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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.

Orindawoods Senior Championships

Here we go, the BIG one! Yes, once again, it is time for the Orindawoods Senior Championships, March 27-April 2. The deadline for entries is March 15. This tournament is a USTA Age Group tournament, with divisions for players 35-85+. These are the top players in Northern California, coming to play at our wonderful Club. Numerous of our own top players have played in this tournament in the tourney. Ernie Winslow, John Hartman, Bill Simpson, Jack Frankel, Barry Gilmore, Dave Moss, Don Faries, and Michael McCollom have all played in the past. *During the tournament week, there will be very limited court availability at the Club, especially in the morning. There will be no reservations allowed, except perhaps for evening reservations, which could be pre-empted if play overflows into the evening due to rain.* Our Referee for this year's tournament is once again, the amazing Dave Moss. This will be Dave's final year performing this duty he has done so well for over a decade. Many, many thanks to Dave.

Indian Wells

Many club members will be down in the desert for the Pacific Life Open the weekend of March 10-13. We plan to watch matches over the weekend, with some people staying most of the following week. Of course there is fine dining (need any tips, I will be happy to provide some of my favorites), and the occasional tennis game for yourself. It is a great deal of fun, and if you didn't join us this year, please make plans to do so in the future. Warning, several members have enjoyed it so much they have either bought homes or time shares, so beware!

Junior Tennis News

It has been a great winter for Patric's Junior Tennis Program, with events for kids in both the Intermediate and Advanced levels. We played a Interclub Match with Orinda Country Club in mid-February, and our rained-out Super Saturday from January has been rescheduled for March 18. The Advanced players will be playing a Points of the Compass tournament on March 4. If you are interested in any of these events, contact Patric. In addition, Eric Peterson has been leading a great advanced play day for the kids on Sunday (con't)

League Action and Court Schedules

Be sure to check the Club Calendar, either on line, or in the Reservation Case at the Club for upcoming League Matches and busy court times (OW Sr. Championships is this month too). On days when there is league play, the courts are much harder to get on, and you need to plan ahead by making a reservation or deciding to play at another time. Matches are scheduled for the following dates: Monday, 2/27, Monday, 3/6, Friday, 3/10, Friday, 3/17. The USTA season, which plays on the weekends, will be starting in late March, early April. There may also need to be a rain make-up scheduled (it rains in California?), so please check the calendar to stay informed. There will be junior tennis events in the afternoons on March 4 and March 18. We update the website calendar as soon as matches and events are scheduled, so it always has the latest information.

Too Much?

So how many events are too many events. I'm sure some of you are asking. It is all a question of balance. For March, we have three league matches and two junior events out of 31 days. Of course March also has the Senior Tournament, but this is the only week of the year we do this. Annoying as it may be if you want to play on one of these days, we do not feel that this is too many events.

Playoff Action Once Again!

Our USTA Senior Women's 3.5 team is in the playoffs, which will be held March 4. Our team finished 11-3, and in a three way tie for first place on the basis of record. After all the tie-breakers were considered, we are seeded 3rd for the playoffs (we lost more sets than the other two teams). Our first playoff match will be against Walnut Creek, who was in first place all season until we knocked them out in the last match of the season. I'm sure the rematch will be a tough one on their home court.

Upcoming Leagues

We will have USTA Ladies teams in the 3.0, 3.5 and 4.0 divisions. Pretty exciting! We are looking forward to the adult season here at the Club.

afternoons. There have often been eight or more advanced kids from the neighborhood playing singles and doubles. This group is by invitation, but if you think your child might be up to it, contact Keith.

As for the Junior Program's Spring session, that begins on the week of April 3 (see page 4). The Winter Program concludes on March 24. It has been a great start to a wonderful year.

Tongue In Cheek

Who Is On My Damn Court?

Several people have commented that the Club is getting busier, and it is true. However, with a few exceptions, people are still getting to play when they want.

In light of the increased action, I want to introduce to some of you to a wonderful feature we have here at the Club, it is called "the reservation." You make a reservation on the website, starting Monday morning at 8:30, or by calling the Pro Shop, again starting at 8:30. Of course there are no guarantees that you will get the reservation you want (ouch, this is the hard part), but everyone has a shot at the open times.

When you have a reservation, you know that you have a court. Isn't that great! If you were not able to get one, you know you are taking your chances with the drop-in courts, which may or may not work out (get there early and often, as they say).

We do admit, there are a couple of tough times to get reservations, Tuesday mornings being the worst right now. Knowing this, people have the option to try to schedule at a less difficult time. Most people don't like this option. It stinks of adaptability, and of being flexible, both vile and odorous concepts, completely out of sync with our modern times ("After me, you come first").

