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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](http://www.orindawoodstennis.com)  
"I like this place, and willingly could waste my time in it – Celia, *As You Like It*, Act II, Scene IV

## **Summer Fun, Exercise and Learning**

Summer is right around the corner now. The pool is open, kids will be out of school soon, and the weather is improving after quite a long, wet winter. With longer days, our Club now offers lots of evening tennis. The USTA adult season is at the midway point, with lots of great competition. Our two main summer programs are starting: Monday Team Tennis and our Junior Program. Great lessons are available from our three USPTA pros. It's summer time, it's tennis time, it's time to enjoy!

## **Living With Lobbing**

Within the rules of tennis (in other words, cheating aside), nothing works up more feelings than the topic of lobbing. From very early in my tennis career, I realized that lobs and lobbing represented the primary combat in the mental and emotional battleground of tennis. The lob, far more than a tactical weapon, took on mythic, and even apocalyptic importance among the members of my club. One of the most intelligent, competitive and crafty players in the club took up the mantel, stepped into a nearby phone booth, and transformed himself into Bob the Lob, the psychological super hero. Bob stood a mere 5'4" if that. Bald, a bit nerdy looking, with glasses, he stood in stark contrast to the crew-cut athletes of the day. He would even dress a bit sloppy in those days of all whites, not because he was a slob, but because he wanted to be underestimated as a foe. Bob would denigrate his own strokes and abilities in public, but he didn't believe his story for a second.

Bob drove more people crazy than you could believe, and like most great competitors, was never satisfied with mere victory. He wanted total victory, and strove for the complete and utter capitulation of his opponent. Playing in the finals of a local tournament against his playing antithesis, Bob triumphed when his psychologically overmatched opponent (former Marine Corps sergeant, big, strong, beer drinking, man's man, with the requisite power game) smashed both of his racquets in the course of three excruciatingly long, bamboo-shoots-shoved-under-your-nails sets. To the sergeant's dismay, no one would lend him another stick and he was forced to retire. Total victory, scorched earth, no quarter given, unconditional surrender. Vindication for the David's of the world, in the face of a mighty Goliath.

**Not What It Seems.** When one looked closer, however, the real Goliath in the battle was Bob. Sarge was overmatched, a mere mental human in the presence of gods, and of greatness. Bob filled his shelves with trophies over the next several years, and this small, unassuming man would inspire total abject fear in his opponents. Much like great champions on the pro tour past and present (Sampras, Graf, Seles, Federer, Laver, Kramer, Gonzales), his intimidation was so complete, that most matches were won before any balls were even struck, or should I say, about the same time the first lob was lofted softly up in the air, and fluttered slowly back down to earth, landing just inside the baseline of the hopelessly overmatched opponent.

But this story does not end with Bob triumphant, the bodies of the vanquished strewn at his feet on the field of tennis battle. Bob was right,

## **Ace It! Registration**

Ace It! registration is still open. 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](mailto: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**

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 13<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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.

tennis was psychological warfare, a battle for the hearts and minds of the combatants. We see it every day, in every match.

**Holding Your Breath.** Sports psychologist Allen Fox describes a match as two people in a swimming pool ducking their heads below the water and holding their breath. The normal person holds his breath until he gets uncomfortable, then breaks the surface to breathe. But the competitor, who is not in there to see how long he can hold his breath, but to hold it longer than the other guy, invariably outlasts his friend. He knows what the real game is: to outlast your opponent. Mentally, physically, emotionally, spiritually. It is said that fatigue makes cowards of us all, and the same goes for mental and emotional fatigue. Even spiritual. If your beliefs are more helpful than the other guy's, make you less tired, more inspired, more willing to fight on, they're done. You win.

So in the biblical story, David had a sling to defeat Goliath. What do we have? The overhead, and superior tactics. While realizing the whole time that this match is ultimately not about shots made and missed, but about the will to persevere. The strategy is simple, the nerves to pull it off, difficult. But then again, that is not even really true, because like David in the Valley of Elah, if you don't go for it, you are going to lose (or die in David's case).

**The Mistake.** Most people, when faced with a barrage of lobs, back up and return lob with lob. In doubles, the net person backs up either to mid court (and watches their partner run side to side chasing the mortar shells), or all the way back to the baseline to assist in the retrieving. Of course the flaw here is that you are playing "Bob the Lob" at his game, and he is the best at it. You are going down, but it is slow death. Chinese water torture. The worst way to go in tennis.

Players that quit make excuses. "Lobbing isn't real tennis." I'm sorry, it's real, just more real that you want to get.

While lobbing back a very deep lob is the correct shot in any circumstances (see last month's article on the proper shots from zones 4 & 5), this doesn't mean you lob back every lob. Remember, this is a psychological battle. Bob is pressuring you with the lob, you have to pressure him back by not letting him get away with mediocre lobs. Like all good tennis strategies, you have to shrink the court, that is, make his target area smaller and harder to hit. You do this by stacking the odds against Bob, with, the stack.

