



**Deutsche
Sporthochschule Köln**
German Sport University Cologne



Deutscher
Tennis Bund

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and Sport Qualifications**



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The zones of the court

and

the importance of the 3rd stroke

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Introduction

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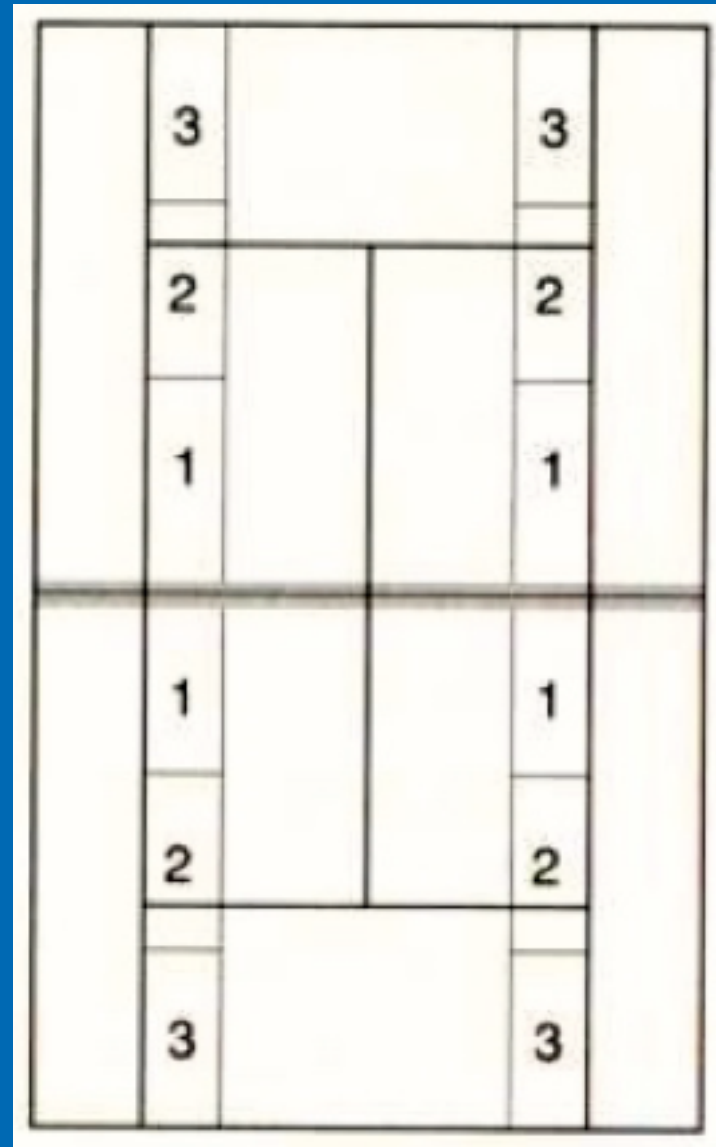
Different court divisions into zones



Groeneveld, 2014

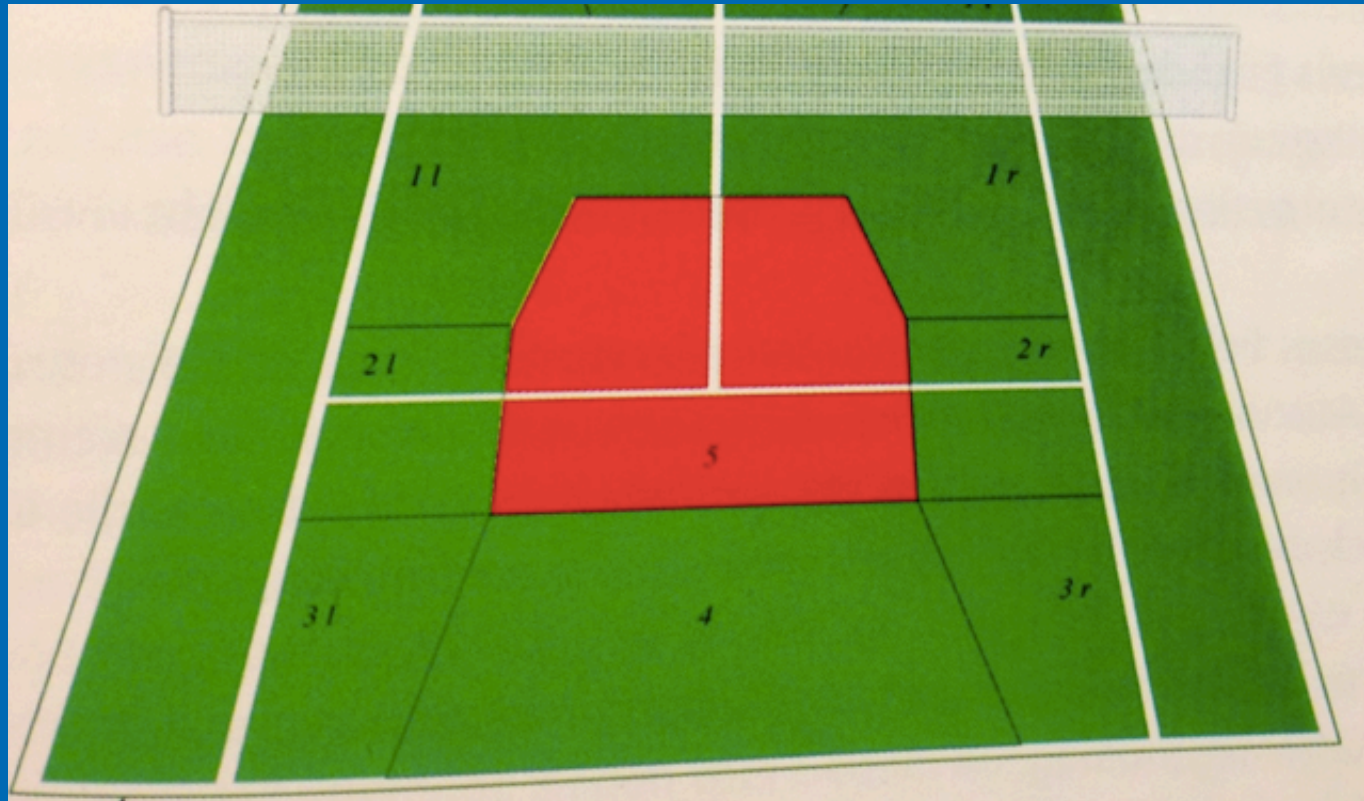


Different court divisions into zones





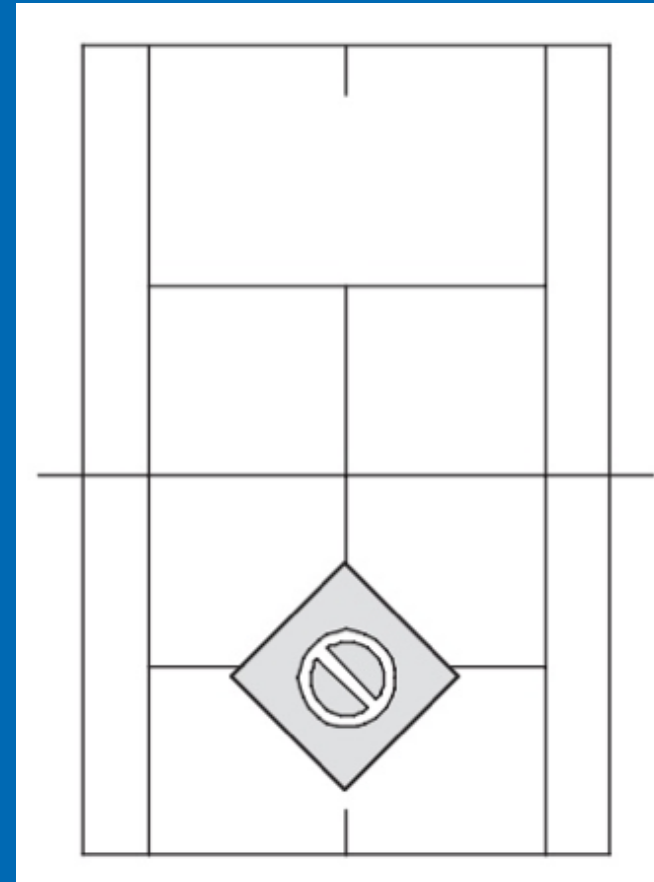
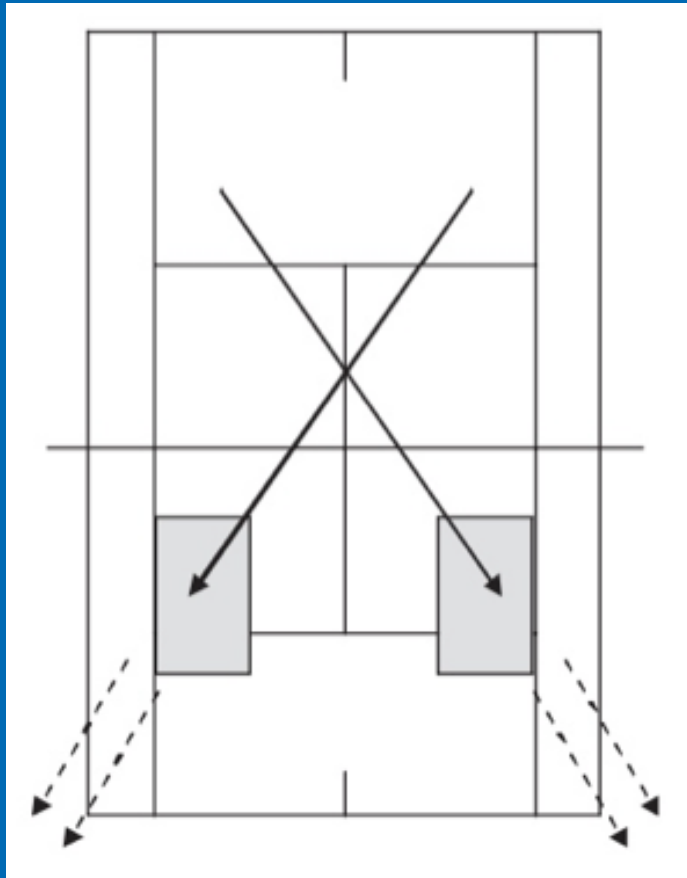
Different court divisions into zones