Trouble in Tennis Paradise usually arises when people simply come down for drop-in play, often like they have been doing for years (centuries, the way you would hear some people tell it), only to find that all the courts are taken. This especially happens when there is league play ("Death to all league players!").

It is important to note that when events are scheduled, we usually schedule those events on the "drop in courts," courts 4 & 5. We do this so that there are almost always at least 3 reservation courts left for people to reserve. People who plan ahead do have the advantage here, and we feel that is just. This is life in the twenty-first century, or as they used to say back in the old country, "The early bird gets the worm."

We strive to strike a balance at Orindawoods between the various tennis needs of the membership. Some people love playing leagues, so it is important that we offer these opportunities. Other people would rather just play in weekly foursomes or singles. Still others just want to drop in and play now and then. We honor all these different playing habits, not counting one more importantly than the other. Don't go apoplectic on me here, but I don't count a 4.0 league match with its high level of play with any more weight than two 2.0s knocking the ball around (and occasionally over the fence). Each has its time and place. Of course most people feel that the best time for the other guy is when they themselves don't want a court. "Oh Stanley, I hear there are open courts for you at 3 a.m. Give it a try then, if you please."

We highly encourage all the members to take a peak at the Club's calendar and find out when there is a lot of action scheduled on the courts, and if you still want to play then, we highly encourage the use of that wonderful feature mentioned above, the reservation. If you don't chose this rather wise and frankly more pleasant path of behavior, then be prepared to suffer some of the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, and be left alone on the deck, without a court or a friend in the world. Except, of course, for your partners, who didn't make a reservation either, and are probably blaming you. Naturally.

When you do have a reservation, and someone is on the court, you get to practice "the art of the bump." 1) Let them know you have arrived (I don't mean in terms of riches and/or entitlement), 2) let them finish their game (no ad, please), and 3) then take the court. The time limit for play is 1.5 hours, if someone is waiting, whether you had a reservation or not. If you have played 1.5 hours, it is not really fair to bump someone else who has also played 1.5 hours, just because you got bumped off your court first. Be nice.

Finally, we would like to take this moment to thank all those tortured souls that do get up oh so early on Monday morning, taking time out of their busy lives, to make court reservations, while their playing buddies, who seldom lift a finger, just show up on game day and expect a court to fall into their lap. May those noble Monday morning warriors never get sick, go on vacation, have their computer crash, or just plain stop making my damn reservation.

And if, on one fine sunny day, you find yourself oh so alone, sitting there without a court, feeling lost like

some dork, please oh please do remember, at the 'Woods, the wait is often very short. Thank you.

How To Lose A Match

Interesting title. You're probably thinking, "Keith, I already know how to do that. You don't need to tell me. Let me in on something that can help me."

But seriously, do you know how to lose a match? Well, do you?

Most people go about losing completely wrong. They just don't get the hang of how to do it properly. There is really only one proper way, you know, and most of us just aren't able to accomplish it.

Quote of the Month

"Americans play to win all the time. I wouldn't give a hoot in hell for a man who lost and laughed. That's why Americans have never lost, and will never lose a war, because the very thought of losing is hateful to Americans" – Francis Ford Coppola, screenwriter for the movie Patton.

No, I'm not talking about being a good sport, any ol' fool can do that. And while being a good sport is admirable, what I am really talking about is being a good competitor. Actually, a great competitor.

A good competitor loses? A good competitor knows how to lose? You bet they do.

Look at it this way, there are four ways a point can end, and three of them are good, and one just plain sucks.

Let's start with the good news.

1) You can hit a winner. Hurray! Go Team! The crowd goes wild! Yeah!!!!

2) Your opponent makes a mistake, an unforced error. They miss a shot they usually can make. Ok, this doesn't have quite the fireworks of a winner, but think of the last time you were given a double fault on a big point. You'll take it, right?

3) This one is a bit harder to grasp onto and really love, but it is the secret to tennis success and happiness. The third good way a point can end is your opponent hits a winner.

What, I'm suppose to be happy that Cheese Ball hit a shot by me, embarrassing me in front of the thousands of people watching a league match on a Saturday afternoon down at the Club? Well... yes, actually. Frustrating as it is to lose a point this way, at least you made them do something to earn it.

4) What if you make a mistake? An unforced error. Boo, hiss! This is the way losers lose points. They just give the point a way, and the sooner you do it in a point, the bigger the loser you are. Remember, the more chances you give your opponent to make an error, the more likely they are to do just that. So missing your fourth shot is way, oh so way, better than dumping the return of serve in the net.

