

# 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY CARD MAGIC



James Swain

James Swain's love affair with the pasteboards began in 1970 after seeing Derek Dingle perform at Rosoff's Restaurant in New York City. It continues to this day, and has produced two volumes of card magic (*Don't Blink*, *The Magic of James Swain* and *Miracles with Cards*) as well as dozens of routines in magic journals. *21st Century Card Magic* represents his latest and best volume, a book filled with practical, baffling card magic.

Along with dozens of amazing tricks (including two unpublished miracles from Bill Malone), many new sleights and concepts are presented for the first time. The Look Away Force is easily worth the price of the book, while The Miracle Deck will open many new doors. For the bold, Steve Bedwell's Control Variation and The Dummy Pass will certainly find a happy home.

For lovers of gambling routines, The Center Deal/The Muck, is a trick worthy of your consideration, while The Just Lucky Eight Card stack will establish you as a world-class card mechanic. If you don't mind a little practice, Poker Interchange Redux is Swain's latest installment of this classic trick.

The book's final entry, Larry Jennings' Famous Chop Cup Routine, has been the cornerstone of Swain's close-up act for nearly twenty-five years, and is presented here as a tribute to Mr. Jennings.

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Card Magic



JAMES SWAIN

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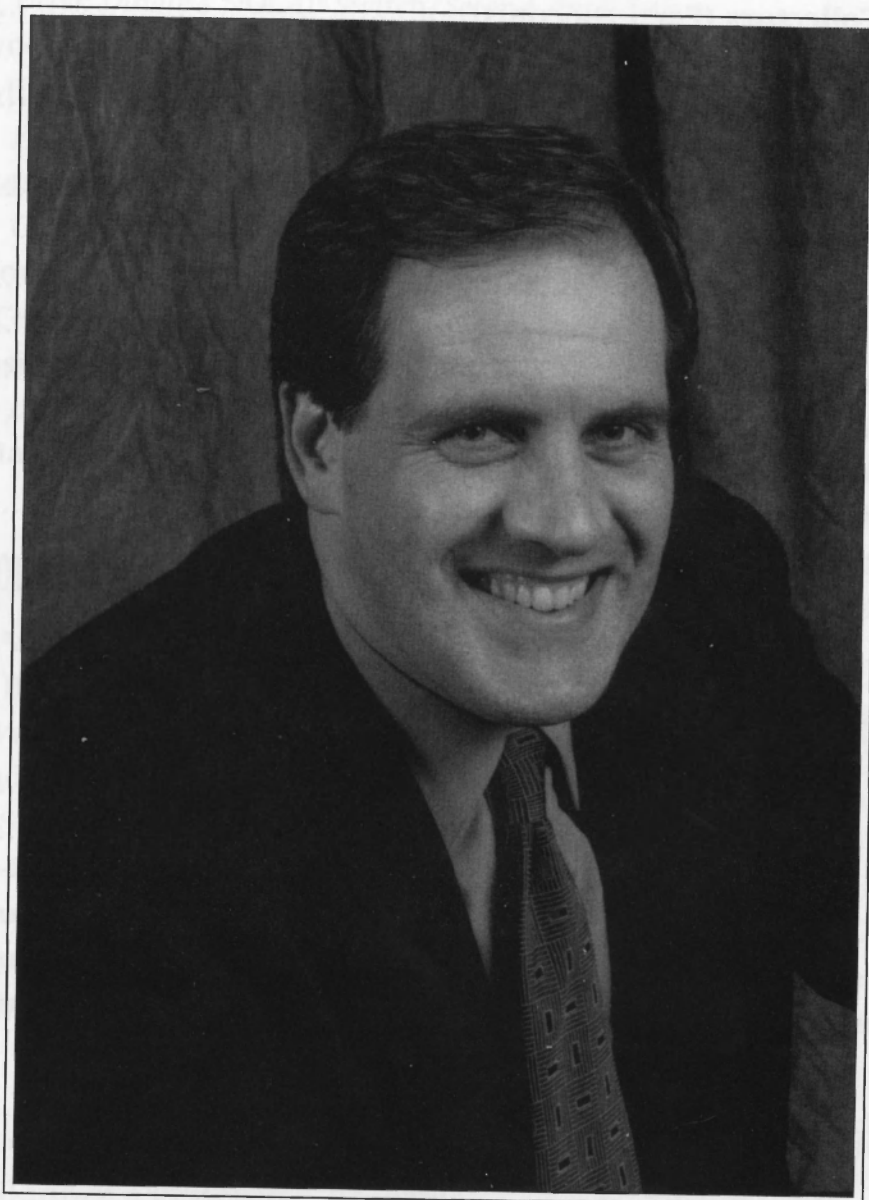
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## Preface

If you ask most magicians, they'll tell you that laymen hate tricks. They're boring, too long, and people are always forgetting their selection. Laymen would rather see a sponge bunny multiply in their hand or a dollar bill float mysteriously in the air. According to most magicians, this is real magic to laymen.

But why do laymen hate card tricks? The answer is simple. Because most magicians perform awful card magic. Most magicians don't understand the power that a deck of cards holds, nor the poetry. Putting a deck of cards in their hands is like giving a power tool to a caveman. This is why laymen hate card tricks.

This book is filled with card tricks that laymen like to watch. Each has a premise behind it, something that makes it special. There are several gambling routines. Why? Because most of the population gambles, and the general public is mesmerized by the notion that there are people who actually possess the skill to beat the house.

Recently, *The New York Times* reported that Australian Kerry Packer had been permanently banned from gambling at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Packer's multi-million dollar winnings at the Grand's blackjack tables had drastically cut into the casino's quarterly profits, which in turn caused the casino's stock to dip. All because Mr. Packer knew how to count cards.

I like to tell this story each time I take out a deck of cards and perform a few miracles. It gets people excited in a way that no other type of magic can.

Cards are power; learn to harness that power, and you'll be forever rewarded.

James Swain  
March 12, 1999  
Tampa, Florida

## Introduction

*By Bill Malone*

**W**hen I moved to Florida in 1987, the thing I missed most was my weekly sessions with Eddie Marlo. Every Saturday I would witness his endless creativity with a deck of cards. I would hurry home as fast as I could to practice the things I'd learned that day. The rest of the week was spent trying to perfect and understand these amazing card creations, all the while waiting for Saturday to arrive again. Finally the weekend arrived and it was time for me to discuss my thoughts with Eddie on these wonderful tricks, but before I could demonstrate he would start showing me brand new moves and effects. By the time I got home that evening I was delighted if I could remember even half of the ideas we'd discussed.

These sessions with Marlo were my most productive years in magic. How fortunate I was to have a master influence me week after week. When Eddie passed away so did one of the best periods of my life. I never imagined that I could ever be that motivated again. Boy, was I wrong! My get-togethers with Jim Swain brings back all those great memories of my days at the Chicago roundtable.

