



# Cup of Joe

WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES?

## SPIN and PICKLEBALL

BY JOE DINOFFER

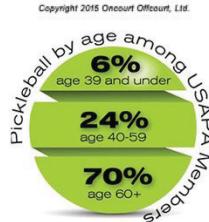
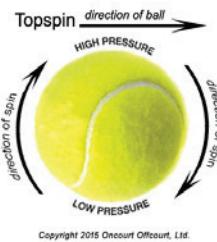
**B**all sports have many things in common. One of them is the effect of ball rotation on the sport. Baseball has curve balls and football has spirals. In bowling, basketball, soccer, and even golf, the effective use of spin has its connection to successful performance. And, in table tennis and tennis, although multiple ball spins are possible, topspin has the most impact.

What about pickleball? Compared to tennis, pickleballs do not spin very much. Why? Because the balls are much harder than tennis balls and there are no strings in pickleball paddles to grip, grab, and create spin.

### How does this impact the sport?

In tennis, topspin allows tennis players to hit harder and still keep balls landing in the court. In pickleball, we rely mainly on gravity to bring the ball back down into the court. What does this mean to pickleballers?

It means that the lack of topspin limits the amount of power you can hit on all shots (except high volleys and overheads). This lack of topspin alongside the “kitchen rule” makes control more important than power. This results in two things: First, it is a gender equalizer; and, second, it is a power neutralizer. These are selling points for pickleball because there is a wider range of players that each of us can enjoy playing with. And that, my pickleball friends, is a good tradeoff for spin! •



**Joe Dinoffer** is a master professional in the USPTA and PTR, has written seven tennis books and 22 DVDs, and has appeared on the Tennis Channel. His company [www.OncourtOffcourt.com](http://www.OncourtOffcourt.com) manufactures training aids for pickleball and tennis. He brings that experience and passion to pickleball in this regular column of Pickleball Magazine.