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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*

## **Shots, Situations and Crazy Characters**

This month I thought I would take a look at some of the various shots, situations and characters we run across in this crazy game of ours. All of what follows is intended to be in good fun, and any resemblance to your own game is, of course, completely accidental, and not meant to offend. However, counseling is available (we call it a tennis lesson in this venue).

On the other hand, I have, in my 45 years of tennis, personally resembled most of these at one time or another. Some, I hope, only in the very distant and forgotten past.

**The "Halleluiah"** – So we all know about playing the percentages, and not trying dumb, low-percentage shots. Well, the "halleluiah" is when one of these "low-percentage" shots comes along, and the clouds part, the heavenly hosts start to sing and you know from deep down in your soul, you can make it. So you do! Yeah! And everyone thinks you are brilliant. Yeah #2! (and hopefully your opponents think you can make it any time you want --- AND --- you are smart enough to know you can't, and only try it when you hear those cute little cherubs start a singin' –Yeah #3).

**"The Impossible"** The impossible is not to be confused with the "halleluiah" (good luck with that). The impossible is the shot you know you can't make, and yet try it anyway. Thus, the phrase, "the impossible shot is still impossible", which I have uttered a few too many times in my life for good, high percentage tennis. But "the impossible" is a good thing to know and test out, from time to time. Keeps one humble. I suppose it could also be called **"the wild hair."**

**The "World Class."** The world class is a shot someone at the club level can only make one out of five times, if that, and is thrilled to make (and so, unfortunately, they keep trying it).

Hint: you want your opponent trying the world class. You or your partner, not so much so.

**"Style Points"** Somewhat related to the world class, this is a shot that you mistakenly think you get more credit for because you make it. Tennis, unlike many events in the Olympics, is not scored based on how hard the move is. If you can make a forehand while executing a triple Lutz, more power to you, but it isn't going to count any more than the garden-variety forehand. The most common sighting of this shot is passing the net person down the alley in doubles. Lots of people make this shot about one time out of five and are happy with those results. (see "Fool's Paradise")

**Fool's Paradise** – Making a shot you can only convert one out of five times (or there about) and being happy about it. Stupid. However, it is really quite a happy situation. The person losing is happy. They made one! The person winning is happy, they're winning. Lots of happy people in "paradise."

**"Marathon Mode"** – In it for the long haul, conserving energy, playing at  $\frac{3}{4}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$  speed, just trying to make it to the finish line. A sure sign you have been playing too much. It's the result of faulty thinking. Tennis is a series of short sprints, not a road race. Marathon Mode is a real problem if you come up against Jimbo Style.

**"Jimbo Style" or "Interval Man"** – High intensity, short bursts, just like tennis. Think: Connors, Nadal. Quick, little steps. You realize rest is between point rather than slowing the pace of your play.

**The "Gravity Shot."** This is when you hit the ball and the only thing that is going to bring the ball back to earth and make it be in the court is gravity. No spin, just good ol' Sir Isaac Newton's law working for you. Very related to "Pushing."

**Pushing** – hitting the ball softly, taking no chances, aiming for the middle of the court, and just praying they'll miss, 'cause you don't have much else going for ya. Often related to "Steal Elbow."

**"Myzzled"** – (misled). Being tricked into attempting a shot you had no business trying in a million years. Smug grin on the face of your opponent after you plunk your shot in the net or send it careening wide is a dead giveaway you have been myzzled.

**"Split the Atom"** -- when you hit a shot and it strikes another ball and both balls shoot off in different directions, leaving the receiver to ponder which one they should attempt to hit (and "Why the h--- I didn't clear that stupid ball").