Here we are in 1999 and Jim is already on his third book. (This one even bigger than the others). Jim comes up with new groundbreaking routines and ideas more than anyone else I know. Everybody has a good idea now and then, but how many magicians have them all the time? Jim and his beautiful wife Laura have become wonderful friends over the years. We speak on the telephone about once a week and our typical conversation will go something like this:

Bill: "Hello?"

Jim: "It's me, Jim."

Bill: "Hey Jim, what's up?"

Jim: "I'm coming down your way and I have several new routines to show you."

Bill: "Are these for the new book?"

Jim: "No, but you're going to love them."

Sure enough, we get together and I sit in amazement as he performs these mysteries to perfection with each one being more clever than the last. After the first one I usually say, "Wow! That's great." He will show me the next one and I say, "Wow! That's great too." this goes on all evening, then when I get home I remember only half. (Sound familiar?) Thank God he's writing these books and not relying on me to



remember the material for him. Jim is one of the finest contributors to the art of card magic, and I am proud to write the introduction to his latest volume.

This book is a perfect way to start off the new century. I have tried many of these routines in front of real people and can attest to their greatness. This book has something for everyone, whether you are a beginner or an accomplished sleight of hand magician. The very first trick "Departure" is an unbelievably strong and mystifying routine that happens in the spectator's hands. This routine blows them away and can be performed by anyone with a minimum amount of skill. I tried "Tongue in Cheek" at the end of my set, after a deck switch before a large group and it received a huge round of applause. "Metamorphosis" finally gives a presentation to Re-Set that keeps the spectators interested all the way through. Be sure to look at "Birds of a Feather" incorporating what Alex Elmsley calls new magic with the pass. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Assembly is definitely one of my favorites along with both Bill Malone tricks (just kidding!). I also thoroughly enjoyed the chapter called "Tricks Of The Masters". "Count on It" by Paul Cummins is a real miracle for magicians and laymen alike.

There are so many routines in this book worth performing that I do not have time to mention them all. However, if you meet Jim, ask him to perform Center Deal Demo/The Muck. It will knock your socks (or nylons) off.

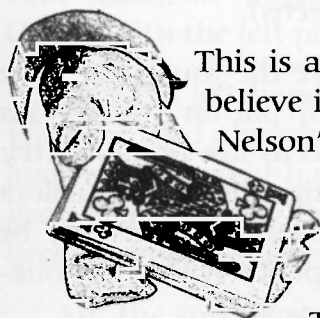
*It's a well known saying, if you can find one trick in a book that you can actually use than you've gotten your money's worth. Well, with this book, you will get your money's worth over and over again.*

Jim Swain gives me inspiration to become a better magician every time we meet. I have always admired his ability with a deck of cards but more importantly *I admire him. He is a first class act and I consider him one of my closest friends.*

Jim and Laura, thank you for sharing your wonderful magic. The only thing stronger is our friendship!

Bill Malone  
May 21, 1999

# Departure



This is a miracle that requires little sleight-of-hand skill. Structurally, I believe it is the finest card trick I've ever invented. It is based upon Earl Nelson's Between Your Points of Departure.

**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** The magician removes the four Queens from the pack and has a spectator select a card. The spectator is then invited to hold the Queens between her palms. The selection is then added to the Queens resting between the spectator's palms. Another spectator picks up the card box on the table and is asked to remove any cards which may be in the box. None are found, and the empty box is closed and placed atop the hands of the spectator holding the Queens and selected card. A magical gesture is made. One at a time, the Queens are dramatically removed from the spectator's hands. The selected card has vanished!

For a finale, the card box is opened and the selected card removed from within. All can be examined upon the trick's conclusion.

**PREPARATION:** Like Alex Elmsley's original Point of Departure upon which Earl Nelson's trick is based, this routine requires the use of a duplicate card. However, this extra card is never part of the deck, a drawback when using duplicates in a card performance. The duplicate I use is the Ace of Hearts. The back design of this card must match the deck which you are using.

You will also need an ungaffed card box with the cellophane wrapping still intact on the lower half of the box. Take the duplicate Ace of Hearts and slip it, facing the box, into the plastic behind the flap. Photo 1 clearly shows how this looks. The box can now be handled freely — it looks and feels normal and no edges show. The fact that there is a back on both sides of the box will go unnoticed, as a few trials will show.

**TO PERFORM:** Take out your deck and perform a few miracles. Leave the card box on the table with its flap open. Try to position the box so it is within arm's reach of a spectator sitting on your left.

When you are ready to perform Departure, openly cull through the deck and remove the four Queens while secretly culling the Ace of Hearts to the rear. (If you are

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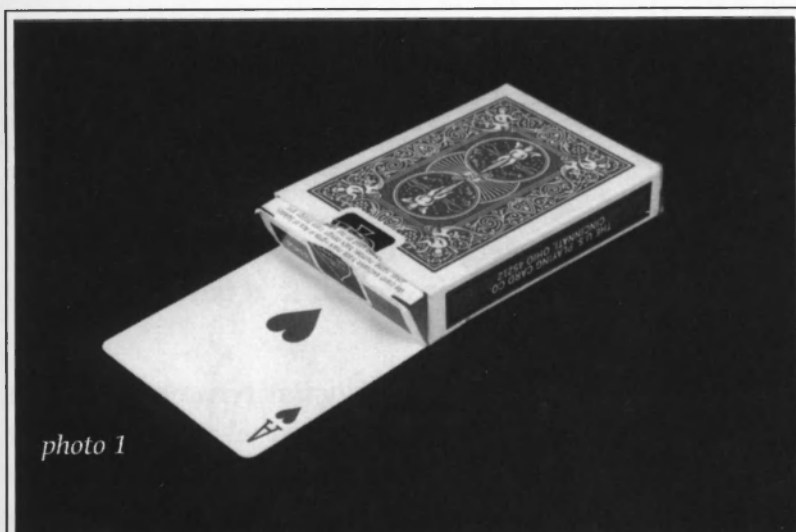


