

Oscar Roitman



A stylized graphic of a table tennis table and ball. The table is represented by two thick blue horizontal bars connected by a thin white vertical line. Below the table, the words "TABLE" and "TENNIS" are written in large, bold, white capital letters, separated by the same thin white vertical line. Above the table, a white circle represents the ball, with a thin white curved line indicating its trajectory.

# **TABLE TENNIS**

## **A BREAKING METHOD**



OSCAR ROITMAN

# **TABLE TENNIS**

## **A Breaking Method**



EDITORIAL AUTORES DE ARGENTINA

Roitman, Oscar

Table Tennis : A Breaking Method / Oscar Roitman. - 1a ed. - Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires : Autores de Argentina, 2021.

Libro digital, EPUB

Archivo Digital: descarga y online

ISBN 978-987-87-1764-7

1. Deportes. I. Título.

CDD 796.346

EDITORIAL AUTORES DE ARGENTINA

[www.autoresdeargentina.com](http://www.autoresdeargentina.com)

[info@autoresdeargentina.com](mailto:info@autoresdeargentina.com)

Queda hecho el depósito que establece la LEY 11.723

Impreso en Argentina – *Printed in Argentina*

# Index

[COVER](#)

[INDEX](#)

[PROLOGUE](#)

[ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS](#)

[INTRODUCTION](#)

[The proposal](#)

[THE WAY](#)

[The player](#)

[The coach's life](#)

[INTRODUCTION TO TEACHING](#)

[The coach](#)

[Types of coach](#)

[What do players expect from a coach?](#)

[Clues to lead a training session](#)

[The coach's goal](#)

[DIDACTICS AND METHODOLOGY OF TEACHING](#)

[Didactics of teaching](#)

[How to teach?](#)

[Methodology of teaching](#)

[Behavior in the training sessions](#)

[Tactical Intelligence](#)

[The technique](#)

[BASIC TECHNICAL ELEMENTS AND SPORTS ELEMENTS](#)

[Basic technical elements](#)

[Equipment](#)

[Anticipation, Automation and Repetition](#)

[Initial position, balance, equilibrium and multi balls](#)

[OFF TRAINING](#)

[Advices during the game](#)

[Parent's role](#)

[What do you see when you see me? Videos](#)

[LUDIC, LEISURE AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES](#)

# PROLOGUE

After being related to table tennis from different roles such as a player, technician and leader for more than 50 years, I have the great honor as well as the responsibility to write this prologue for teacher Oscar Roitman's book. Before referring to the book itself I want to make some considerations about its author.

As few sportsmen Oscar Roitman is the appropriate synthesis of effort, intelligence and professionalism to the service of this sport. I had the opportunity to give him many tasks of responsibility, especially when I was the president of the Argentinian Table Tennis Federation. He fulfilled all the expectations regarding his job in relation to the institution as well as in other issues audited by the National Entity of Sport High Performance by the Sport Ministry of the Nation among others. Undoubtedly the author of this book has a lot to do with the development of table tennis in Argentina, leading the process related to the discovery of the Argentinean representatives in the Youth Olympic Games held in Buenos Aires and with the improvement of the Argentinean team players.

Oscar devotes the first pages to describe his initial step as a beginner table tennis player until he reached his best level in the national team or when he took part in international competitions such as the World Senior Championship held in 1993. In those pages the author shows nostalgia, excitement, pride and thankfulness to the sport that had marked his whole life.

The next pages, with different contents and experiences, are attractive from the human point of view and enlightening from the professional view. He presents his many and rich experiences as a table tennis technician and coach in our country as well as in other countries such as the USA or Spain.

The following chapters explain the author's knowledge, information and experiences obtained in those different roles.

Thus, the author goes from the very first steps of learning how to play table tennis until high sport performance, developing all the levels related to training, tactics and strategies as well as everything related to the appropriate elements. The author shows his pedagogical way of training and his authentic devotion to ethic principles and values about the sport and in relation to the effort leading to sport success.

It is worth to mention that the book exceeds the sport and it pays attention to the importance of the parents' role and their influence on the athletes' development.

In summary, teacher Oscar Roitman's book is an excellent vehicle to describe his relationship with table tennis as well as to show the great input he gives to the professional aspect of it, showing great passion and encouraging others to share it.

Nestor J. Tenca

ITTF Executive Vice president (2017....)

Lawyer

President of Argentinian table tennis Federation (1998-2002, 2006/2016). -

President of South American table tennis Confederacy (2011-2017). -

Member of the Olympic Argentinian Committee (2001-.....). -

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The most difficult part of writing this book was to overcome the emotion that every remembrance arose in me. I do not want to forget any person who was present in my life because they are a lot but, at the same time, very important. I will not exceed in mentioning all of them, I will try to find an equilibrium, and just mention the essential pillars, those who were always there, those who believed in my decisions and those who criticized me because, in that way, they helped me to improve.

By no doubt, the basic and fundamental foundation of my life is my family. My parents Mario and Aidana never questioned my vocation and supported all my decisions. I am so sorry my mother is not alive because she did not have the opportunity to enjoy all those aspects she cheerfully motivated in me and I had to go through but fortunately could achieve. My younger siblings Fernando and Alejandra helped me by playing table tennis enthusiastically. Both followed my steps as near as they could till high performance. And my eldest sister Gaby, when she was alive, was always very close to me, although in her own way.

