



February 2006
Volume 12, Issue 2

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.

Looking Forward in 2006

We have a lot of great tennis planned for 2006. Of course, there are your weekly games and groups with all your Orindawoods friends. On top of that, we have several great league teams lined up for the spring and summer. Our Senior Tournament will be played the last week of March, as usual. As the weather improves in late spring, we will begin our usual lineup of twilights and the fantastic Monday Night Team Tennis. The Ace It! Breast Cancer benefit will be on June 24 this year, mark the date down now, I know you won't want to miss it. Our excellent Junior program runs year around, with lots of fun events for the kids on the weekends. The year rounds out with our Holiday Party, Reindeer Games and the Junior Tournament in December.

Senior Tournament

The Orindawoods Senior Championships will be held March 27-April 2. Many of the top players from all over Northern California come to Orindawoods to compete in this stop on the senior tour. Some of our top men take on this challenge each year and enter the draw. Past contestants from Orindawoods include Bill Simpson, Don Faries, Jack Frankle, Barry Gilmore, Michael McCollom, Ernie Winslow, John Hartman and others from the area. If you are not quite this level of player, it is still fun to come and watch and learn from the fine players that compete in the tournament. There are men from 35 to 85 and above playing. I have learned a great deal from every level. To see how someone 85 years old can still play singles well, and how they do it, overcoming any mobility problems, is of great value to us all. Talk about great positioning, good footwork, and the ability to read a shot and a situation. These guys are masters. Mark you calendar and come watch some of the action.

Website Highlights

www.orindawoodstennis.com

More and more members are finding the Orindawoodstennis.com website a useful tool in finding the information, registering for a court and signing up for an event. In a little over a year, the site has seen an increase in use and services.

- Not sure if the courts are dry, check out our online weather report, or take a look at one of two live shots of the courts to see with your own eyes. The cameras are also a great way to see if there is a chance of getting on a court, or if the Club is busy.
- Signing up for events or programs is easy on line.
- If you have a friend interested in joining the Club, the website is a great resource for them to see if Orindawoods fits into their lifestyle.
- There is no better way to register for a court than on line. It is fast, and easy, once you get the hang of it. Keith would be happy to help you learn the process.
- All our past newsletters and group e-mails are posted on the website, so if you thought you read something way back when and want to check it out, you can find it on the site.
- Wondering how busy the courts might be, or if there is an event that you want to participate in, take a look at the Club calendar, always up to date and right there on the site for your convenience. Our weekly events, junior program and all home matches and special events are posted there.
- The court scheduler is also a great way to see how busy the courts might be, and if there is a good chance that you could walk on a court, or if the ball machine is in use.
- Finally, the website is just fun. We have lots of great information, including the history of the Club, favorite inspirational quotations, and lots and lots of pictures of your friends in action.

Not A Computer Kind of Guy or Gal?

Of course, computers are not for everyone, so you can always call the Club and get the information and reservations you need. We post the calendar, and the daily court schedule in the glass case next to the clubhouse door.