**The "Bazooka"** – when someone just blasts away, and if it hits something, it's deadly (unfortunately is it as likely to hit your partner in the back as your opponent). Mostly they just miss, often causing damage to the nearby fence. This shot is often observed in mixed doubles competition

## **Ball Machine Club**

Just a reminder to you Ball Machine Club enthusiasts, the 2013 ball machine club membership ends on February 28, and if you want to continue with the ball machine club, payment is due by March 1<sup>st</sup>. The Ball Machine Club membership will be \$110 for 2014 (March 2014-Feb 2015) for unlimited access to the ball machine when it is available. Remember, there is no ball machine use during prime time (M-F 9-10:30, Sa-Su 9-12pm, and all evenings).

## **Save the Date**

### **Ace It! 2014**

The date for this year's breast cancer awareness day is June 7th. Mark your calendars.

## **Tulip Tournament**

Can you feel it? Summer (tennis season) is coming. Some would argue it has been here all "winter", but it is time to don the spring clothing, grab our racquets and join our friends for our annual Spring social on Sunday, March 30th from 12 to 4 p.m. No cost, and please, no rain (for at least this one day). Contact Keith or Lysbeth to register.

where the men often feel the need to be real men. Think of turkeys with raised tail feathers.

**Mixed Troubles** – “Troubles” rhymes with “doubles”, self-explanatory (and self-evident when couples play together). Good luck with that.

**“The Kevin Allen Conundrum”**: Do I have a better chance of winning the point letting a great shot go and hoping it is out, or lunge for it and almost surely miss?

**The “Steal Elbow”** – getting tight. Your arm won’t move. Different, but similar to choking, in result only.

**“Heimlich Maneuver”** – i.e. choking. Feeling like you can’t breath (b/c you’re not). Your partner should probably not try the actual maneuver if you are choking. It could be embarrassing, and not socially proper, especially in mixed doubles.

**“Kobayashi Maru”** -- A war-game scenario from Star Trek that is “an unwinnable situation” that star fleet cadets are put through to see how they react when they can’t possibly win. Often in tennis we are put in a situation where we can’t make a shot, or win a point, and the test is, do we panic (which doesn’t help for this shot or future shots), or do we stay calm and do out best (which is the attitude that will serve us best in future “near” impossible situations where if we stay calm, we could actually succeed). You see, in life, you often don’t know it is impossible in advance, until you stay calm and give it a try.

**The “Prayer Shot”** – You are out of position, lunging, doing anything just to make contact, and you know the only chance the ball is going in is based on prayer, but it seems better than doing nothing. This actually might not be a good idea for future success, but oh so tempting. (see Kobayashi Maru above) Hint: prayer is not a good device to base your match strategy on (no offence intended for those of us who spend Sunday morning at church and not with the ball machine practicing like “The Natural” below). However, judging by the way a lot of folks play, prayer does seem to be the extent of advanced planning many players put forth around these here parts for attempting to win a match.

**The “Scotty”** – another Star Trek derivative. This one can either be 1) “Captain, I’ve given her all she’s got. She can’t take much more. She’s breakin’ apart.” i.e. trying so hard things are starting to fall apart, or 2) “Beam me up, Scotty. This match sucks.” i.e. tanking, giving up, throwing in the towel, etc...

Scotty kind of defines both ends of the effort spectrum, doesn’t he? Too hard, and nobody home. Neither is good.

**“The Wild West”** – a shoot out where the players are just blasting away, often not hitting anything (including the court). Many junior lessons or high school (especially boys) practices look like this, only to see them revert to the “Gravity” or “Pusher” the next day when the rival high school comes to town for the big “must win” match.

**“Smoke and Mirrors”** – A strategy employed when you are getting beaten and know you have no chance if things remain this way, so you try a strategy that cannot possibly work (you know you got nothin’ in your hand), unless they foolishly change their winning game to try to deal with your smoke and mirrors approach. Similar to bluffing. At Gettysburg there was a famous Union bayonet charge that caused a major Confederate unit to surrender. The Union charged because they were out of ammunition. The Confederates didn’t realize they were being “myzzled.” Lobbing is actually a smoke and mirrors approach at high levels against people with big overheads (you want them off the net where they are killing you).