photo 1

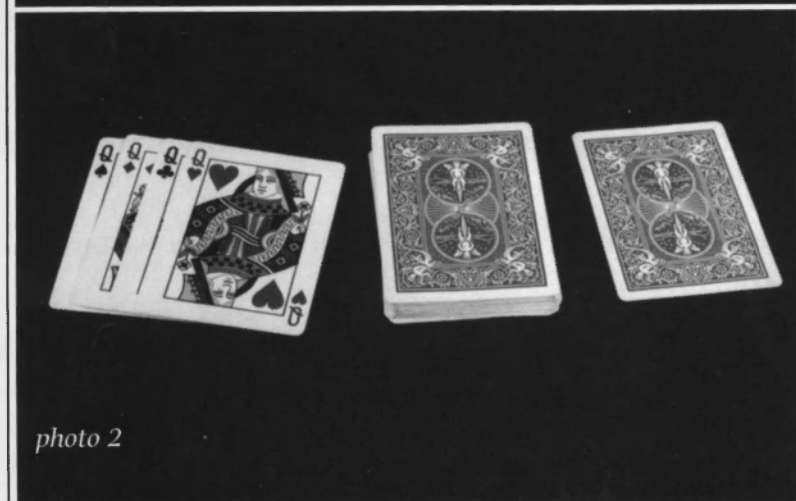


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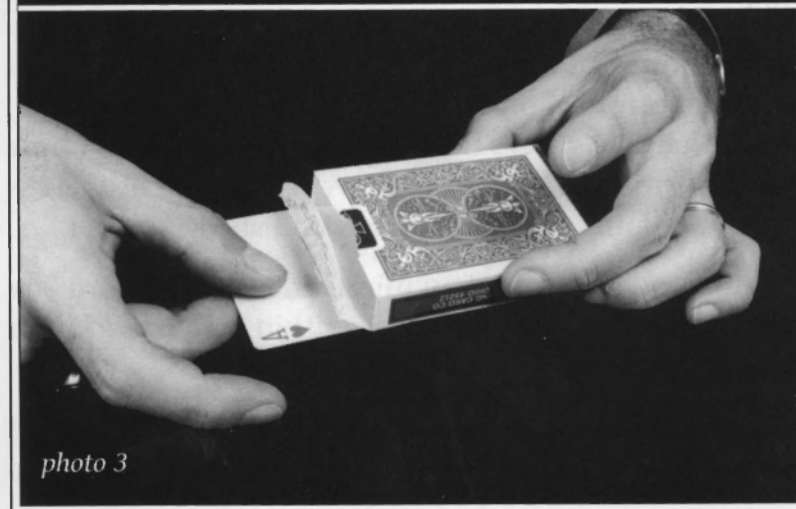


photo 3

uncomfortable culling a card, start by cutting the Ace of Hearts to the top of the deck and then openly remove the Queens).

Leave the four Queens in a face-up pile on the table. As the Queens are removed, try to arrange them so the colors are separated. This can be done openly without arousing suspicion.

"This is a magic trick with five cards," you begin. "We'll use four Queens and a card which you get to pick."

Force the Ace of Hearts to a person sitting on your right. I usually use Bruce Cervon's One-Handed Flip-Over Force. A slip force will work equally well. Or, do a brisk overhand shuffle, injogging the first card, then square the cards and catch a break below the injogged card. Perform a standard Riffle Force on the spectator.

Let everyone see the Ace of Hearts, then look at the card yourself. Smile and say, "Makes the trick a lot easier to do." Drop the Ace of hearts face down on your working surface approximately two feet to the left of

the Queens. Square the deck, and drop it between the selected card and the Queens on your working surface (see Photo 2).

Pick up the Queens and display them between your hands. 'A trick with five cards. Four Queens...' Square the Queens in the left hand, getting a break beneath the face Queen with the left pinky. "...and the card you selected, the Ace of Hearts."

Here the left hand turns palm down and scoops up the Ace of Hearts, aligning it with the card above your pinky break. Without pausing, turn the left hand palm up, and with the right hand take the two cards above your break and drop them onto the deck sitting on the table. Drop this double so that it hangs over the right side of the deck for approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch.

Ask the spectator who selected the Ace of Hearts to hold out their hand. Say, "You get the four Queens." Perform a brisk three as four face up Elmsley Count and place the Queen packet face down onto their hand. Have the spectator place their other hand on top of the Queens.

'And the Ace of Hearts. "

The right hand grasps the tabled deck in Biddle Grip and lifts it off the table. The left comes up from below and the right hand places the deck into the left in dealing position. Square the double onto the deck while secretly catching a left pinky break beneath it. Flip the double over, then thumb the card into the right hand, and ask the spectator to open their hands. Place the card in your hand onto the Queens. Have the spectator close their hands and say, "Five cards."

Ask the spectator sitting to your left to pick up the card box. Say, "Did I leave any inside?" This is a subtle way to have the spectator look inside the card box and see that it is empty.

Don't worry — the spectator will not notice the duplicate Ace of Hearts hidden behind the cellophane, as the box's flap will hide this card. Casually drop the deck into your jacket pocket.

Ask the spectator to close the card box and hand it to you. Take the card box and balance it atop the hands of the spectator holding the five(?) cards.

Make a magic gesture, then have the spectator crack their hands apart. Pull out a Queen, snap it, and drop it to the table. Repeat this two more times. For the fourth Queen, pull the card out slowly (the spectator holding the cards will think the cards are stuck together) and snap it, then allow it to float to the table.



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Remove the card box and have the spectator separate their hands. The Ace of Hearts is gone! This is a stunner — the spectator saw five cards, and now there are only four.

Now for the finale. Hold the card box with your left hand at the bottom, the half-moon cutout facing up. Pull out the flap with the right hand and reach inside with your right thumb, your right fingers going below the case. With your right middle finger, contact the back of the hidden Ace of Hearts. Pull it rapidly but smoothly out of the box (see Photo 3). The illusion of the card being extracted from the box is perfect — the card flies out so quickly that you cannot see that it comes from below the box (this move is based upon Matt Schulien's Card From the Box revelation, which is an invention of Ed Marlo's).

Drop the duplicate Ace of Hearts onto the table and take your bow. To clean up, reach into your jacket pocket, thumb the Ace of Hearts off the top of the deck, then remove the deck, leaving the Ace of Hearts behind.

**FINAL NOTES:** Credit goes to Phil Goldstein for originally combining two Alex Elmsley tricks, Point of Departure and Between Your Palms, and publishing them in Scattershot.

This routine also allows you to switch the deck at the routine's end. Here's how: have your cooler sitting in your left jacket pocket with the Ace of Hearts reversed on top. Place a small piece of stiff cardboard between this deck and your body. At the point in the routine where you drop the deck into your pocket, make sure to place this deck on the opposite side of the cardboard.

At the trick's conclusion, flip the four Queens face down on the table, and drop the Ace of Hearts face up on top of them. Scoop up these five cards and place your hand into your pocket. Drop this packet onto the deck you are switching out, then reach behind the cardboard and remove the cooler. Take the cooler out, "notice" the reversed Ace of Hearts on top, and casually flip it face down. Proceed with your next miracle.

Special thanks to Darwin Ortiz for helping me choreograph this routine.



# Tongue in Cheek



This is a terrific routine to use as a follow-up for the proceeding trick. It is a real mind-blower and is very funny. It is based upon a routine which Canadian magician David Ben described to me many years ago. David Ben attributed the original routine to Michael Close and Harry Riser.

**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** the deck is shuffled and spread face up across the table, letting everyone see the mixed condition of the cards. The cards are scooped up, turned face down, and two are selected and returned to different spots in the pack. The magician then explains that he will mix the deck four different ways, and that each mixing will accomplish a different task. First the cards are given a cut. The magician says that this has separated the reds and blacks. The cards are then given a fancy waterfall shuffle. This, the magician explains, separates the suits. An overhand shuffle is given: this puts the cards in perfect order. The last shuffle is done by the spectator (!). This, the magician says with a smile, has put the cards back in random order. After the groaning has subsided, the magician corrects himself. This last shuffle has moved two cards in the pack — the first spectator's selection has actually switched places with the second spectator's selection. Sensing the audience's disbelief, the magician turns the deck face up and spreads it across the table. The deck is in perfect order except for two cards — the juxtaposed selections!