Tennis Tip

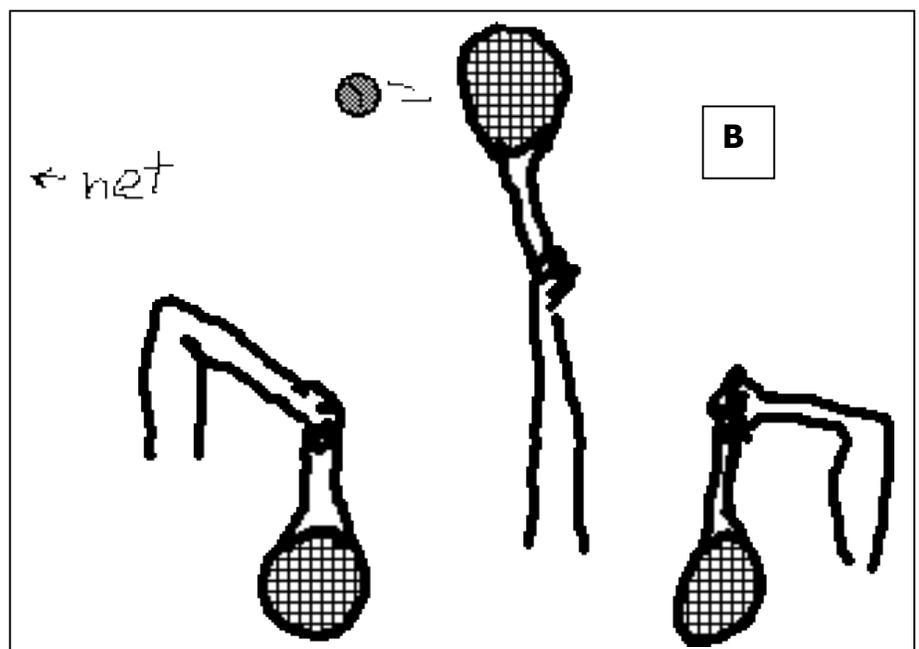
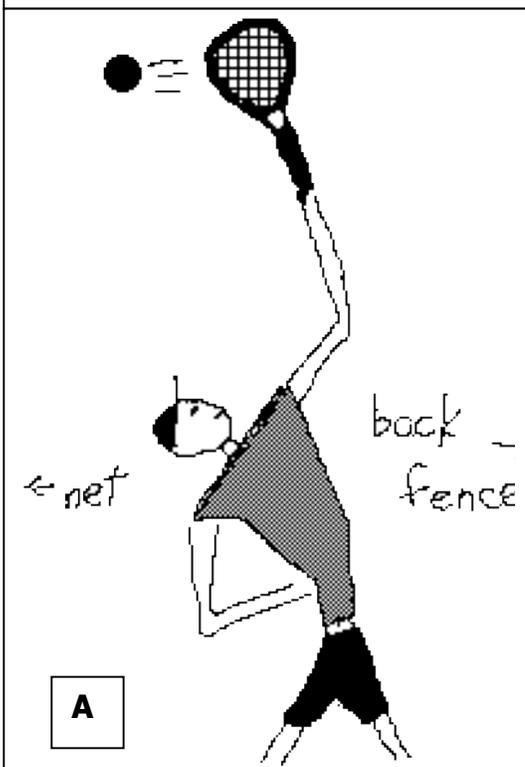
Keeping Your Shoulder in Place

I was teaching a lesson the other evening, and my student, a twelve-year-old girl with a promising serve, was hitting some balls. She was turning / looking forward too soon on her serve and pulling the ball to the left and down into the net. I told her to keep looking up at the contact point and the ball. When she hit the ball, she should still be looking up, but the ball will be gone and she will see the sky. "Look for the sky, before you look down." This in itself, is a great tip for working on you serve. Try it out. You shouldn't actually look down to see how wonderful your serve is until it is about to land in the court on the other side of the net. Many people seem to believe that it won't go over the net if they aren't watching it, but I assure you, once the ball has left your racquet there is nothing that you can, or have to do, to make the result come out in your favor.

Watching the contact point after the ball is hit is something that I have learned applies in practically every sport I have ever played, football, baseball, volleyball, golf. I remember always overthrowing my receivers in football because I would invariably look up to see how good a spiral I had thrown instead of keeping my eyes (and head) steady on the receiver. When I looked up, it would raise my shoulders a bit before I even released the ball, which would make me "aim" higher and overthrow the receiver (and actually throw it right to the safety, for an interception, big huge bummer at the time).

Back to our story. So I told my talented young student this, and she came up with a good question. She asked, "Won't my arm block my view of the sky as I finish the swing?" I thought about this for a few moments, tried a serve or two of my own, and suddenly realized this is where so many people go wrong on the serve. They try to move their arm in front of their head. In other words, they swing forward. Or stated a bit more comically, they are trying to put both arms on the same side of their head (don't try this at home).