**“Satan’s Compliment”** – When someone draws attention to something you are doing really well with the intention of making you think about the shot too much, fall out of the zone and thus mess it up. A compliment that seems nice on the surface, but is anything but nice. And very poor sportsmanship. Notice touring pros never talk to each other during a match.

**“Yard Sale”** (a skiing term, but one that can be converted quite nicely to tennis under less than ideal conditions) -- when a player trips and falls, and everything goes flying in different directions, hat, sunglasses, racquet...

**“Pond Theory”** -- no matter how good you get at tennis, there is always a bigger pond and a bigger fish. Philosophical question of the day: Is it better to be a big fish in a little pond, or a little fish in a big pond? Most athletes, being confident, go for the bigger pond thinking they’ll be a big fish there too. Only in retirement do they look back fondly at the happy days spent in the small pond, and finally understand how disillusioning life in the big pond turned out to be. Plot of many a novel.

**“Life in the Food Chain”** -- see “pond theory” above (only with sharp teeth).

**“Headin’ South”** -- losing

**“One way Ticket to Palookaville”** -- losing, career heading south, and related to “The Contender”

**“The Contender”** – If I’d won that match, “I coulda had class, I coulda been somebody, I coulda been a contender. Instead of a bum, which is what I am.”

**“Bagel”** -- a 6-0 set.

**“Getting Bageled”** -- painful. Not as bad as the dreaded “Courtesy Game.”

**“Courtesy Game”** -- being allowed to win the twelfth game of a match, so you only lose 6-0, 6-1. Most effectively served cold, with a smug, heartless smile. Ouch!

**“Ruby Slippers”** – “There is no place like home, there is no place like home, there is no place like home.” Wanting to be anywhere else but on this court, in this match, with these people, at this time, and correspondingly playing like it (but with that attitude, you won’t be for long -- which is kind of the plan, isn’t it). I.e. tanking, taking a dive, going down with the ship.

**The “Boomerang”** -- No matter what shot you hit, good, bad or indifferent, the ball keeps coming back.

**“Golden Set”** -- winning a set without losing a point.

**Quote of the Month:**

“Be who you are and say what you feel because those who mind don’t matter and those who matter don’t mind.”

-- Dr. Seuss



## Orindawoods Tennis Club

650 Orindawoods Dr  
Orinda, CA 94563  
USA

**Phone:**  
925-254-1065

**Fax:**  
925-254-1380

**Website:**  
[www.orindawoodstennis.com](http://www.orindawoodstennis.com)

### Executive Tennis Director:

Keith Wheeler  
[orindawoodstc@  
sbccglobal.net](mailto:orindawoodstc@sbccglobal.net)

### Head Pro:

Patric Hermanson  
[PatricTennis@yahoo.com](mailto:PatricTennis@yahoo.com)

### Associate Pro:

Anna Marie Gamboa  
[gamboa.tennis@yahoo.com](mailto:gamboa.tennis@yahoo.com)

### Junior Tennis Staff:

Mika Braun  
Sofia Marino  
Mary Alice Paulson

### Weekend Staff:

George Kaiser

### Newsletter Editor:

Keith Wheeler

### Associate Editors:

Patric Hermanson  
Marcy Sharafian

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**The "Lobber"** -- scum sucking bottom feeder, i.e. a smart player despised by all (even their mother).

The **"Power Player"** or **"A Real Tennis Player."** -- someone who hits hard, plays real tennis, not pusher tennis, never lobs, misses a lot and loses (especially to lobbers).

**The "Showboat"** -- someone who plays better in front of a crowd. Also, a person who brings out their repertoire of trick shots to woo the crowd. Poor, phony imitation of "Silk."