**PREPARATION:** You will need a prearranged deck in perfect order. For the sake of this explanation, arrange the cards as follows, from the top down: Ace - King of Hearts, Ace - King of Clubs, King - Ace of Diamonds, King - Ace of Spades. Give this deck six out faro shuffles (or two reverse faro shuffles) and put it in your jacket pocket to be switched. You will also need a deck with a matching back design.

**TO PERFORM:** At an appropriate point in your performance, ring in the prearranged deck. Give it a casual false cut or two, or if you know one, an in-the-hands false shuffle (see NOTES). Turn the deck face up and ribbon-spread it cross your working surface (see Photo 1). Although the deck is in a prearranged order, no one will notice this. Scoop up the deck and flip it face down.

You will need two spectators to assist you. For sake of explanation, we'll call them

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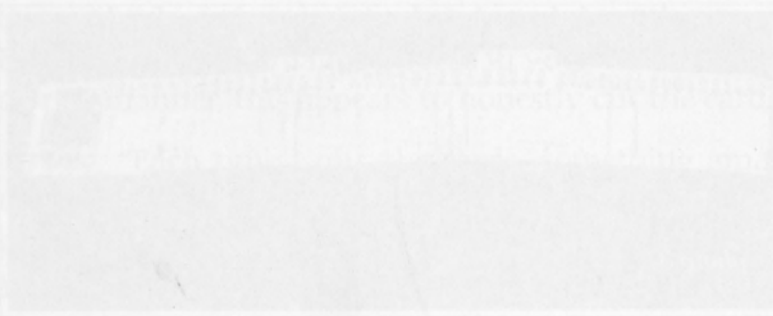
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and Mary's selection halfway from the spread — they will be resting in each other's spots in the deck — and let everyone see that you've lived up to your claims (see Photo 3).

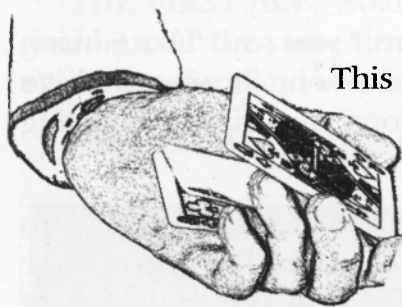
**FINAL NOTES:** The presentation which I use closely follows that of what was described to me as Michael Close's. My contributions to this routine have been to make the selection process a little fairer, and eliminate two faro shuffles. I have also found that the addition of the two other false shuffles greatly enhances the comical element of the routine.

This is one of the few cards tricks which you can play for laughs and still pull off a miracle.

A number of excellent in-the-hands false shuffles can be found in Roberto Giobbi's *Card College* series, as well as in *The Expert at the Card Table*.



# Metamorphosis



This is my handling of Paul Harris's Re-Set. It is my favorite routine in this book and one that I perform frequently. It is not difficult to do and all the moves are angle-proof. Best of all, it plays for any audience — children or adults — with equally satisfying results.

A brief history of how this routine came into being. I learned Paul Harris's original routine back in 1978, and came up with my own handling a short while later. I showed this handling to Tony Spina, owner of Lou Tannen's magic store in New York. Tony wanted to publish the routine in *The New Stars of Magic* with one condition: I had to clean up the ending.

Spina's stipulation proved far more challenging than I'd ever imagined, and I spent the next twenty years searching for a method. What I discovered was that Re-set is a great routine with a serious flaw — the ending. For readers not familiar with the trick, the magician shows four Aces and four Jacks and places the Jacks on the table. One at a time, the Aces magically turn into the Jacks. For a finale, the Jacks instantly turn back into Aces, and the Jacks are shown to be in the pile on the table. Needless to say, how you show the Jacks on the table at the end is quite a challenge, since your audience is burning those cards when you pick them up. Many solutions have been published over the years, all requiring either palming, a Vernon transfer move, or a fishy looking count.

In 1998, I hit upon a solution, one which I believed finally did the trick justice. I began to perform the routine regularly and came to another startling conclusion. Laymen didn't like Re-set nearly as much as magicians! So what if the Aces and Jacks switched places? No one cared! Re-set was a trick desperately looking for a plot.

The following presentation, I humbly believe, gives Re-Set real meaning. It also makes laymen happy. I hope you enjoy it.

**TO PERFORM:** Openly remove the four Aces and four Queens from the deck and place the rest of the cards aside. They will not be used again. You will also need the card box, which should be placed with its flap open to your right on the working surface.

The half moon side of the box should be facing up.

Arrange the Aces in the following order, from the face: Ace of Hearts, Ace of Spades, Ace of Clubs, Ace of Diamonds. Then arrange the Queens so they are alternating Red, Black, Red, Black. Pick up the Aces with the left hand and the Queens with the right. Fan the two face-up packets so everyone can see you are working with just eight cards.

"People often ask me if I know how to perform big illusions," you say. "Like Sawing A Woman in Two, or The Vanishing Elephant. Well, I do know one illusion, and it's called Metamorphosis. It's been performed by many famous magicians, including Harry Houdini and Siegfried and Roy. Here's my variation."

Secretly insert the left pinky between the Ace of Diamonds and Ace of Clubs. Also insert your left third finger between the Ace of Clubs and Ace of Spades. This is done while the Aces are still spread. By keeping your left thumb pressed firmly on the face of the spread, no breaks will not be visible from the front. Drop the Queen packet onto the Aces and square all the cards with the right hand from above. In the act of squaring, pick up both breaks with the right thumb from above. Hold the eight card packet in Biddle Grip with the right hand.

"The four Aces will play the part of the magicians, while the four Queens will act as the assistants."

Peel the Queens into the left hand as follows: peel the first Queen into the left palm, and as you bring the right hand packet over to peel another card, secretly drop both Aces onto this card. With the left pinky, maintain the break between the two Aces. Without pause, peel the second Queen into the left hand. (Spot check: the left hand holds four cards, a Queen at the face and a Queen at the rear, with two Aces in the center and your left pinky holding a break between the Aces). Peel a third Queen onto the left hand packet. Peel the fourth Queen onto the left hand packet, and as you do so, steal all three cards above your break beneath the right hand's cards. This will leave three cards in the left hand (from the face: Queen, Ace of Diamonds, Queen) and five cards in the right hand (from the face: Ace of Hearts, Ace of Spades, Queen, Queen, Ace of Clubs).

Drop the cards in your right hand face up onto your working surface. With your right hand pick up the card case, and pull back the flap with the right forefinger. Place the "Queens" face up into the box. The face of the packet is against the half-moon. Close the box and drop it to your table, the half-moon side facing up.

"The Queens are placed in a box," you say. "Now for the magic."

Pick up the face-up Ace packet and perform an Elmsley Count. Four Aces will show.



Flip the packet face down and openly take the Ace of Hearts from the bottom with the right hand. Say, "One at a time, the magicians will change places with the assistants in the box."

**THE FIRST ACE:** Holding the Ace of Hearts in your right hand, tap it against the card box. At the same time, secretly push the top card of the packet in your left hand over a fraction, and obtain a left pinky break beneath it.