**The Stack.** The stack formation is one up and one back (see Fig. A & B), but modified to bring out your strengths, and put the most pressure possible on Bob. Don't let him just lob, make him feel like he has to lob great, every single time (ball must land in the shaded area on Fig A & B, nothing short). The short lobs must be punished in the game of psychological warfare, even if you miss some overheads. So many times in matches I have watched as soon as a lob goes up, the net person says "yours," and switches to the other side. This must change. The net person must stand where they are ready to hit overheads. The back person must also shift so that they are not put in extremely awkward lobbing positions (see figure A & B). Notice that in the stack, both players are near the middle, essentially playing singles, and on the side of the court that allows them to hit more forehands. Fig. A represents shifting from the normal Ad Court positions, and Fig. B represents the shift in the normal Deuce Court positions. Notice that the net player has a choice of 1) moving into the middle, or 2) moving into the middle but farther back, near the service line. If the net person is absolutely certain the opponent is going to lob, they can move to position 2, otherwise, if there is any chance of a groundstroke, stay in position 1.

Now I have to say, here and now, Bob's mama didn't raise no fool. As soon as Bob started running into teams that featured a big overhead, Bob went out and got himself one. I should know, I was Bob's overhead for a while, and we did quite well. I would patrol the net, smashing anything that floated short, while Bob would cruise back and forth at the baseline, launching mortar shell after mortar shell into the enemy's backcourt. And Bob was a very smart guy. He never got upset at me when I missed an overhead. On the other hand, he encouraged me. He knew the real game we were playing, and how it affected the bottom line. Players with opposite talents and opposite personalities often make good teams and are successful. The trick is not to drive each other crazy. Bob knew that trick, he was the ultimate winner.

**Stay Positive.** When faced with the inevitable good lob, stay positive. A good lob is a good shot. Give lobber credit and move on. Be determined, make him prove he can do it over and over again. Don't give up. (keep holding your breath underwater). Remember, he is ultimately not lobbing to win the point. He is lobbing to make you quit. Don't do it.

Don't even hang your head. In no way let him know he is getting to you, this just spurs him on and he will never quit. Allen Fox writes that a player should never let on that the other is getting to them, or that they are frustrated in any way. This just guarantees that your opponent will never quit, because they always believe that at some point, you won't be able to take it any more and your game will explode. Along with your racquet in Sarge's case.

One of my pet peeves is when a student volunteers information that your opponent should never know. "Oh, the sun is so bad on this side." What, are you a complete idiot, why not just invite them to put it up in the sun.

**Here's Johnny...** Johnny Carson, when telling a joke that bombed, would often follow up with a joke about his writers. He'd say, "The material I have to work with these days," or something like that. This would always get a laugh, because the audience would empathize with being up there and bombing. The

### **Quote of the Month:**

"Fatigue makes cowards of us all."

-- George S. Patton



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material players have to work with is important. The lobber is giving you tough, slow, high bouncing shots to work with, that are very hard to hit (out of your strike zone), tough to generate pace on and require a lot of running to chase down. But why not turn this strategy around on the lobber? Lobbers like high bouncing, deep, slow balls, that they can loft over your head in a majestic arc. It takes room and height to lob. Don't give it to them. Hit short and low, or shots with a great deal of pace when appropriate (like overheads and serves).

**Foolishness.** In this light, the traditional strategy of hit deep and come to the net is totally foolishness. You're playing right into Bob the Lob's hand. And then players whine when they get lobbed. Any player (not just the Bob the Lobs of the world) should lob in that circumstance. You are surrendering the entire back half of the court, and handing the appropriate shot to them on a platter. All in the name of playing "good tennis," or "real tennis." Bob loves fools like you. Remember, Sarge was one of these guys, and buying new racquets all the time get expensive.

It is important to have a well-rounded game. A game ready to deal with any circumstance. So a player who has taken the time to learn good groundstrokes should also know how to lob. If you start with the groundstrokes, and add the lob, the sky is the limit. But if you start with the lob, and win too soon, you will never develop all the shots you need for the higher levels. Early success is usually a precursor of long-term failure. A hard point to understand for the 2.5, 3.0 and even the 3.5 player.

**The Trap and the Turnaround.** One of the key points to remember is that lobbing is the easiest strategy to learn and use successfully. It is a short cut, and it works. Up to a point. Remember that lesson from long ago in Kindergarten, when you cheat, you are only cheating yourself. Players that took the lob option, like Bob the Lob, were often so successful that they never actually learned anything else. Here is one of the key areas to turn the psychological screw. Force them to hit groundstrokes, because they can't. The best way to beat the stack is driving groundstrokes, but most lobbers don't have that shot. They never had time to learn them, because they were too busy winning and gloating over your weakness. When most lobbers are faced with superior tactics that force their hand, they feel suddenly outgunned, and the game stops being fun. They even envy your game, your shots, your style. The torturer becomes the tortured. Too late to go back and learn a real game, they either attempt to keep their rating low where they can't be outgunned, or they quit.