Schönborn, 2008



Different court divisions into zones

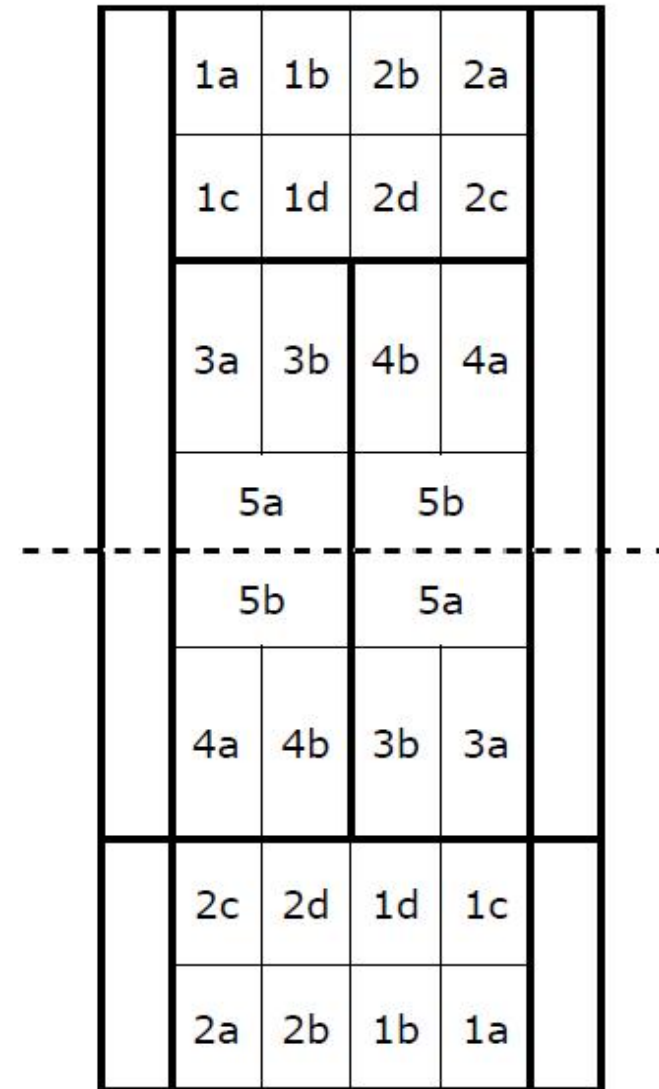


Antoun, 2007



Different court divisions into zones

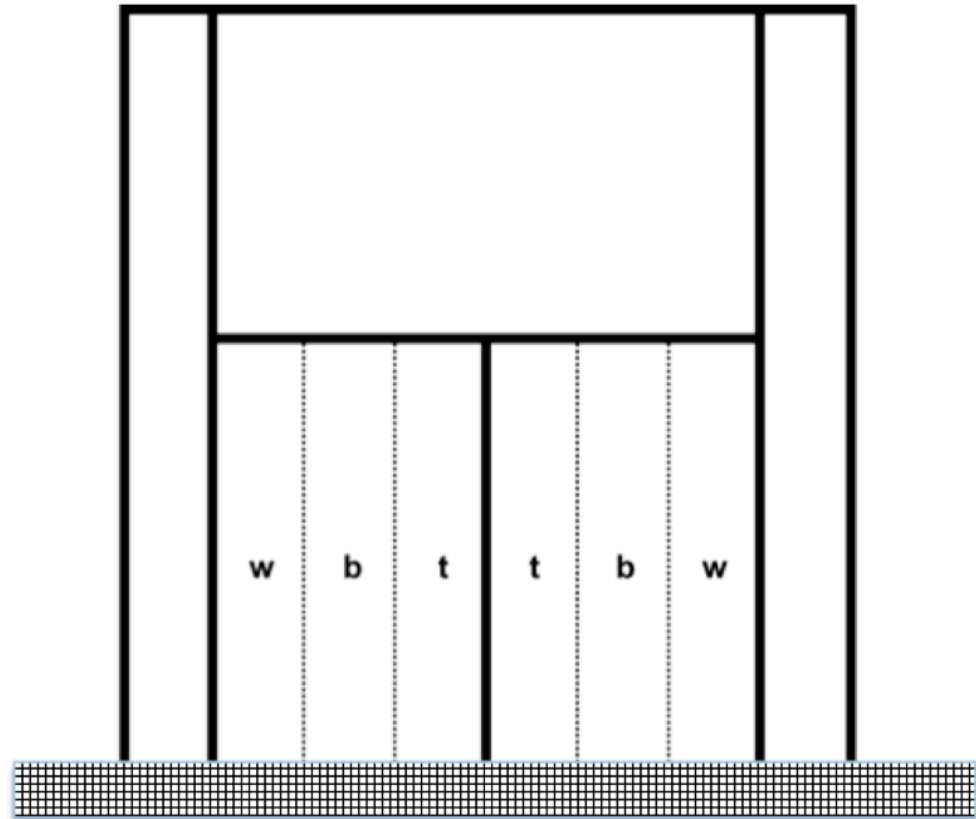
- Different court divisions into zones
- Either only part of the court or not clear enough
- Division into 12/14 zones, easy to mark and to understand
- 4 quarters lengthwise (inner and outer zones)
- 2 crosswise sections behind the baseline
- The „forbidden / red“ zone in the center
- ...and...





3 service zones

- wide
- body
- t





Numbers and conclusions for practice



Rallye Length

- ✓ > 50% of the points are over after 4 strokes (2/player)
- ✓ Most common rallye length with 20% is „2“ (Serve and Return)
- ✓ The game opening is the most crucial part of the game
 - Every point starts with a serve
(and most of the time with a return)



3rd stroke vs. strokes 4-8

- ✓ In the court: 90 / 86 % (W > L)

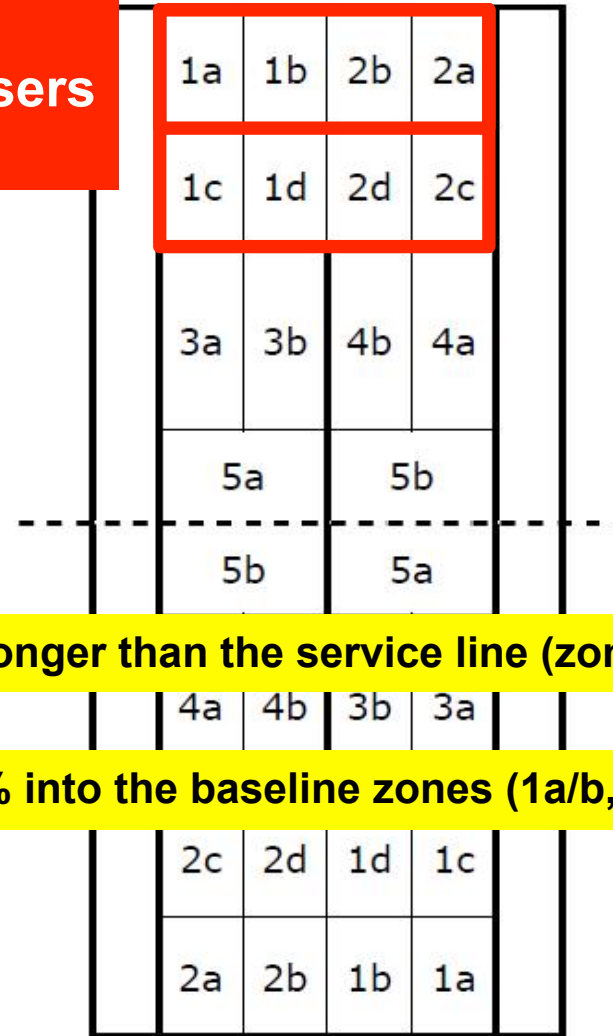
- ✓ Winners: 7 / 5% (!)
- ✓
- ✓ Out > Net (W < L)