Drop the Ace of Hearts onto the packet and square the cards above your pinky



break. Magically click your fingers, then perform Frank Garcia's Pirouette Double Lift as follows. With the right hand, lift the two cards above your break and move them an inch to the right so they protrude off the right side of the packet. Keep the left thumb on the back of the double at the exact center. The left middle finger is positioned directly beneath the thumb and acts as your pivot point. Place your right forefinger

against the upper left corner of the double and spin the double in a clockwise direction (see Photo 1). The double does a 180 degree turn, then is flipped face up onto the packet. Catch a heel break beneath this card. This is the familiar Altman Trap. Pause for a few seconds, then turn the double face down. Deal the top card to the table.

**THE SECOND ACE:** Push the top card of the packet to the left with the left thumb. With the right fingers, grasp the three bottom cards (which should be in alignment) and pull them out to the right, then flip them onto top card in your left hand. The Ace of Clubs will show. Thumb this Ace into the right hand, exposing the Ace of Spades beneath it. Turn the Ace of Clubs face down with the right hand and insert it beneath the Ace of Spades from behind, being careful not to expose the face-up Queen hidden beneath it. The action is similar to the familiar Tilt move. Say, "The Ace of Spades is next. To make it harder, I'll leave this Ace face up."

The right hand grasps the packet in Biddle Grip. Pinch the packet with the left fingers, and draw the face-up Ace of Spades and the bottom card into the left hand,





leaving a double in the right hand. Pause, then drop the double in your right hand onto the face-up Ace of Spades.

Click your right fingers, then grasp the packet with the right hand in Biddle Grip. With the left fingers draw out the top and bottom cards, leaving a double in the right hand (see Photo 2). The face-up Ace has turned into a Queen! Place the

double onto the cards in your left hand and perform the Pirouette flourish, then flip the double face down. Deal the top card onto the card on the table.

**THE THIRD AND FOURTH ACES:** Buckle the bottom card of the packet. Perform a double turnover, exposing the Ace of Clubs. Say, "This Ace will go next." Turn the double face down and take the top card into your right hand. Tap this card against the card box, then tap it against the double in the left hand. Grasp the double with the right fingers, holding the two cards by their right long side. Flip the double face up into the waiting left hand, then turn over the single card in the right hand. Two Queens will show — the remaining two Aces(!) are gone.

**THE QUEENS TURN BACK TO ACES:** The right hand holds a single Queen, the left a double card (a Queen at the face followed by the Ace of Clubs). Place the Queen onto the double, spread to the right. Hold the cards in place with the left thumb, then grasp the spread with the right hand, thumb on top, fingers below. With the left hand pick up the two face-down cards on the table and flip the three cards in the right hand face down onto these cards. Click your fingers over the packet and say, "But like most good things, the trick only lasts a little while."

Flip the packet face up and perform a standard Elmsley Count. The Queens have instantly turned back to Aces!

**THE CLEAN-UP:** Hold the packet face-up in the left hand. With the right hand, pick up the card box, grasping the box at its non-flap end. Secretly buckle the bottom two cards in the left hand and obtain a pronounced pinky break above the bottom two cards (the Queens). With the left forefinger, push the packet deep into the hand while continuing to hold your break. This will free up the left first and second fingers and the



left thumb. The right hand brings the box over to the left hand, and the left forefinger pops open the box. The left hand does not move while this happens. Remember, bring the box to the hand.

Slip the left forefinger and thumb into the box and pinch the three cards resting within. Pull these three cards out about an inch, then change your grip, and grasp the cards by the sides and pull them cleanly from the box (see Photo 3, exposed view). As these cards come out of the box, they should be elevated in the left hand, and two to three inches away from the Ace packet being held deep in your left hand (see Photo 4, exposed view).

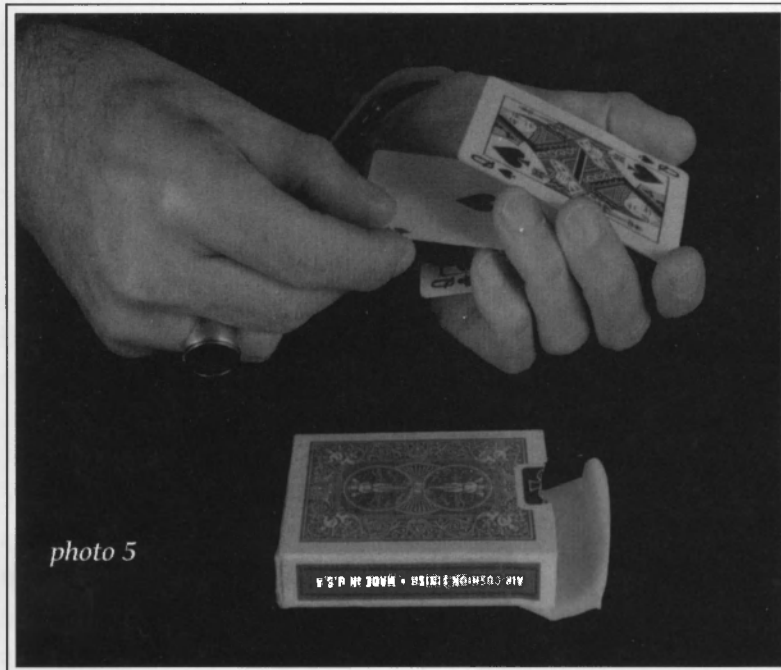
With the right hand, take the empty card box and toss it to your working surface. As this happens, begin to close the two packets in your left hand, leaving about an inch

between the upper Queen and lower Ace packet. The tossing of the box is excellent misdirection and will more than cover this.

With the right hand, pinch the Aces above the break at their inner end. See Photo 5 for an exposed view of this action. Withdraw the three Aces and toss them in the same manner in which you tossed the card box (the actions must be identical!). As the three Aces hit the table, allow the cards in your left hand to coalesce.

Grasp the Queens in the right hand in Biddle Grip. This packet consists of five cards.

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From the face, they are a Queen, followed by the Ace of Diamonds, followed by the other three Queens. Hold the packet as if to do a pressure fan. Fan the packet, pulling out three single cards with the left hand while holding the last two as one (see Photo 6). Four Queens will show. (This is Ken Krenzels' Pressure Fan Hideout). In one continuing action, drop the Queens onto the Ace packet on the table, starting with the double card and followed by the three single cards.

With the right hand, spread the eight card packet from right to left, displaying four Queens followed by the four Aces. The Ace of Diamonds (the Ace hidden by the double) will mesh invisibly with the Ace of Hearts....Say, "And that's Metamorphosis!"

**FINAL NOTES:** Paul Harris's original version of Re-set can be found in *SuperMagic*, as well as the recent trilogy of Harris material published by A-1 Multimedia.

The packet switch at the end bears many similarities to J.K. Hartman's "Covered Cop Transfer" (page 66-67) in *Card Craft*.