A **"Hacker"** -- an average Joe tennis player. Technically someone who hacks at the ball, rather than strokes it beautifully. We're all hackers next to Nadal. (see Pond Theory above)

**The "Hired Gun":** A player, often a sandbagger (see below), who roams from USTA team to USTA team each season looking for the best deal and the best chance to get to Nationals (see "Playing for the T" below).

**The "Sandbagger."** -- someone who purposely plays lousy to keep their rating down. Or self-rates at a level lower than they really are. Sandbaggers have occasionally played matches with their non-dominant hand to "lose" a match (we are not talking Nadal here, who actually does play with his non-dominant hand -- ouch, that hurts, see "Natural"). Everyone seems to want these folks on their team, b/c "we're playing for the T".

**"Playing for the T"** -- a player or a team that is obsessed with winning and going to nationals where all you get is a crummy t-shirt that you will wear to every match for the next twenty years to impress people until it literally falls off you in tatters. Which actually, when you give it a little thought, isn't really all that impressive of a look. Might want to rethink that.

**"A Tough Competitor"** -- Someone who "competes" well by squeezing the lines on big points and you have to name them something. After all, no one is comfortable calling them on what they are, a cheater. Calling someone a cheater sounds so crass to say out loud in our refined society (perhaps being confrontational is worse than cheating, in some weird mixed up way). Somehow it has become worse to call someone a cheater, than to be one. That's a bit mixed up. Ya think? See "country club."

**"Good Snacks"** -- A well know fact that the lower the level of team, the better the snacks. The higher the level, the more "tired" the snacks ("Aye, I forgot to get snacks again, better rush into Rite Aid .... I've been doing this too long").

A **"Country Club"** -- a really good idea that somehow got messed up along the way, probably because people were involved.

**Orindawoods** -- the best tennis club on earth, which somehow managed not to get messed up by same said people. Or maybe it was different said people.

**"Best Dressed" or "photo op"** -- A player who has the latest clothes, racquet, shoes, equipment. Often (but not always) how well they are dressed is inversely proportional to how well they play (exception: "silk" below, who "best dressed" is hoping to be confused with, without doing the requisite work required to actually be good). The best example I can offer here was a woman at another club who would change the overwrap on her racquet handle to match the outfit she was wearing that day. Of course the shoes and socks matched impeccably as well. And the visor. Nail polish? Come to think of it, that was at a country club.

**"The Non-Conformist"** -- a player who brings the same old can of off-brand balls ("does Target really have their own line of signature Poncho Gonzales tennis balls?") to his foursome each week, offers "to open the balls this week," but everyone declines because no one wants to play with crappy balls. To further paint this picture, these balls are white, in a solid tin can, which you open with a key, like we used to open a ham. Don't cut yourself. Remember those? A variation of this is someone who brings balls "that have only been used once." By the dog. Come to think of it, looks like Rover got his teeth into the can as well.

**"Mentally Tough" or "Bullet Proof"** -- A player who wears their game face, isn't disrupted from their task by gamesmanship, and is focused on producing their best tennis in matches. Because they are not always social, warm or outgoing, women who are mentally tough are sometimes referred to by the b----- word (behind their back, please, this is a country club) and men "competitive jerks." BTW, these rare birds could care less what you think or say, they're bullet proof, or as we say with dripping envy, mentally tough.

**"The Natural"** (no, we don't mean Robert Redford, though he is a good tennis player). -- someone who makes the game look easy. It is often said as a backhanded compliment, or a jealous put down, that someone is a natural, and that "they didn't have to work hard, like me" to get where they are. The truth is, most naturals worked really hard to get that look. No one is born with a Federer forehand. Not even Federer, or Robert Redford. Most Naturals train

really hard when no one is looking. We aren't naturals precisely because we weren't there at the club practicing at the same time to see the naturals working hard becoming natural. Naturals often hit in the winter, sometimes in the rain, often when it is too early, late, cold, hot, windy, or just plain inconvenient for everyone else. They are often called "loners," but can evolve into "silk." But only when no one is watching.

