

The New Service Rule

Clarifications from the ITTF Rules Committee Chairman, Rudi Sporrer,
on rule 2.6.4, decided at the AGM 2003 in Paris

The Rule

2.6.4

From the start of service until it is struck, the ball shall be above the level of the playing surface and behind the server's end line, and it shall not be hidden from the receiver by any part of the body or clothing of the server or his doubles partner; **as soon as the ball has been projected, the server's free arm shall be removed from the space between the server's body and the net.**

“Where ?”

“The space between the server's body and the net” is the **imaginary vertical four-sided column** defined by the farthest parts of the **net posts** and the 2 parts of the server's trunk (= body except head legs and arms) being **farthest left** and **farthest right** relating to his end line (see **yellow** area of the attached diagram).

“When ?”

The **free arm** (= the arm connected to the free hand as in 2.5.6) has to be **removed** from the space described above at **the moment the ball leaves the free hand** and has to **remain outside** this space **until the ball is struck**.