# Icebreaker



One of the best books to come out in the past ten years is Darwin Ortiz's *Strong Magic*. Reading it from cover to cover can only make you a better magician in the eyes of laymen, the only audiences which really matter.

One of Darwin's essays in *Strong Magic* deals with how important introductions are for magicians. Darwin stresses the need for audiences to be told that a performer is good before he ever does a trick. As we all know, there are lots of lousy magicians in the world, and it is Darwin's contention that every performer needs to establish that he is not one of them.

However, what happens when an introduction is not convenient, and the performer needs to establish that he's a miracle worker and not some clown who took up conjuring a few hours ago? There are many laymen who do not hold magicians in high esteem. Icebreaker was developed to win these particular people over.

**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** A card is selected, returned and lost in the pack. The magician states that he will need two chances to find the selected card. Two cards are taken off the top and shown. Neither is the spectator's card. The magician places one of these cards between the spectator's palms, then rubs the second card against the spectator's cupped hands. The second card becomes the card the spectator is holding! The spectator turns the card in their hand over to reveal their selection.

**SET-UP:** None. The presentation is what sells this routine, so I will give it word-by-word along with the mechanics.

**TO PERFORM:** "Hello, like to see a trick? This one's a real miracle. Watch." Have a card selected, memorized, then returned to the center of the deck. Secretly obtain a left pinky break above the selection as you square the cards.

"Did I tell you it's a brand-new trick? Well, it is, and I'm going to need two chances to find your card. " While speaking, secretly control the selected card to the top. An invisible riffle-pass will work here, or a side-steal, or even a double undercut. Just get the card to the top without the spectator's knowledge.

"Watch, I click my fingers over the deck, give it a riffle, and your selection jumps to



the top." Suiting actions to words, click your right fingers, then riffle the deck from the back with the right thumb, getting a break beneath the top two cards. Lift these two cards off the deck as one in Biddle grip and turn your right palm to the audience, displaying the card(s). Let's say it's the Ace of Spades. Say, "Is that it?"

The spectator will deny it's her card. Say, "Not yours? Well, I said I needed

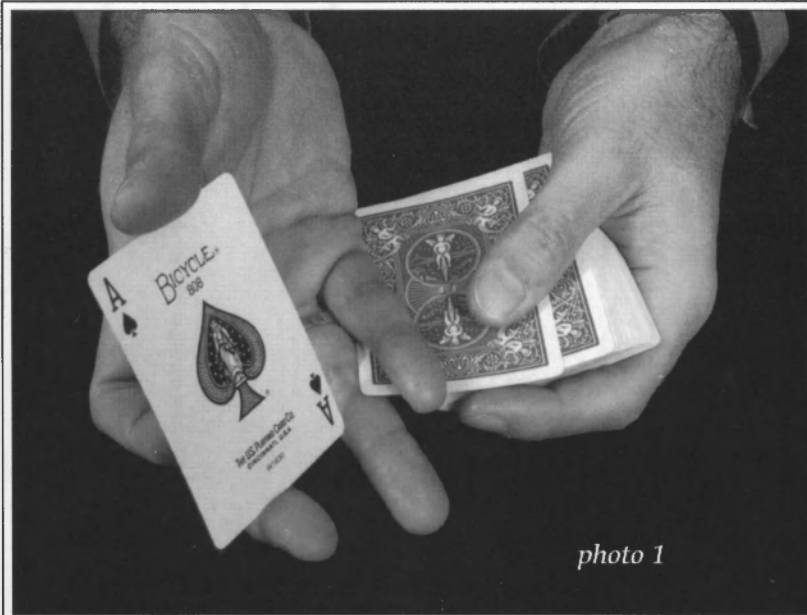


photo 1



photo 2

two chances. Look." You will now perform a flourish of Paul LePaul's. With the right hand holding the double, the right pinky and third finger clip the top right corner of the top card of the deck (see Photo 1). Turn the right hand palm down, exposing the face of the clipped card. Simultaneously, drop the double onto the deck (see Photo 2). With the right hand gently lift the top card

(the selection) off the deck while displaying the clipped card, which we'll call the Two of Spades. The spectator will also deny that the clipped card is their selection.

Have the spectator put her hands out. Place the supposed Ace of Spades into her palms while still holding the Two of Spades clipped between the third finger and pinky. Have the spectator close her hands around the supposed Ace of Spades.

"Hold onto the Ace of Spades tightly so I can't get at it."



While she complies, your left hand takes the face up Two of Spades against the top of the deck. The right hand now regrips the Two in preparation for a Top Change.

"Look, I'm going to take the Deuce and rub it against your hands." Touch the Two of Spades against the spectators' hands, then bring it back and perform a Top Change, snapping the card as you do so. As the Top Change is done, the left hand rapidly turns palm up. This action will completely cover any telltale movement of the top card being switched (see Photo 3, exposed view).

Place the switched card beneath the spectator's clasped hands and lightly jab the spectator with the card.

"Did you feel that. You did? Look what happened." Bring out the Ace of Spades and show its face, holding the card against their clasped hands. This will insure that the spectator won't open their hands prematurely.

"I got the Ace of Spades from between your hands. Now, it would be a pretty good trick if the card you're holding is the Two of Spades. But, it would be a miracle if the card between your hands was the one you selected a few seconds ago, wouldn't it?"

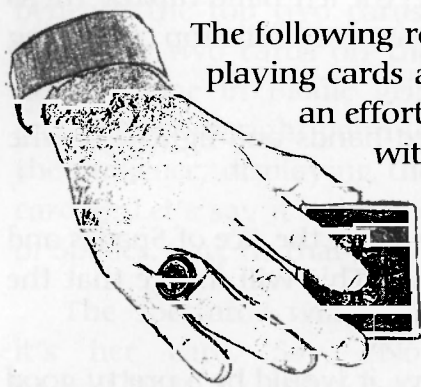
Get the spectator to acknowledge that it would be a miracle. A simple smile or shake of the head will do. Have them unclasp their hands and show the selected card to conclude.

**FINAL NOTES:** The effectiveness of this routine is dependant upon your ability to sell it. Make the spectator acknowledge that what you're going to do is impossible, then do it!



photo 3

## A Tribute to Dunninger



The following routine is something I'm exceptionally proud of. Although playing cards are involved, the effect is pure mind-reading. The trick is an effort to replicate the type of mind-reading routines associated with the late Joseph Dunninger.

I had the good fortune to meet Dunninger in Al Flosso's shop in New York when I was twelve years old. At the time, Dunninger had a weekly half-hour TV show on WPIX in New York, and I was still naive enough to believe that he possessed paranormal abilities. He was an impressive man, and quite gracious.

What made Dunninger seem real to me at the time was his ability to handle spectators. Through the spectators' faces the impossible took place as Dunninger apparently read their minds. This is what "sold" Dunninger to the public, and what makes good mentalism so entertaining.

**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** Three spectators are asked to help the performer. One is handed a shuffled deck of cards. The performer turns his back, and the deck is given several legitimate cuts. The spectator handling the deck removes three cards and places them in a pocket, where they are mixed. The spectator then hands two of the selections to the other two spectators. The deck is put aside.