And that, my friends, was Bob and Goliath's end. Victims of their own success, hubris, and shortsighted tactics and skills. Every game can be beaten. Good luck out there!

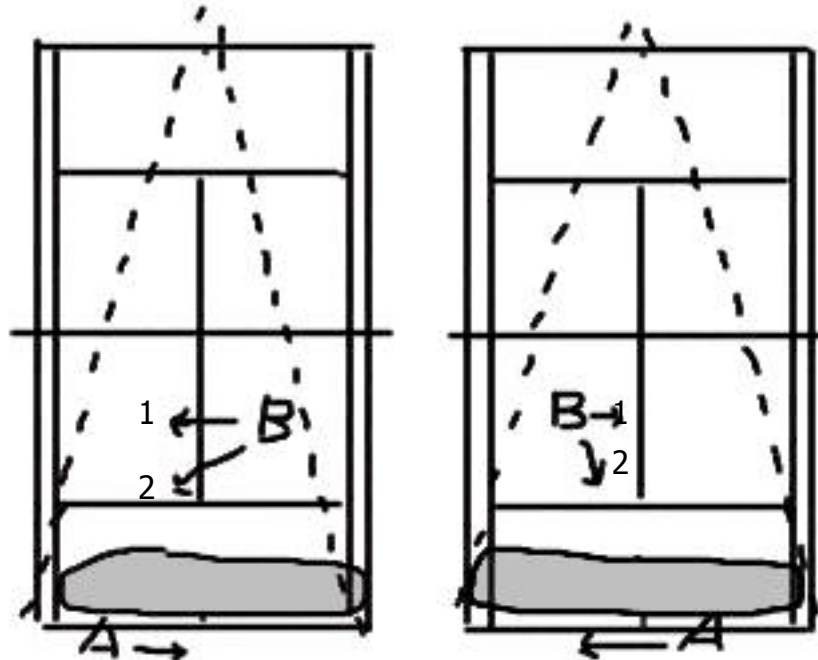


Fig. A

Fig. B

**www.  
orindawoodstennis  
.com**  
Reservations, Club  
calendar, weather and  
court updates, lesson  
programs and much  
more!

## 2011 Orindawoods Summer Tennis Camps

Welcome to the 2011 Orindawoods Summer Junior Tennis Program. Our Summer Program consists of eight one-week (Monday-Thursday) camps. In addition to taking our young players' games to a new level, our four day camps are full of good fun and good friends. Our energetic and professional staff has put together a positive and challenging instructional environment that will allow the students to grow both as tennis players and as people. Our camps will suit the beginner, just starting out, as well as the advanced player preparing for summer and fall tournaments. Non-members are welcome in all our classes.

Our **Full Afternoon Camp** is for kids 7-16. Players will be separated according to age and ability. The Full Camp will 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 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. Campers should bring a snack for the break. At 2:15pm will begin the *Match Play Block*, where the campers 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 campers will work with many aspects of the USTA Quick Start Program, making it easy for even the younger beginner to play matches. The Full Camp Day will finish at 3:45pm

If you are looking for a shorter tennis experience, you can sign up for our **Half Camps**. 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 Camps** we are also listing the Lil' Ones Camp. This camp is for the 4-6 year olds, and will run on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 4:00-4:45pm.

*We hope to see you this summer at Orindawoods! Make sure you sign up early.*

<b>2011 Weekly Summer Tennis Camps</b>				
Camps	Ages	Days	Times	Cost per week Member/Non-member
<b>Full Camp</b>				
Afternoon camp	7-16	Monday-Thursday	12noon-3:45pm	\$180 / \$205
<b>Half Camps</b>				
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](mailto:patrictennis@yahoo.com)) to sign up or to get more information or call 925-254-1065. Enjoy!

### Enrollment Form

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

EMERGENCY CONTACT \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name (1) \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Child's Name (2) \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Session 1	June 13-16	Full Camp ___ Half Camps Instruction Block___ Match Play ___ Lil' Ones ___
Session 2	June 20-23	Full Camp ___ Half Camps Instruction Block___ Match Play ___ Lil' Ones ___
Session 3	June 27-30	Full Camp ___ Half Camps Instruction Block___ Match Play ___ Lil' Ones ___
Session 4	July 5-7	Full Camp ___ Half Camps Instruction Block___ Match Play ___ Lil' Ones ___
Session 5	July 11-14	Full Camp ___ Half Camps Instruction Block___ Match Play ___ Lil' Ones ___
Session 6	July 18-21	Full Camp ___ Half Camps Instruction Block___ Match Play ___ Lil' Ones ___
Session 7	July 25-28	Full Camp ___ Half Camps Instruction Block___ Match Play ___ Lil' Ones ___
Session 8	August 1-4	Full Camp ___ Half Camps Instruction Block___ Match Play ___ Lil' Ones ___

### **Total Camp Cost:**

Child (1) Cost: \_\_\_\_\_ + Child (2) Cost \_\_\_\_\_ -Discount for Child (2) \_\_\_\_\_ =

