Development Group</u> | <i>Thursdays 4-5:30pm</i> | <i>\$300* N/A</i> | |
|------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------|--|

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 ages 11 thru 14.

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| IV | <u>Tournament Training Group</u> | <i>Wednesdays 4:30-6pm</i> | <i>\$300*</i> | <i>N/A</i> |
|-----------|---|----------------------------|---------------|------------|

The Tournament Training Group is an invitation only class. Contact Patric about setting up a try-out.

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

- We have factored into the cost of the clinics the possibility 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.
- Inclement Weather: In case of questionable weather (rain), please call the Pro Shop for a court condition update.
- 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.
- **Tennis shoes required (no black soled shoes).**