- ✓ Forehands > Backhands
- ✓
- ✓ Run-around forehands 37 / 16% (4.-8. G > V)



NO difference between winners and losers

**Depth
of the
strokes**



85 / 79% longer than the service line (zones 1 + 2)

33 / 30% into the baseline zones (1a/b, 2a/b)



Depth of the strokes

Goal of the exercise:

- ✓ Hit groundstrokes with a good depths

Execution:

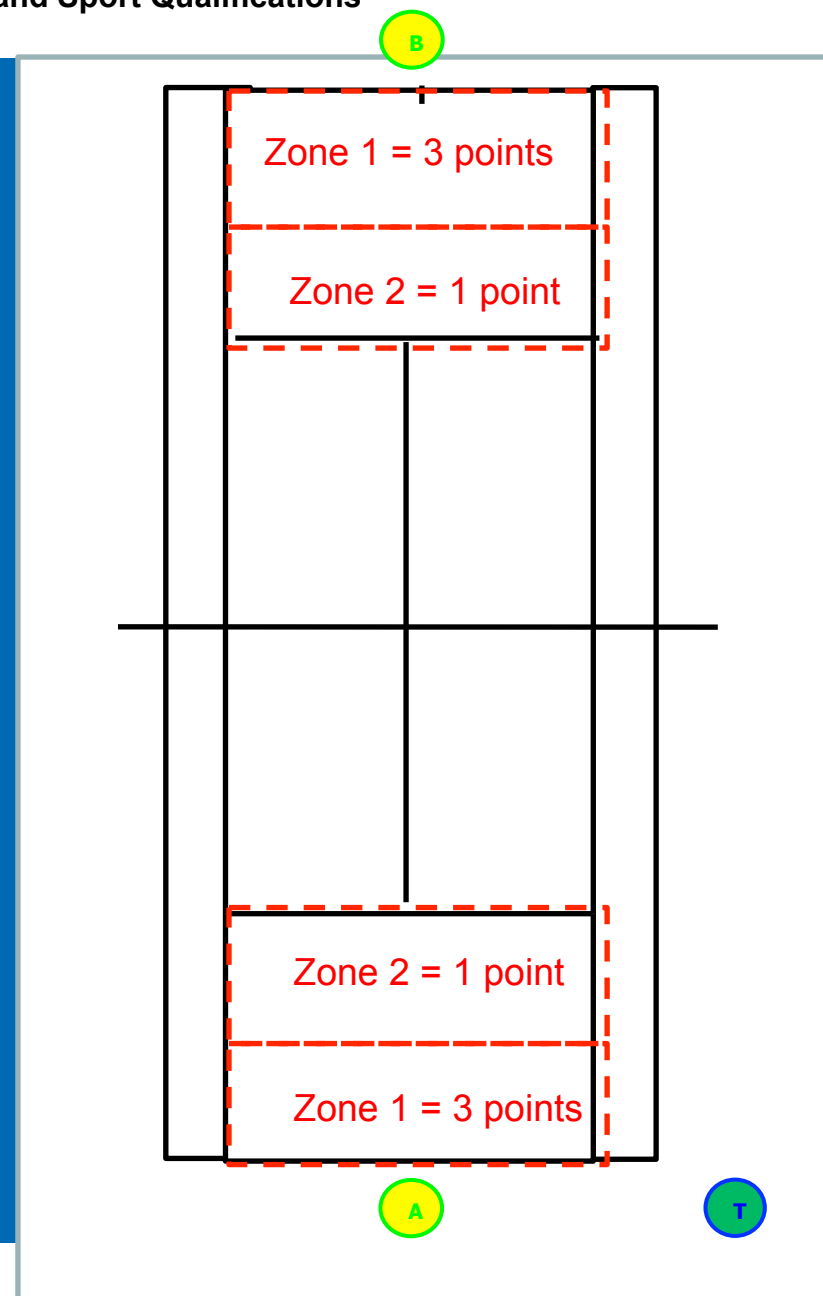
- ✓ Hit with each other through the middle
- ✓ 2 minutes or up to 30 Points

Variations:

- ✓ Cross-Cross
- ✓ Shorter than service line = -1 point
- ✓ Into the net = -2 points

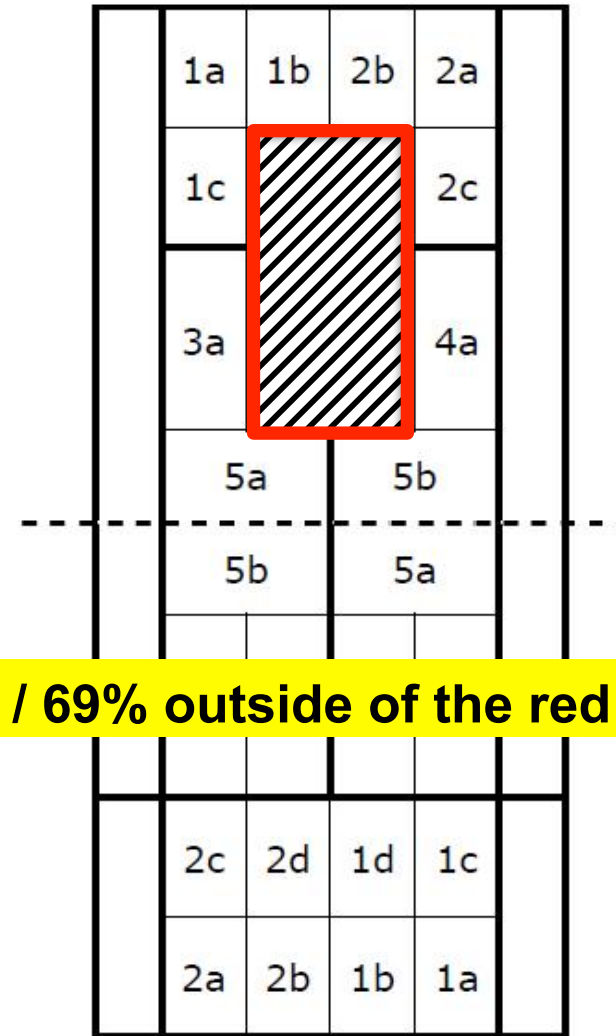
Quality control:

- ✓ Ball still rising at baseline level





The red zone



76 / 69% outside of the red zone

1st number: 3rd stroke // 2nd number: strokes 4 -8



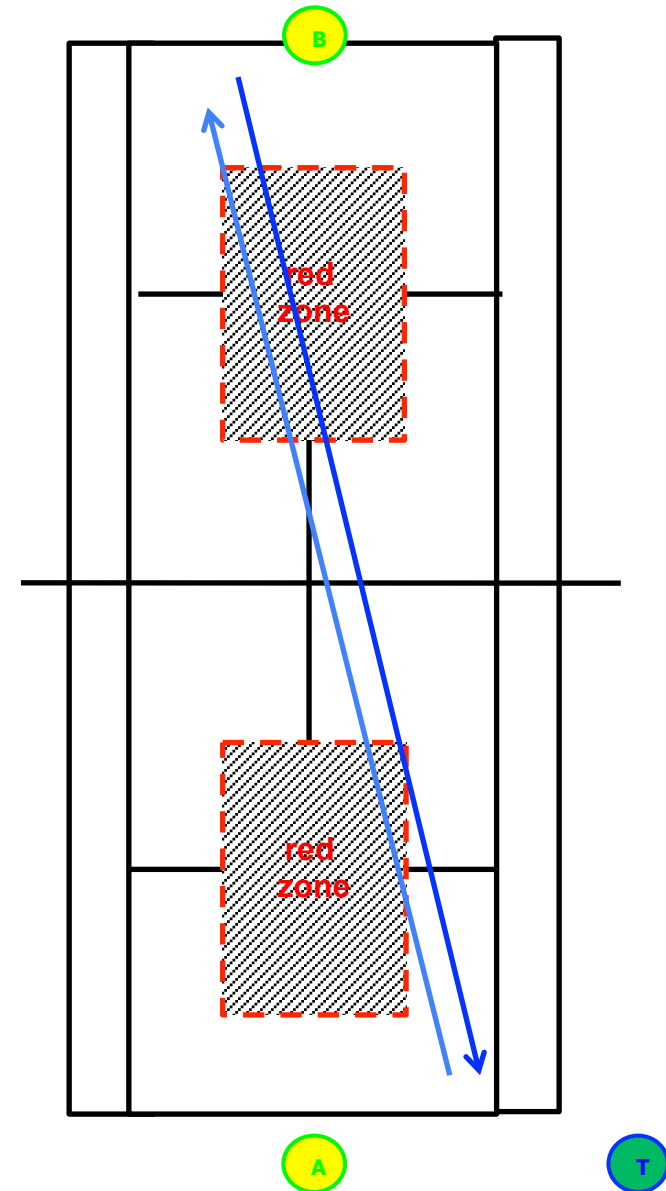
The red zone

Goal of the exercise:

- ✓ Placement out of the red zone

Execution:

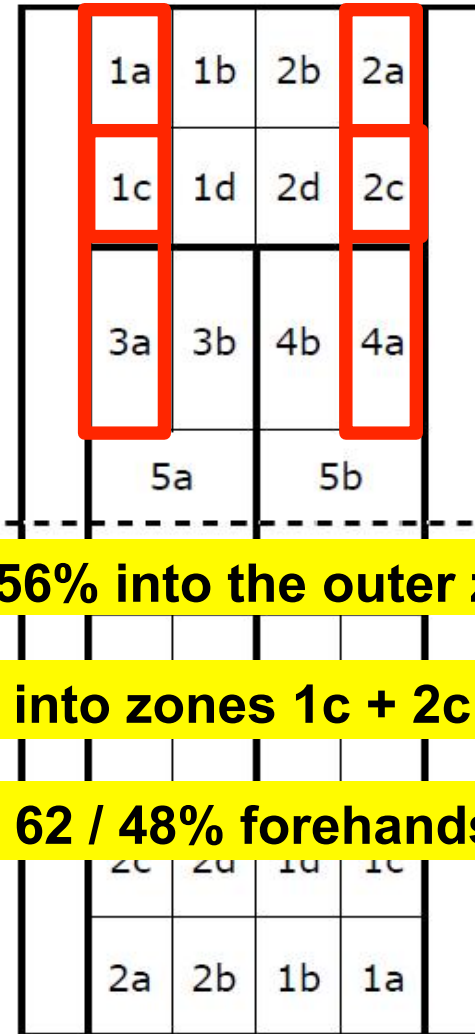
- ✓ Hit with each other
 - cross-cross
 - or other stroke combinations
- ✓ Play points against each other
 1. Red zone = player cannot win the point
 2. Red zone: player loses the point





**Winner-Loser-Difference:
Outer zones & c-zones**

**Placement
of the
Groundstrokes**



66 / 56% into the outer zones

35 / 28% into zones 1c + 2c (c-zones)

62 / 48% forehands



Placement of the groundstrokes

Goal of the exercise:

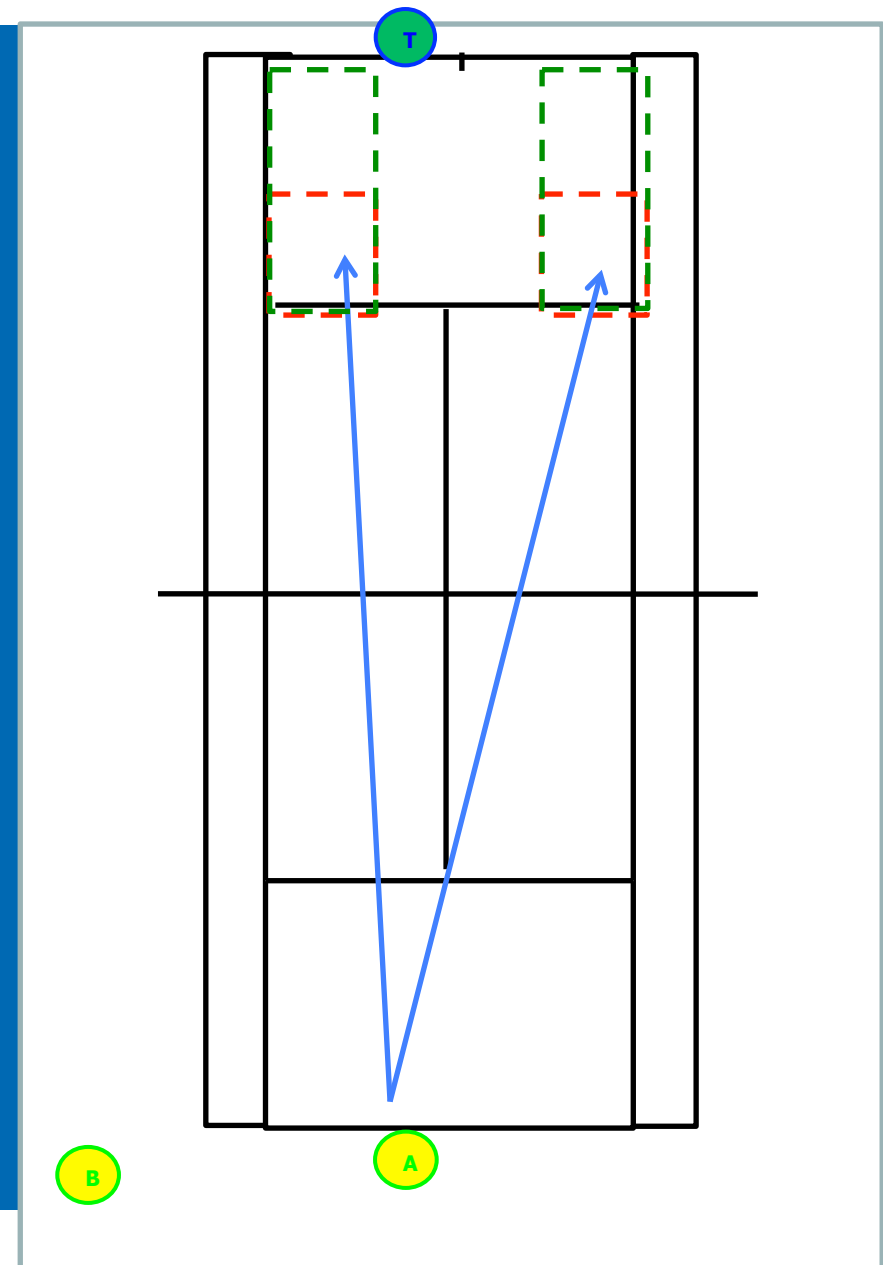
- ✓ Placement of the groundstrokes in certain zones

Execution:

- ✓ Mark outer zones and c-zones

1. Basket feeding drill:

- ✓ 6-10 Balls out of the basket
 - ✓ **Serve movement before every stroke**
- ✓ Hit into one of the zones
- ✓ **Use the forehand**
- ✓ Target hit = 1 Point
- ✓ (up to 20 Points)





