

THE EARLIER BALL. Peter Farrell.

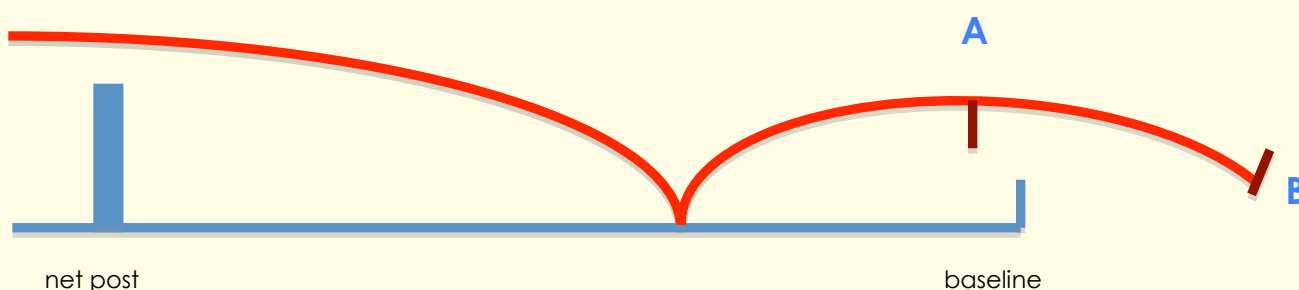
One of the most common mistakes I see club level players make in baseline rallies is ***letting the ball drop too low before they hit it.***

As you are awaiting your opponent's next shot, you will probably be in a position near the centre of the court, and just behind the baseline. Many players are great at moving left and right from here. But not so many players seem to be aware of the advantages of ***moving forward*** if the opponent's shot will be low (below waist height) when it reaches them. But this is one of the most effective ways to turn a rallying or even defensive situation into an opportunity to attack...

Here are the problems caused by hitting a low ball from behind the baseline, and how these problems disappear if you step forward and hit the ball earlier:

1. Making contact at point B means you must emphasize `hitting up` to get the ball over the net. If you do not lift it enough, your shot will go into the net. If you lift it too much, it will sail long. Making contact at point A means you do not have to lift the ball as much, so the chances of hitting either into the net or long are reduced.
2. If you hit a shot from point B at 30kph, and a shot from point A at 30kph, the shot from point A will obviously give your opponent less time to react, since it has a shorter distance to travel to get to him.
3. The closer you are to the net in tennis the better the angles you can hit. So playing a shot from A will allow you to move your opponent and make her run more than a shot hit from B.

The key is – ***don't be backward about coming forward.*** Step up to the mark and turn a rally situation into an opportunity to win the point.



Stepping inside the baseline to hit the ball at point A, rather than staying back and hitting it at point B has all kind of advantages...