Let me explain further. When you serve you should stand sideways to the court. Without describing the entire serve motion, when you hit the ball (if you are right handed), the net and service box should be to your left (off your left shoulder). Next in line from left to right would be your head looking up at the ball, followed by your right shoulder which is between your head and the back fence (behind your head -Fig. A). Most people try to bring their arm forward to produce forward force, when actually, your arm should



stay back and rotate (your elbow actually turns backwards – Fig. B).

There are two main problems with trying to bring your arm forward. One, is that it causes the racquet to move down, pulling the ball into the net (the problem my young student was having). The second problem is more serious, the problem with trying to move your arm forward is that it is attached to your shoulder, at least presently, and by swinging it forward, you are actually trying to disconnect it (ouch, rotator cuff tears, dislocations and other charming problems).

Quote of the Month

"What you see from here is not what you see from there." -- Ariel Sharon on moving from opposition to prime minister

One of the keys to serving well is to actually keep your arm back behind your head and rotate it (the elbow goes from pointing forward to pointing backwards). The arm stays relatively in the same place, behind your head. And attached to your shoulder. Good luck out there!

The Mental Game

Honesty On the Court

Actually, I'm not referring to line calls here, although, honesty in this regard is certainly in your long-term best interest. What I mean by honesty today is that you need to be honest with yourself about what shots you can make. When someone hits a high risk shot and wonders in retrospect if they should have tried that, I like to say, "Hit any shot you can make." Put another way, it isn't "high risk" if you can make it, just be honest with yourself that you can.

For example, some players seem to make a living hitting passing shots down the alley in doubles. Normally, this isn't the way to go, it is low percentage, but for some, it seems to work. The honesty comes in when you look at that shot and see how often you are actually making it and winning the point. We remember the great ones, but what about the entire overall picture? Did we win 2 out of 5, or 4 out of 5?

Some players remember the good stuff, and forget the bad, some remember the bad, and lose sight of the good. The master remembers it all, in that she has an honest view of what she can really do, and what she can't. Be honest about the situation, too. Sometimes you have a shot all lined up, and the percentages are good. Other times, you are not really prepared to hit that shot, but you try it anyway because you made it before (when you had it lined up). That is not being honest, because the situation is not the same.

It seems that most of us have pretty good hindsight, "Arghhh! That was a stupid shot!" The trick is to be honest with yourself beforehand, and only attempt shots that you can make.

Volleys

Soft Hands, the Ultimate Test

Most volleys involve hitting the ball up over the net. It is true that when we are very close to the net (like when we are the server's partner, hopefully), we might be able to punch the ball down into the court, but the vast majority of the volleys we have to hit (I have it at 4 out of 5), we are going to have to hit the ball up (it has to get up over the net, after all). Hitting the ball up involves a bit of a problem, however, which most of us are aware of. First of all, if we hit it up too much, it will go long and we lose the point. If we hit it up and it gets to our opponents as a high ball, they can hit it hard and down at us, not an enviable position either. So the trick is to have "soft hands," (i.e., the ability to hit the ball up soft enough that it will float up over the net, and then drop down to where we want it to go). Often in doubles, this means that you want to hit the ball up over the net (to a height of at least 3.5-4 feet) and then have the ball fall down at the feet of your opponent.

The ultimate test of how soft your hands are is your ability to hit the really difficult touch shots, the drop shot and the lob volley. These are the shots that you actually hit up at the sharpest angle, and still have to have soft enough hands to not hit them too far. Both a lob volley and a drop shot are actually hit up at about the same angle as if you were going to hit a ball over the fence, around 45 degrees. They are just hit softer. These are both killer shots to have in your arsenal, and if you can hit them, you certainly have soft enough hands to place the ball at an opponent's feet after lifting it up over the net, and the world of net play is simply your own backyard kingdom.