I would also like to mention those who believed in my project and motivated me to be better. Nestor Tenca, whom I will mention several times in this book, for betting in my formation, always supporting my crazy ideas and, what is more, giving me his personal friendship. Antonio Lasen and Fernando Montero from Narón, Spain, Tim Titrud, the table



tennis family from Portland, Oregon, USA, Norman Veiga and all the table tennis family from Lugo, Spain.

I also want to mention my friends from life who supported me on each of my personal developments being happy with my successes and lending me a hand after my failures: Darío Gallardo, Mariano Greis, Sacha Barrera, Raúl Gómez, Pablo Bertani, Gabriel Feld.

Besides, the world table tennis family who helped me to build my present life: Alberto Pires and Carlos Palomo, my teachers in Mendoza, Gustavo, Pablo y Franco, David Soler from Spain, Tom Wetzels from Germany, Peter Teglas y Pisto from Hungary, Jerome Feneche from France, Fran Camargo and Marles Martín from Brazil and many, many more who influenced me positively to be a better coach and a better person.

All my students who, in one way or another, demanded my best efforts and thus, they became and become my motivation.

Federico Agüero helped me writing this book and Emilse Berlanga who designed its cover. I am very thankful to both of them.

And, last but not least, who is the sum of all the previous ideas, who believed and believes in me because she is happy with my successes and she supports me in my failures, because she is the most critical of my decisions and pushes me to improve, because she encourages me to go on learning, and because she is always with me: my life partner, my family, Gabriela.

# INTRODUCTION

Table tennis, better known as “ping pong”, is a highly popular game-sport because it can be practiced at anytime, anywhere, at a very low cost, it is excellent as an element of social integration since it is inclusive because it can be practiced by the thin, the obese, men and women among themselves, tall, short, people with different capacities, people of all ages and allow the integration of different age groups. But, as the game is highly popular - sport is a fact that it does not attract people to its usual practice. A handful of hundreds practice it in our country distributed in a few training places in each city or province. The same happens in Spain and increasingly in the rest of Europe, where it loses ground compared to other more popular sports. The exception is Asia, where it is a highly popular sport, especially in the world's leader, China, where table tennis is in excellent health with 27 million members and nearly 70 million people who practice it regularly.

It is clear that it is a sport that you like, since wherever you go and you comment that you are linked to table tennis, everyone is quick to say that they play or have played ping pong, in a garage, in a campsite, a parish, to the outdoors, in the schoolyard, wherever. They have all played, but they do not practice it.

So, you may wonder, what is the reason why people do not come to practice table tennis? I think there is never a single reason, the answer is always poly causal, but I am going to dare to launch a theory about one of the possible causes for

which I understand, it is not practiced regularly nor do people who like it join the federated structure. of this sport.

## **The proposal**

The project that I lay out here is from the pedagogical and methodological point of view.

Usually, a table tennis fan goes to a club or to an association to learn how to play the sport or to improve his/her pre-existing skills. There he/she meets a coach who proposes him/her a series of activities which in the short time are found tiresome and he/she decides to abandon.

Let me explain all this better. For example, in the case of young children, they go to a class and the coach explains to them quickly how to take a racket and they must go to train on the table immediately.

It is not always this way, but most often. As soon as he/she goes to the table he/she receives a concert of technical explanations about forehand and backhand drives, slices and so on. The only exercise is to "repeat", repeat and repeat until the technique comes up properly.

I agree that repetition is the base of automatism and part of the process of learning the technique, but it is not the only way. There are many other possibilities which are less boring, less dull or non-motivating. The mere repetition leads students to abandon quickly. Furthermore, some coaches, without considering the players' maturity process, want to prepare successful players in a very short time thus, taking a shortcut to achieve the target quickly. In the case of adults, it is practically the same. The difference is that, sometimes, adults complain about it and try to change the

activity according to their own will. Children never do that. This book tries to show something different. I am absolutely convinced that there is a possibility of learning in another way: having fun, doing a great variety of activities, giving real importance to the ludic aspect and connecting table tennis to the competitive aspect through different and specific games.

As table tennis has been my passion since very young and during that time I have built up a wealth of knowledge I would like to share with you through this project. The challenge is to present something different to get players out from their "comfort zone" that gives them confidence, which, at the beginning, may seem easy, but, in the long term, it is complicated. The challenge is also to be creative, to reinvent table tennis, to let you discover your own method, your own working philosophy that will be rewarding for all people related to table tennis. And, what is more, that ensures a long life in the sport to those who want to practice it regularly.

**THE WAY**

## **The player**

When I began playing table tennis in the early 80's, the training method that my coach applied was coherent with the methods applied at that time for almost every teaching process. And these were according to the historical moment we were living at. We must remember that democracy in Argentina was returning after a military government, a very strict and authoritative one, full of rules, where dialogue was impossible. The same happened in different areas and, sports were not the exception.

My coach, Alberto Pires, was very well organized. He numbered the tables orally (the numbers were not written on the tables). For example, he said: "table number one" and immediately we knew which table we should go to. The best players were supposed to go to table number one, those having a lower level should go to table number two, up to table number five as I remember. On table number one there were only two players regardless if there were 40 more players wanting to play. On the other tables, there were two or four players and we played "crossover" repeating the exercises he gave us or those previously learned and that we knew by heart, even its sequence: forehand drive cross, backhand drive cross, backhand push, a bit of mobility and few games. When the game began the best players used the tables and the beginners, like me, had to wait for our turn sitting till the best finished and gave us the opportunity to play.

The base of training was repetition. We had to exercise a hundred forehand drives without failing, then a hundred backhand drives in the same way. If we failed, we had to