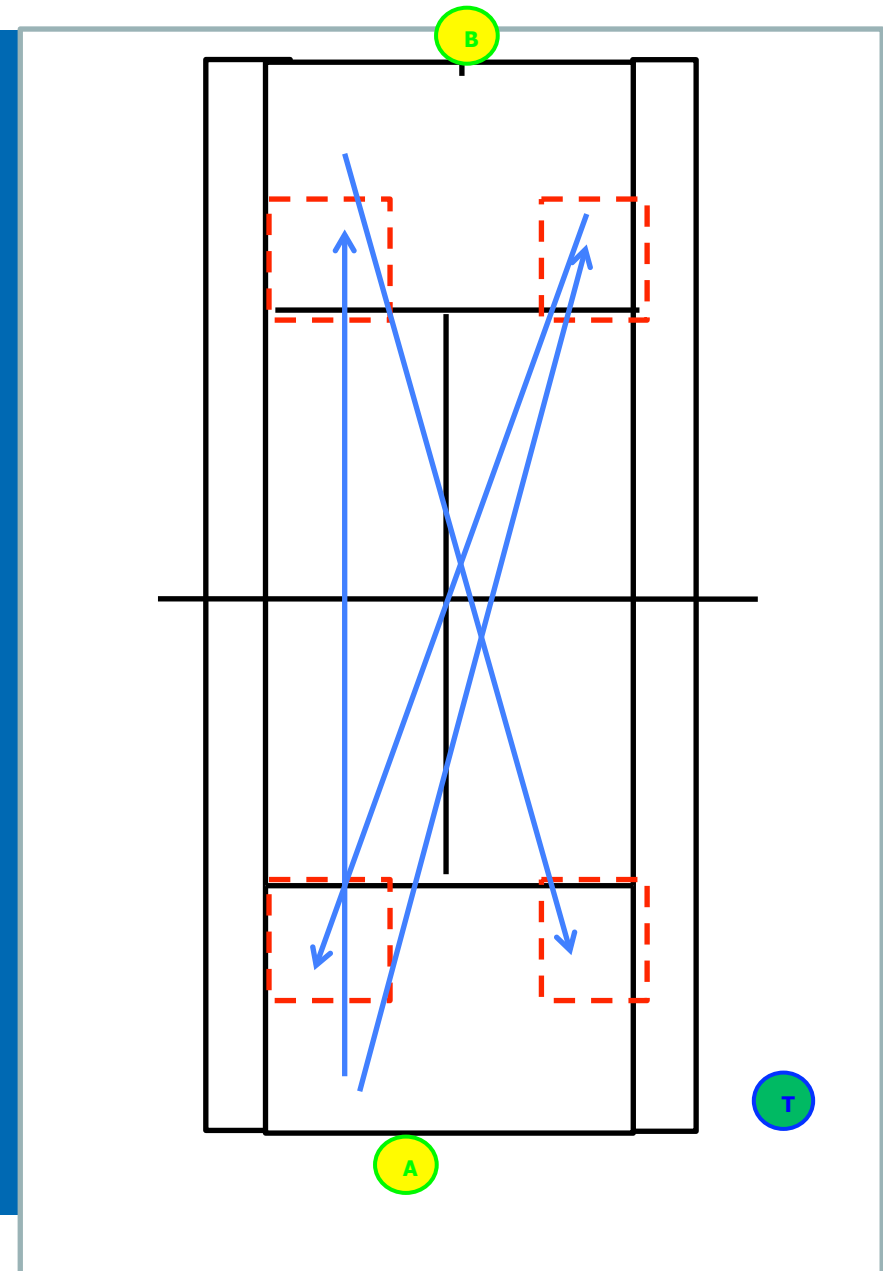
Placement of the groundstrokes

2. Playing with each other

- ✓ Cross-cross-cross-down the line
- ✓ Hit into one of the zones = 1 point
- ✓ Count as a team up to 20 or against each other up to 10

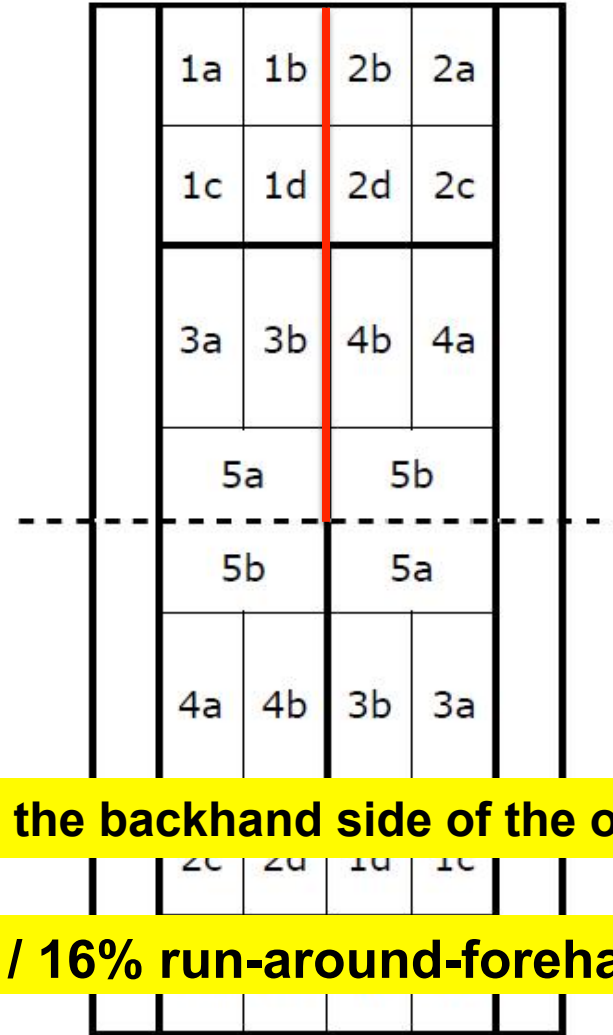
3. Points against each other:

- ✓ Serve - Return – Cross-duel
- ✓ Hit into the zone opens the court





Placement



61% to the backhand side of the opponent

37 / 16% run-around-forehands



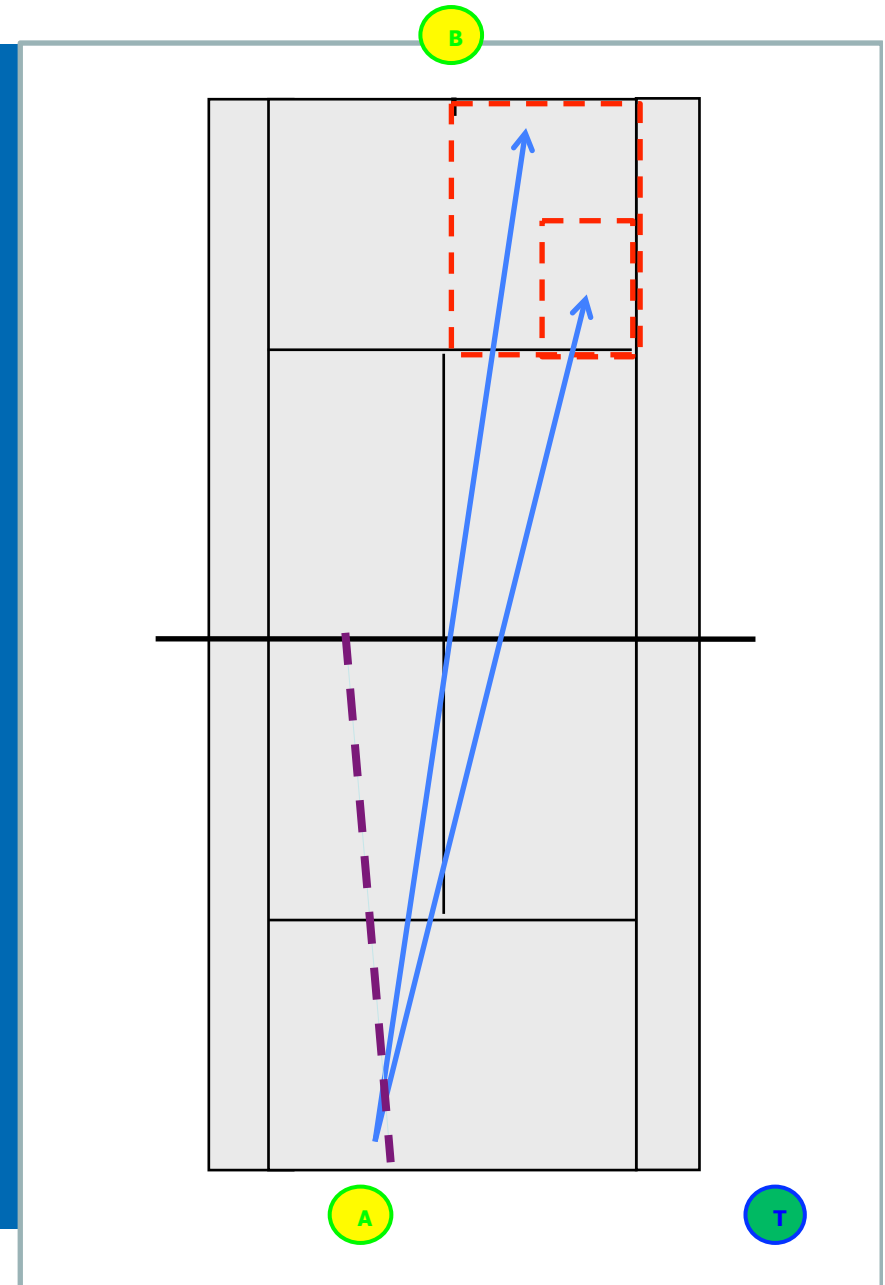
Use of the forehand

Goal of the exercise:

- ✓ Use the forehand more often, more offensive and more targeted

Execution:

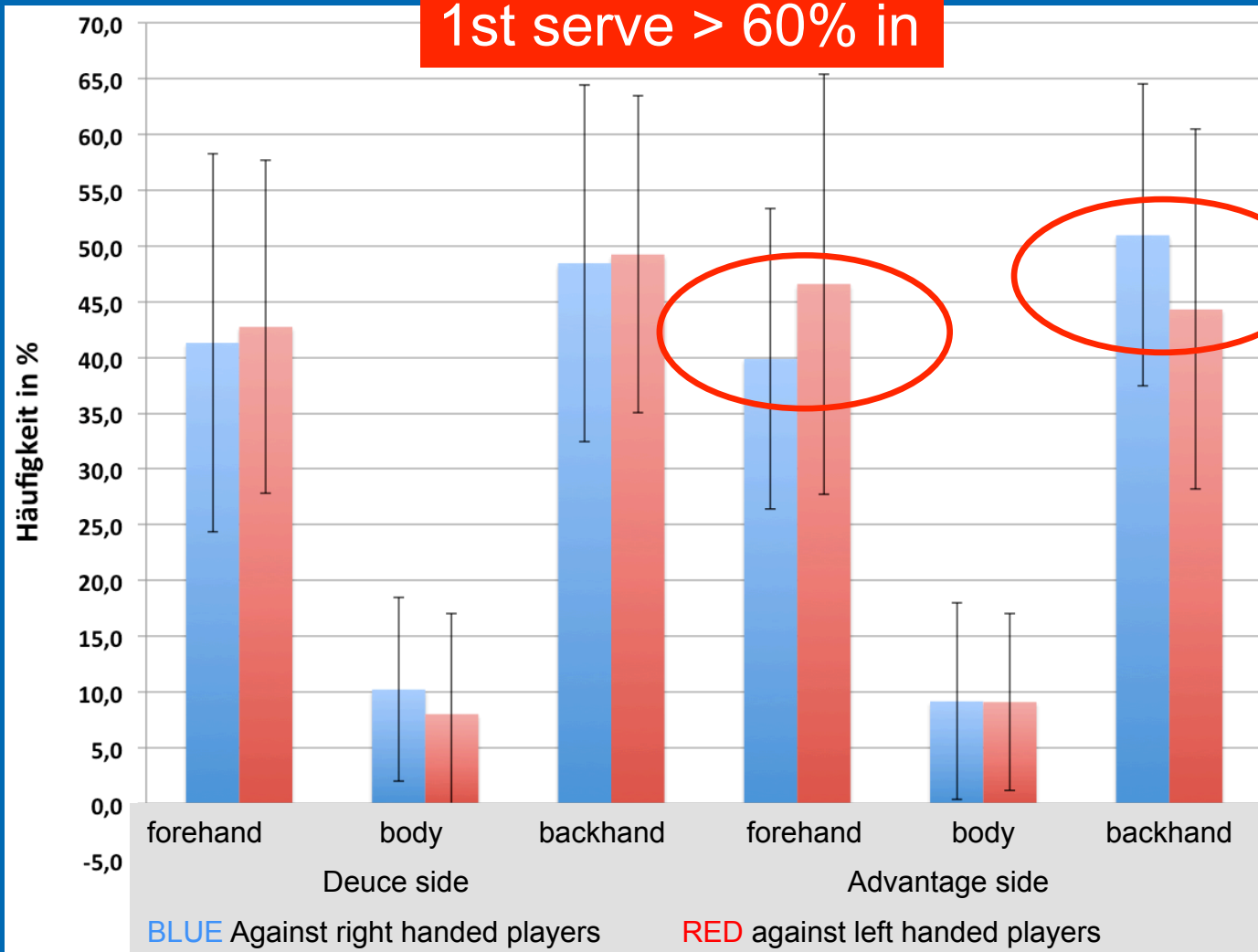
- ✓ Mark outer zones and c-zones
- ✓ Cover 3/4 of the court with the forehand
- ✓ **Serve movement before the rally**
- ✓ offensive forehand into marked zones
- ✓ Player B defends with deep Balls to the center
- ✓ Change tasks after 20 target hits





1st serve

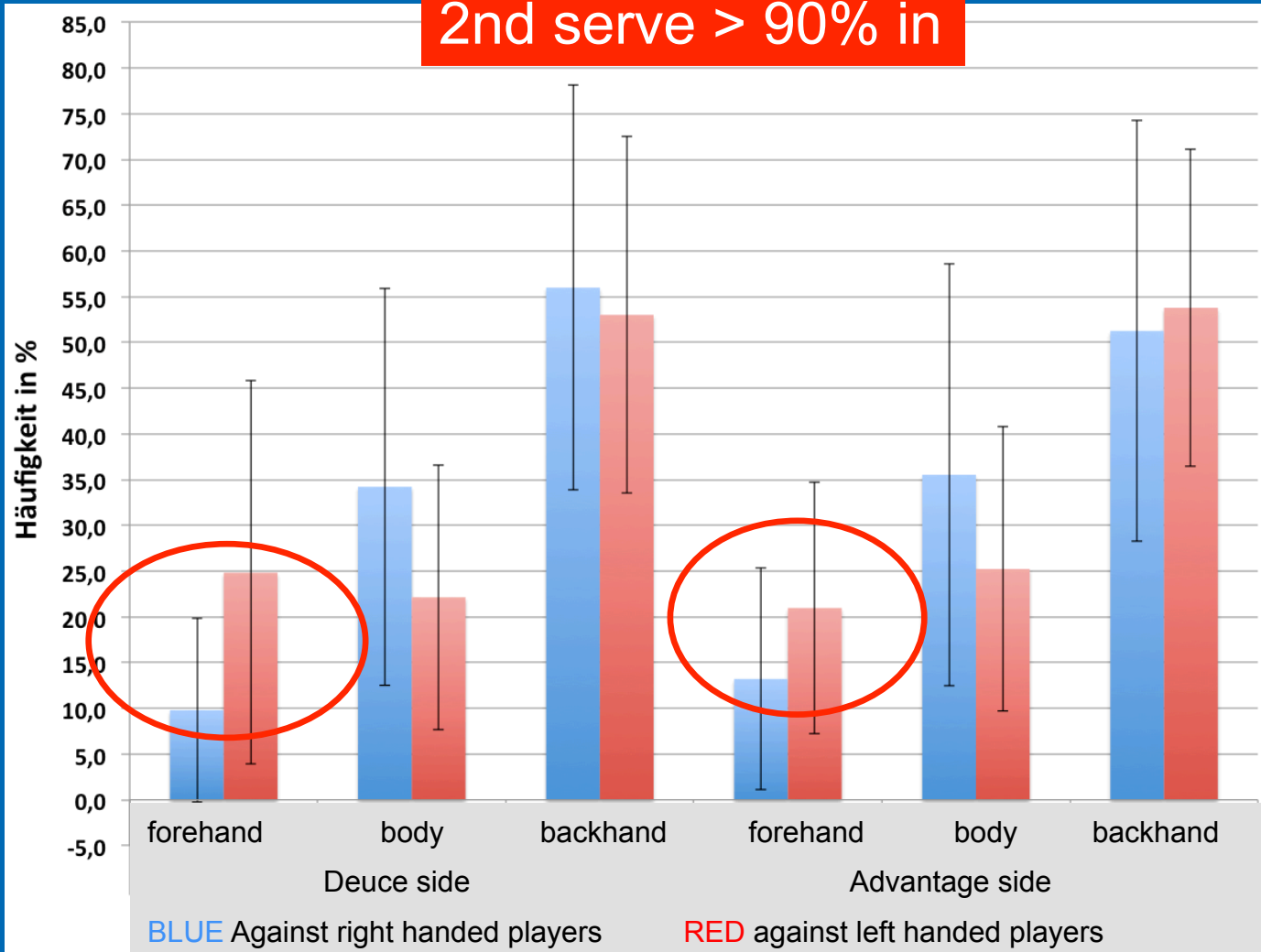
1st serve > 60% in





2nd serve

2nd serve > 90% in





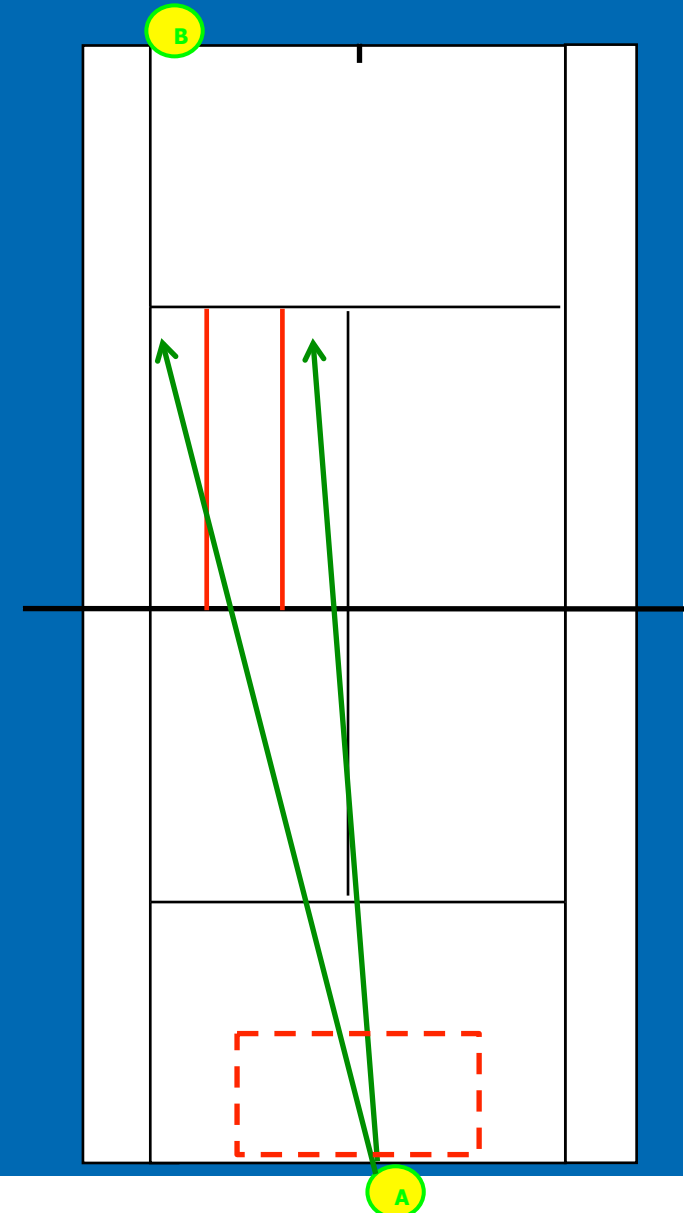
Serve- and Return (S&R)