Without speaking a word to any of the three spectators, the performer miraculously divines the three selections.

**SET-UP:** You will need a deck of cards arranged in Si Stebbins order. For those not familiar with the arrangement, it is simply this: the cards are arranged by suit — CHaSeD— with each card three values higher than the one above it — King, 3,6,9, Queen, 2, 5,8, J, Ace, 4,7,10 —and so on throughout the deck, starting with the King of Clubs on top. When the deck is prearranged this way, you can look at the bottom card after the deck has been cut, and instantly discern the identity of the card on top of the deck, as well as those beneath it.

**TO PERFORM:** Invite three spectators to help you. Have them stand in a line a few

feet behind you. Remove the deck in Si Stebbins order from your pocket, give it a few straight cuts, and spread it face up between your hands, allowing the spectators to see its "random" order. Turn the deck face down, give it another cut, and then hand it to one of the spectators. Turn your back and ask this spectator to give the deck a cut. After this is done, tell the spectator to remove either the top three cards or bottom three cards (it doesn't matter) and put them into a pocket.

Turn back around, take the deck back, and as you place it into your jacket pocket, glimpse the bottom card. Let's say it is the King of Diamonds. This tells you that the three cards in the spectator's pocket are the 3 of Clubs, 6 of Hearts and 9 of Spades. Pocket the deck.

Turn your back again and take a step or two away from your spectators. With your back still turned, ask the spectator who picked the cards to place their hand into their pocket, and mix the cards around. Have them remove any card, and hand it to another spectator. Have them remove another card and hand it to a third spectator. Ask all three spectators to secretly note their cards and put them away. Now comes the fun part.

First, it is necessary to have a visual picture of where each spectator is standing in relation to the performer.

Performer (with back turned)

Spectator A   Spectator B   Spectator C

Ask all three spectators to concentrate on their cards. Pretend to concentrate yourself. You will now make a number of statements based solely upon what you already know about the three selections, yet make it look like mind-reading. Here's how.

Say, "I'm seeing three cards — two blacks and one red. Will the two spectators concentrating on the black cards please take a step forward."

Two spectators will obey and take a step forward. This is an effect all by itself, and will usually generate a great deal of puzzlement.

Ask the two spectators who stepped forward to concentrate on their cards. Strike your best mind-reading pose and say, "I'm seeing two black cards — one is a Club, the other a Spade. The Spade is a more powerful card. Would the spectator thinking of the Spade please close their eyes and concentrate."

The spectator holding the Spade will shut their eyes. Again, this is an effect all by itself. Remember, the audience is seeing three people do what you tell them, even though you are standing with your back turned.

For the first time, turn around. The three spectators might be standing in this formation:

Spectator A (eyes closed) Spectator C

Spectator B

Based upon their relative positions, you will know which card each spectator is holding!

Spectator A, because his eyes are closed, must have the 9 of Spades.

Spectator B, because he's standing behind the other two spectators, must have the only red card, the 6 of Hearts.

Spectator C, because he's standing in line with Spectator A, is thinking of the 3 of Clubs.

Don't reveal the cards all at once. Focus on Spectator A and slowly reveal their selection. Have it removed and displayed. Repeat with Spectator B and then with Spectator C.

Take your bow.

**PERFORMANCE TIPS:** This trick has five effects. The first comes when the two spectators step forward, the second when one spectator shuts their eyes, the last three when you reveal the cards.

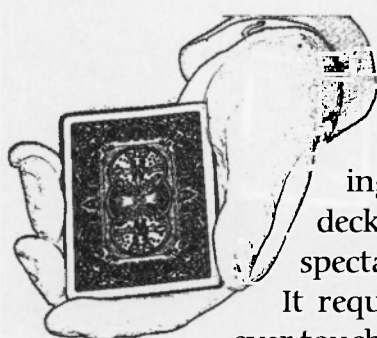
To strengthen the final revelations, it is advisable to miscall the second selection, then correct yourself before it is revealed. Mind reading effects benefit greatly when the performer seems to make a mistake, similar to seeing a tightrope walker "lose his balance" during a difficult maneuver. This little touch adds greatly to the overall mystery.

This trick is based upon Annennman's Secret from my previous book, *Miracles With Cards*. Canadian magician Bob Farmer took great exception when I published this trick in *Genii* Magazine and did not give him credit, since he had sent me several variations of Annennman's Secret, and felt he'd played a role in the trick's development. Unfortunately, Bob's feelings (and my caustic response) made their way into print.

In preparing this book, I took the time to reread Bob's correspondence, and found my scribbled notes within. There is no question that Bob's variations influenced my thinking and helped bring this trick along. I believe this is the source of Bob Farmer's displeasure, and for that I extend my apologies.



# The Twenty-One Card Trick



The Twenty-One Card trick has intrigued many magicians, most notably Ed Marlo and Steve Draun, who have published several superb variations. The trick's appeal seems to stem from the fact that most laymen learned the trick during their childhood, and are quick to perform it when handed a deck of cards. This is a wonderful follow-up routine to use after a spectator shows you their handling of the Twenty-One Card trick. It requires absolutely no skill whatsoever, nor does the magician ever touch the cards.

**EFFECT:** A spectator removes twenty-one cards from a deck, shuffles them, then separates the cards into three equal packets of seven cards. One card is selected from one of the packets and remembered. The packets are reassembled and mixed by the spectator. The spectator then spells out the performer's name, one card for each letter. Upon completion of this process, the spectator is asked to name their selection. The card is shown to be the last one dealt — a true miracle!

**TO PERFORM:** Hand a deck of cards (it may be borrowed) to a spectator and ask her to remove twenty-one cards. Have the packet shuffled and separated into three packets of seven cards. Be sure to watch the spectator as she performs these actions, ensuring that there are exactly seven cards per packet, otherwise you might end up with egg on your face upon the trick's conclusion.

The spectator is asked to pick up any of the three packets and give it a quick shuffle. Then, by cutting anywhere in the packet, the spectator lifts the cards and looks at the card cut to. Have this card memorized, then instruct the spectator to drop the packet onto the seven-card packet on the table which is situated to her left. You should watch the spectator as these actions are performed so nothing goes wrong.

Have the spectator drop the remaining cards from her left hand onto the other seven-card packet (the one to her right). Have the spectator place the cards on her right onto the cards on her left, further burying her selection.

