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## **The Effect of Consistent and Varied Follow-Through Practice Schedules on Learning a Table Tennis Backhand**

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In table tennis the follow-through action after a shot is an important part of skill execution. In this experiment we aimed to extend literature around the contextual interference effect by investigating whether the way the follow-through is organised in practice affects learning of the backhand shot in table tennis. Thirty unskilled participants were allocated to a blocked practice, varied practice or control group and aimed backhand shots towards a target following ball projection from a machine. Each group completed these shots in a pre-test, a learning phase with follow-through manipulations, a post-test and a retention test. The varied practice group improved their shot accuracy from pre-test to post-test and from pre-test to retention test (both  $P < 0.01$ ), whereas neither the blocked practice nor the control group displayed any change in shot accuracy. Practising the follow-through in a varied fashion enhanced learning of the preceding shot compared with blocked practice or no follow-through instructions. This shows that the benefits of learning motor skills under conditions of high contextual interference also apply to how follow-through actions are organised. The findings are of value to coaches and suggest that instructions related to the follow-through action should be considered as well as the primary skill itself.