Goal of the exercise:

- ✓ Systematic automation und optimization of S&R tactics and patterns

Execution:

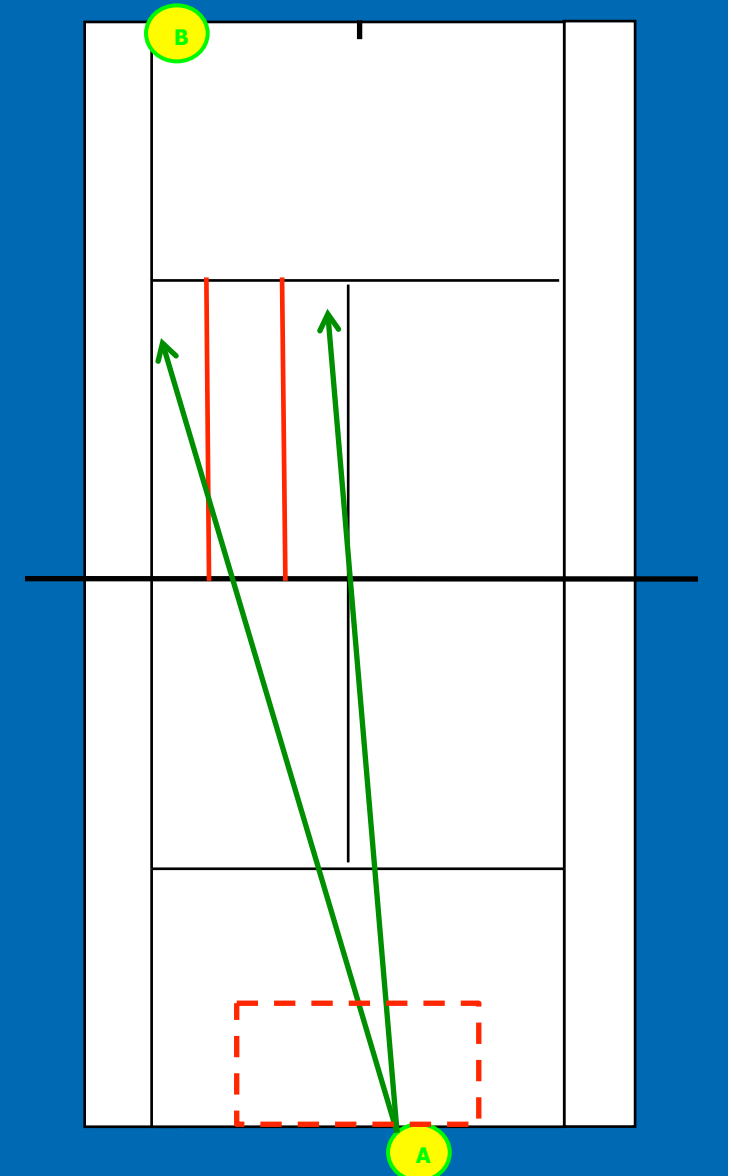
- ✓ 30-40 S&R (ca. 10-15 min) per player in each practice session
- ✓ Specific serve techniques
 - ✓ individual strength and weaknesses
- ✓ All directions
 - ✓ with an increased number of serves to the backhand
- ✓ All return options





Quality Control:

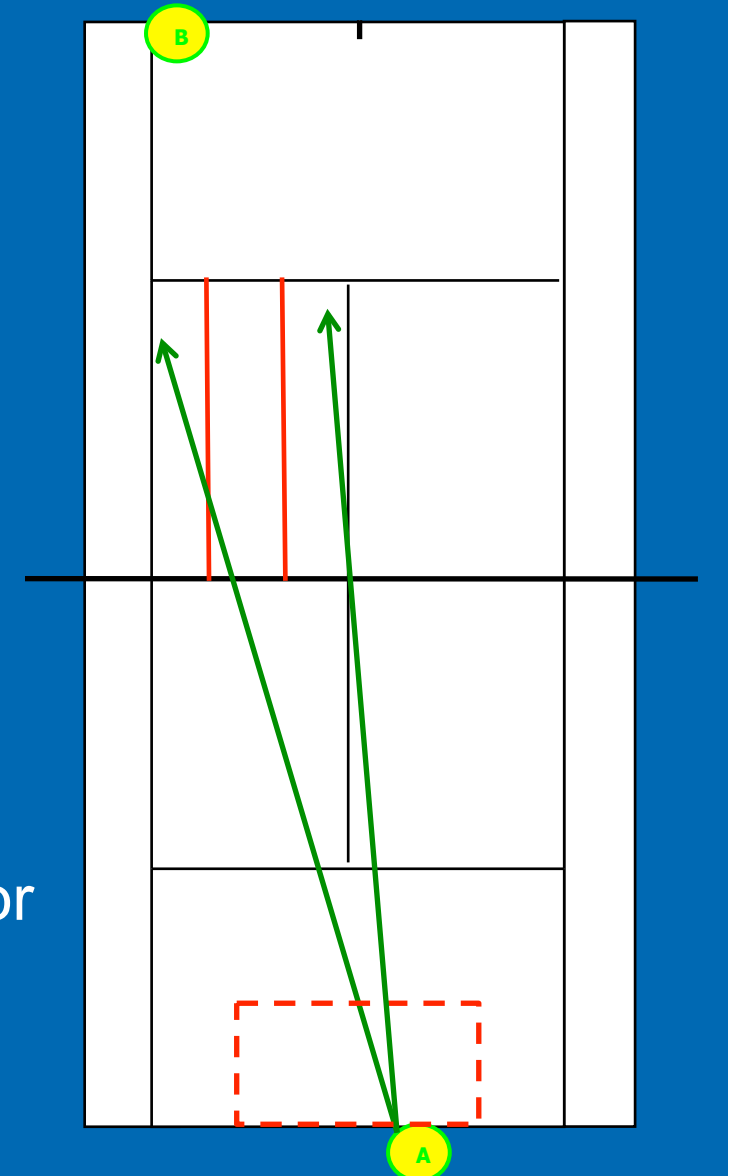
- ① Slice wide
 - 2nd bounce as far outside of the doubles alley as possible
 - Competition!
- ② Flat to the T
 - Hit the back wall/fence as high as possible
- ③ Kick wide
 - At the baseline min. shoulder high





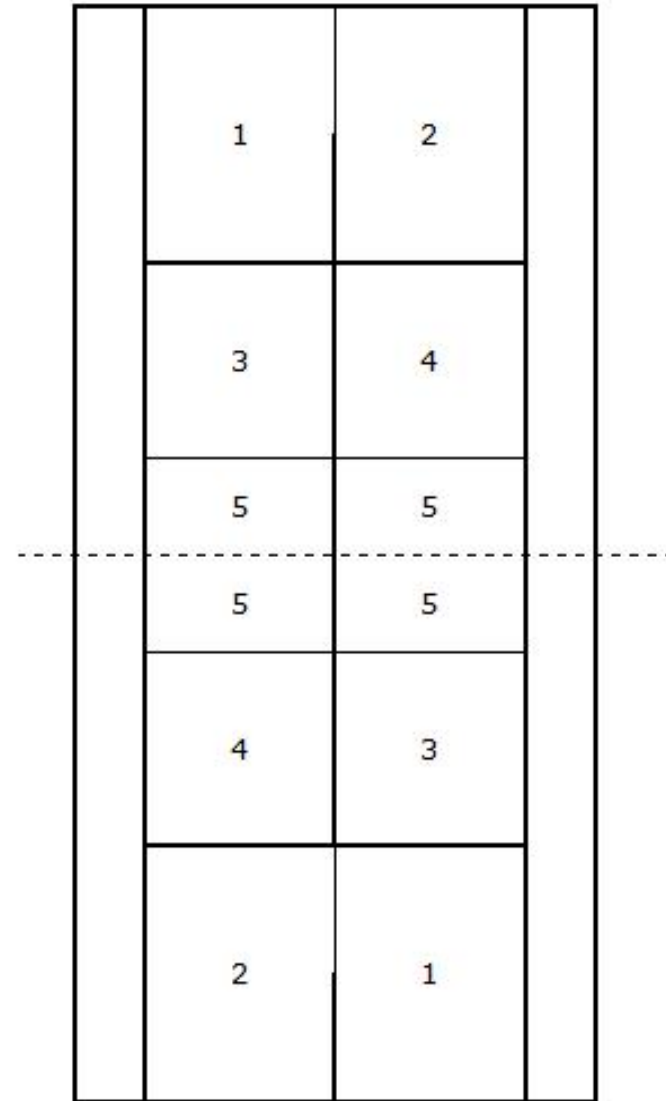
Quality Control:

- ④ Returns into target zones
 - Deep returns through the center
 - zones 1b / 2b
 - ⑤ Always hit the 3rd stroke
 - Best quality control for S&R
 - Strengthen the movement patterns
- Increase the S&R performance by practicing 30-45 mins. systematically for either 7 to 10 days daily or 4-6 weeks every second day





- Serve patterns -





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- **Serve patterns** -

Video



Top-3-Serve patterns (n = 3554)

Pattern	Frequency	W%	Pattern-Discription
Back-behind-V	207	69 %	serve T, same corner long
Small V	178	72 %	serve T, free corner long
Big V	265	66 %	serve wide, free corner long

- **Winners & Losers play the same patterns**
- **BUT winners play the patterns significantly more successful**
- **Patterns with run-around-forehands are significantly more successful**



Serve-Patterns

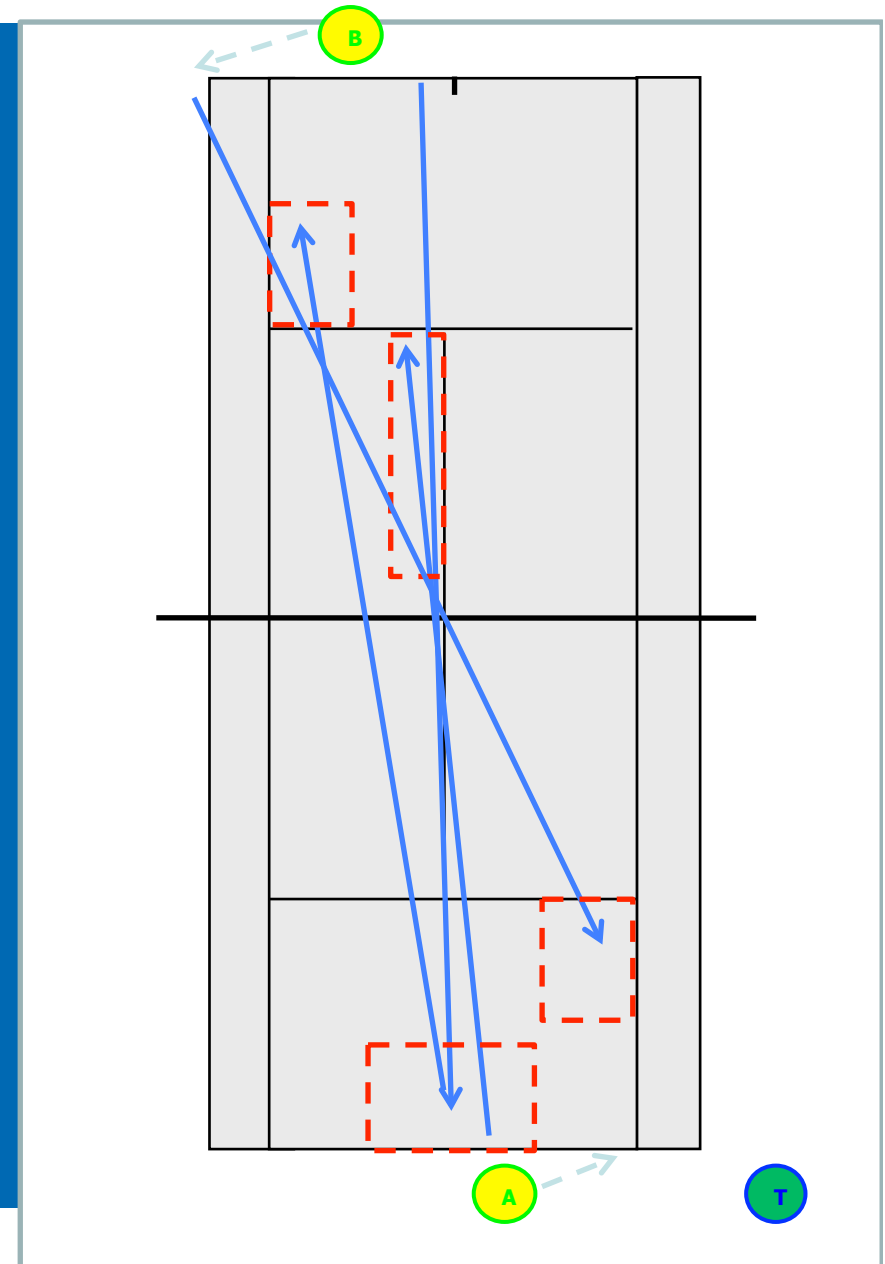
Pattern „Back-behind-V

Goal of the exercise:

- ✓ Practice and automate serve patterns

Execution:

- ✓ S&R into specific target zone (T)
- ✓ 3rd stroke into the same corner longer than the service line
- ✓ Returnplayer hits cross court
 - 3rd and 4th stroke into c-zone / outer zone





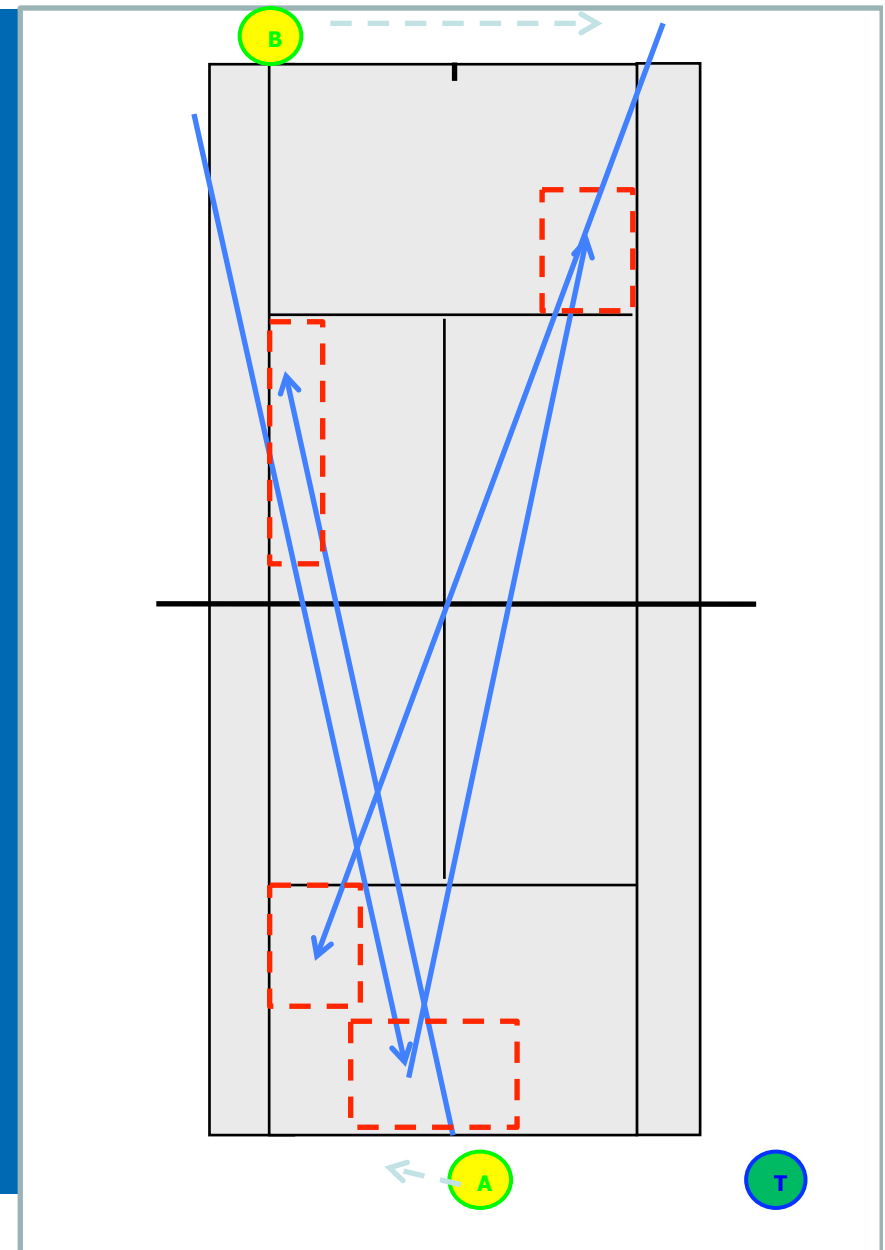
Serve-Patterns

Variations:

- ✓ From both sides
- ✓ Players change tasks
- ✓ Other Top patterns:
 - ✓ Small V (178, 72%)
 - ✓ Big V (265, 66%)

Clear goals for the 3rd stroke

- ✓ 90% in the court
- ✓ Few or no errors to the net
- ✓ Use the forehand
- ✓ Placement!





Conclusion

- ✓ There are different zones on a tennis court
→ Know them and use them for your advantage
- ✓ The game opening is the most crucial part of the game
→ Practice it!
- ✓ The 3rd stroke is very important for the advantage in the rallye
→ Practice it!
- ✓ Practice and automate serve patterns



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Thank you very much!!!