Orindawoods Tennis Club

650 Orindawoods Dr
Orinda, CA 94563
USA

Phone:
925-254-1065

Fax:
925-254-1380

Website:
www.orindawoodstennis.com

Executive Tennis Director:

Keith Wheeler
orindawoodstc@sbcglobal.net

Head Pro:

Patric Hermanson
PatricTennis@yahoo.com

Associate Pro:

Philip Laubscher

Junior Tennis Staff:

Chris Michaels

Weekend Staff:

Kendall Krakow

Newsletter Editor:

Keith Wheeler

Associate Editors:

Kristie Wheeler
Patric Hermanson

7.5 Combo Playoffs

Our 7.5 Combo team played in the Sectionals in Fresno the weekend of January 13-15. The ladies had a great weekend, winning two of the three team matches, and just missing advancing to the finals by virtue of dropping a single tie-breaker in one set out of all the sets they played. Reports are that everyone played well, and the teamwork and camaraderie was exceptional!

Our team was captain Linda Richardi*, Carmen Duarte*, Marcy Sharafian*, Mary O'Neal*, Lu Lynn DeSilva, Carol Penskar, Liz Jennings, Susie Richardson Hazel Faries, Lana Kaiser*, Lorna Jennings, Sharyn Lawrence*, Miyuki Sheppard* and Marilyn Faye*. (Ladies with the * played in the Fresno sectionals). Congratulations to all; it was a great season!

Court Usage

Leagues This Spring

League teams have been forming for the upcoming USTA season, and the local spring league. It looks like there is going to be a lot of tennis action this spring. Be sure to check out the Club calendar on the website to see when there are league matches, and when the courts might be a bit busy.

As always, we have attempted to balance the Club's court usage between league players and non-league players, trying to avoid prime-time matches as much as possible. It is always our goal to share our limited court resources in a way that benefits as many members as possible. Good luck to all!

New Squeegees and Drying Courts

We have some new squeegees, the ones made out of white PVC piping. The trick to using these puddle movers is not to push down, at all. Let them just glide over the court, and they work great. The older (rusting) metal squeegees do require some downward pressure to work best.

I say this every winter, but it is worth repeating: squeegees move water, they don't dry courts. Sun, wind and heat dry courts through evaporation. The roller squeegees do pick up a bit of water, but like a sponge, you have to "squeeze them out" every few feet to make this work. The fastest way to dry a court is get all the standing water off with the blades, and let Mom Nature do her thing. She is very good at her thing, you know.

Winter Junior Clinics

The 2006 Winter Junior Clinics began the week of January 9th and continue through March 24th. Head Pro Patric Hermanson will again lead the 11-week session with the help of the very talented Philip Laubscher and our junior staff.

Level	Class	Time	One Day/ week	Two Day
I	Lil' Ones (ages 4-6)	Tu/Th 3:15-4pm	\$100/\$115 (mem/non)	\$190/\$205
II	Beginners (ages 7-10)	Tues. 4-5:30pm	\$200/\$225 (mem/non)	n/a
III	Inter. (ages 7-13)	Thurs. 4-5:30pm	\$200/\$225 (mem/non)	n/a
IV	Adv. (invitation only)	Friday 4:30-6pm	\$200/\$225 (mem/non)	n/a

We have factored into the cost of the clinics the potential of two weeks of missed classes due to rain, illness, vacations, etc. In case of questionable weather (rain), please call the Pro Shop for a court condition update. For more information or to sign up, contact Keith or Patric at the Pro Shop (254-1065), on line at www.orindawoodstennis.com or at patricTennis@yahoo.com. Tennis shoes are required. No marking black soled shoes.

Weekly Club Drop-in Events

Ladies' Clinic, every Tuesday morning 9:30-10:30 a.m. w/ Patric. Cost: \$5

Ladies' Playday, every Tuesday morning 10:30- 12 noon, Courts 1 and 3

Men's Clinic, every Thursday morning 9:30-10:30 a.m. w/ Patric. Cost \$5

Men's Day, every Thursday morning 10-12 noon, Courts 4-7, and Saturdays, 8-10:30 a.m. Courts. 4-5

**"I like this place,
and willingly
could waste my
time in it"**

**--William
Shakespeare**