**"Bob"** -- Robert Redford. Really. The real deal.

**"Ball Machine Buddies"** -- i.e. players on the way to be naturals. Or looking at it from a slightly warped perspective, the only players the ball machine could get to hit with them. Ever feel like that? Me too.

**"Silk" or "the Kitchen Sink"** -- This is the player that no matter what you throw at them (the kitchen sink, for example) they always look calm, smooth (like silk), and in control. Even when they can't get a great shot you hit, they never look like they have lost their composure, form (they never do the "Prayer shot" or look like "Scotty") or appear concerned in any way. They are perfectly calm all the time, and occasionally toss you an off-handed "good shot" when you just hit the best shot of your entire life. Sometimes they will add a "nice try" when you are clearly not up to the challenge of playing them ("poor, unfortunate soul"). Watch out for the "Courtesy Game" with this player, though they meant no real harm in doling it out. This player is often called "The Natural", but they are far more than that.

The most common response when encountering such an opponent on the opposite side of the net is "uh oh." Sometimes we don't even get out of the warm up before the "uh oh" slips out, painfully noticed, under our breath. The second thing is then figuring out something intelligent and perhaps even witty to say to them when you make your conciliatory hand shake (witty is a bit risky though, because you don't want to say anything stupid or off color in the presence of greatness). Their "well played old sport" is a comment you will cherish for the rest of your playing days.

Often this player is well-dressed, top drawer, to the nines, because they are so far above the toil of mere mortals that they simply don't care you might mistakenly confuse them for "Best Dressed". They probably really do have a photo op. After all, you want to be seen with them. Right? Like the pictures of you with the President on your office wall.

Silk figures if you are not going to break a sweat, you might as well look good doing it. And oh yes, "Thanks for playing,, old sport."

Good luck out there! And remember, it's all a joke, be a mench, and most importantly, enjoy the ride. It's the only one we've got, and it is a darn good one at the 'Woods. We're blessed. Thanks for playing.

### ***Junior Tennis Program Spring 2014***

Come join Head Pro Patric Hermanson, Associate Pro Anna Marie Gamboa and our junior tennis staff for our fun, informative and competitive Spring Junior Program. The Spring Session will start the week of March 10th and run for 10 weeks. We have added the Friday Workout as well in mid-February for those players who want tennis more than once a week.

<u>Level</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Time(s)</u>	<u>One day/week</u>	<u>Two Days</u>
<b>I</b>	<b><u>Lil' Ones</u></b>	<i>Tues/Thurs 3:15-4pm</i>	<i>\$135*</i>	<i>\$215*</i>
The <b>Lil' Ones class</b> 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.				
<b>II</b>	<b><u>Future Stars Group</u></b>	<i>Tuesdays 4-5:30pm</i>	<i>\$250*</i>	<i>N/A</i>
The <b>Future Stars Group</b> 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.				
<b>III</b>	<b><u>Tennis Development Group</u></b>	<i>Thursdays 4-5:30pm</i>	<i>\$250*</i>	<i>N/A</i>
In the <b>Tennis Development Group</b> 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.				
<b>IV</b>	<b><u>Tournament Training Group</u></b>	<i>Wednesdays 4:30-6:30pm</i>	<i>\$340*</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<b>New for this Winter Session:</b> We have extended the clinic from 1 & ½ hours to 2 hours to better serve the needs of the players at this level. The <b>Tournament Training Group</b> is an <u>invitation only</u> class. Contact Patric about setting up a try-out.				
<b>V</b>	<b><u>Friday Workouts</u></b>	<i>Fridays 4:00-5:30pm</i>	<i>\$200*</i>	<i>N/A</i>

**New starting in February:** We have added Friday Workouts for **The Tournament Training** and **Tennis Development Group**. This class will last 8 weeks, February 14 to April 4<sup>th</sup>. Still space available!

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