Ask yourself a very telling question next time you are playing. When Big Bertha blasts in her serve to you and comes to the net, and Volleying Veronica is her partner just waiting for your return and they have you dead to rights, do you just hit it back towards them, or do you try to hit it by them, in an attempt to pull off the impossible winner? Be honest, because this is the secret to tennis, I believe.

I will tell you, I win so many points coming to the net, because my opponent simply refuses to hit the ball back in the court for fear I might be able to hit it (let alone hit a winner).

And, when I catch myself making this mistake myself, trying to rip a big shot when it really isn't possible with any regularity, I tell myself, "The impossible shot is still impossible."

Basically, the stunningly amazing shot is for losers.

Ouch, that one hurts the ol' ego, who is simply, ardently, passionately, totally, in love with stunningly amazing shots, but it's true.

So picking your shot if you want to know how to lose properly goes in this order: The first priority is 1) hit a shot you can make. So simple, so hard to do. Then 2) hit a shot to a place on the court where you will have the best chance to defend the court if they hit it back. Finally, 3) go for the open court, the winner. Many Club players, and most losers, get this exactly backwards, they go for the winner first, irregardless of whether they can even make the shot, and they never, ever consider how to defend the court. They are too caught up in the potential glory to actually weigh the consequences.

Don't believe me? Set the ball machine up for a sharp angle shot from the baseline to the service box, out wide, and try to hit the ball down the alley like you would a return of serve. Every thing is in your favor, you know where the ball is going, you can get used to the speed by getting several shot to practice on, and still, I doubt very much you can get even half the balls to land in the alley, with no net person there to even intimidate you. In fact, I would be shocked, if you made more than three out of ten, but people try this shot all the time in matches, and that is not even considering what a lousy position it puts you in to defend the court if your opponent gets to the ball. The one good thing about an alley shot is that it is the easiest way to hit a winner, which is exactly my point, club players, err losers, go for the winner first, not for the win.

Let's take a little digression here, and define "shots you can make." Ten out of ten times, obviously. One out of ten? I wouldn't call that a shot you can make. Five out of ten means your losing half the points before your opponent even gets a chance to hit it back, which they very well may do. Not a good bet, if there are better options



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(sometimes you are in such a difficult situation on the court that you can only make 5 of 10 of the "easiest" shot available to you, so that is the one you do). So it becomes a question of risk versus reward, right? That is where the second part of the equation comes into play: what kind of position does making the shot leave you in? If you take a higher risk shot, say a 7 out of 10, but when you make it, you are in such great position you will win six of those seven points, that might be worth it, right? Winning more than half. This is where going for the winner, or the open court, becomes a consideration.

So how do you lose a match? You play the percentages, and let your opponent have the thrill and honor of playing great to beat you. Make them hit all winners, be so stingy with the errors you hand out.

We were recently treated to a wonderful Men's Final at the Australian Open, Marcus Baghdatis and Roger Federer. For almost two sets, Baghdatis made those winners, and Federer made a few too many errors, and the young man was up a set and a break, then Federer rolled, eleven straight games (5-7, 7-5, 6-0, 3-0). Federer stopped missing, Baghdatis missed a few more, and Federer came into the net and made Baghdatis try to beat him, and the young Cypriot couldn't do it. Not shot after shot, winner after winner. Sure Marcos made some HUGE shots, the crowd went wild, but he wasn't up to winner after winner. Few men are. You see Federer knows how to lose, and he is willing to do it, if his opponent can come up with the goods, like Marat Safin did in last year's Australian Open. In fact Federer is so good a loser that it he was only able to pull off the feat four times last year in 88 matches.

Knowing how to lose, means that you seldom will, but when you do, you will know that your opponent played well, and deserves the credit, which you will no doubt graciously give, because you will know you didn't give the match away, they won it.

So from now on, go out there and try to lose a match the right way. You will find it is pretty hard to do. Good luck out there!

CPR Class

There has been interest from many Club members in taking a CPR class. The Orinda and Moraga Fire departments offer CPR classes on the 3rd Saturday of each month, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The cost is \$50. I am planning to go on April 15 (I'll need CPR after paying my taxes), and it would be fun if there was an entire group. Contact Keith for more information.

Spring Junior Clinics

The 2006 Spring Junior Clinics begin the week of April 3rd and continue through June 9th. Head Pro Patric Hermanson will again lead the 10-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.

Our Winter Session continues to run through March 25, join us!

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*