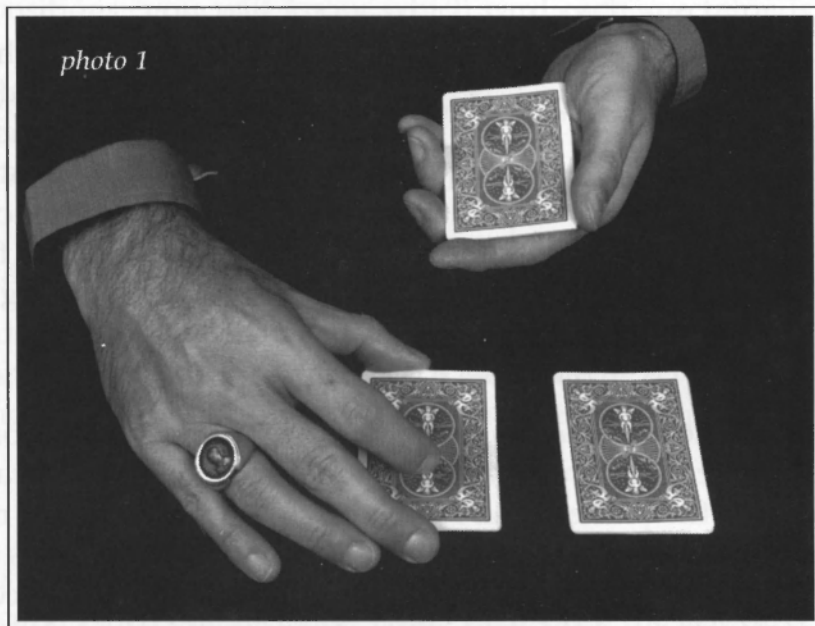
The spectator's selection now lies fourteenth from the top, owing to Gene Finnell's



clever Free Cut Principle. Now, you could immediately reveal the selection, but I strongly suggest that you don't, as the spectator may repeat the steps later with their own deck, and discover the mathematical principle which makes the trick work. Instead, you will now let the spectator mix the cards, or so it seems.

Ask the spectator to cut off some cards and drop them on the table to their left. Have her cut off another group and drop it to the right of the first packet (see Photo). Have the spectator place the packet remaining in her hand to the right of the two packets on the table.

You must now establish eye contact with the spectator assisting you. I do this by saying, "Sue... please don't forget your card!" This will make Sue momentarily look up from the cards. The purpose is to get Sue to momentarily forget about cards on the table.



Once Sue acknowledges that she's thinking of her card, point at the packet to Sue's left (the first packet placed on the table) and have her place these cards onto the center packet. Then have her place this combined packet onto the packet on her right. This is Jay Ose's false cut, and is absolutely deceptive when done in this manner. As Jon Racherbaumer likes to point out in his lectures, the Ose false cut looks real while a real triple cut (where the packets are picked up in the opposite direction) looks false. Try this a few times and you'll see how deceptive this false cut is, even when performed in an unwitting spectator's hands!

Sue's selection is still sitting fourteenth from the top. I tell Sue that by spelling my full name she'll find her card. She spells my full name (James Paul Swain, which has 14 letters) and turns over the last card dealt to find her card!

Now, what if your name doesn't have fourteen letters? Here are two solutions which I've used and found to be equally effective:

**SOLUTION ONE:** Before your show, find out the spectator's full name. Perhaps it can be spelled with fourteen letters if you use their middle initial, or add Doctor, or some other official title. Other combinations of words can be used (the name of the company that hired you, a street address, etc.) Be creative.

**SOLUTION TWO:** Have the spectator name their card and then spell down to it, dealing a card for each letter. The easiest way to do this is by using Marlo's "Flash Speller" from Alton Sharpe's *Expert Card Chicanery*, which allows you to instantly determine the number of letters required to spell to any card. Marlo's formula is as follows:

All Clubs: 10-12 letters

All Hearts & Spades 11-13 letters

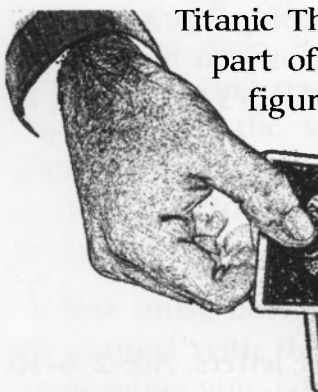
All Diamonds 13-15 letters

The values of all cards are spelled with either three, four or five letters. Ace-2-6-10 (three letters). 4-5-9-Jack-King (four letters). 3-7-8-Queen (five letters). Now, since there are only three choices for each suit, and there are only three choices for each value, it is easy to determine the number of letters in each card. For example, suppose the spectator says their card is the 3 of Clubs. All Clubs can be spelled with 10, 11 or 12 letters. Since the 3 requires five letters to spell (T-H-R-E-E), it must be 12, the last number in the group. In other words, any card whose value is three letters will be the first number of that suit; any card whose value is four letters will be the second number of that suit; any card whose value is five letters will be the third number of that suit. Just remember the table and the rest is easy.

Of course, if the spectator's card is spelled with 10 or 11 letters, you will want to add the word "The" to the spelling in order for the routine to reach a successful conclusion. If the card is spelled with 15 letters, then leave out the word "of" and turn up the next card.

**FINAL NOTES:** This trick was inspired by a routine from a Jon Racherbaumer lecture. Ed Marlo's original twenty-one card routine may be found in *Marlo Without Tears*(Version #3), while Ose's false cut may be found in Harry Lorayne's *Close-Up Card Magic*. And, a more comprehensive description of Marlo's "Flash Speller" may be found in Paul Cummins' "...from a shuffled deck in use..." lecture notes.

## The Tale of Titanic Thompson



Titanic Thompson was a legendary golf and card hustler from the early part of the 20th century. Considered one of the most colorful sports figures of his era, he is virtually unknown today.

This routine is based upon Lin Searles' "Moracle", and exploits the Thompson legend in a devious way.

**SET-UP:** Remove the Royal Flush in Spades plus twelve indifferent cards and place them in the following order from the top: indifferent card, 10 of Spades, Jack of Spades, indifferent card, Queen of Spades, three indifferent cards, King of Spades, and finally the seven remaining indifferent cards. Turn this packet face down and give it a sharp convex bend.

Place this packet on the bottom of the pack. It may help if you also give the rest of the deck a slight concave bend to keep the bottom packet separated. Now place the Ace of Spades on top of the deck and you are set.

**PRESENTATION:** "Titanic Thompson was a legendary golf hustler from the 1920's. One of his better hustles could only be done during the winter. He would go to a country club and bet a rich member that he could drive a ball four hundred yards. The member would usually take him up on the wager, and Thompson would go outside, find a frozen lake, and drive his ball across it."

Holding the set-up deck in your left hand, remove the Ace of Spades and hold it face up in the right hand.

"Titanic Thompson was also a great card hustler. The way he cheated was by marking the deck he was playing with."

Turn the Ace of Spades face down in the right hand, and with the left forefinger, point at the back design of the Ace.

"Most card cheats mark the backs of cards using special ink or daub. Titanic Thompson was different. He marked the cards with his fingers. By placing a slight, almost imperceptible bend into a card, he could tell what it was. A famous magician

named Paul Rosini once met Thompson, and was badly fooled by this. Thompson let Rosini keep the marked cards, and Rosini stayed up the whole night trying to find the work. The next morning, Thompson saw Rosini, pointed at the cards in Rosini's hands, and said, 'I see you've still got my cards. The Eight of Clubs is on top.' And it was!"

Drop the Ace of Spades face up onto your working surface. Cut approximately twenty cards off the top of the deck and drop them in front of a spectator. Pick up the Ace of Spades with the right hand and hold the card in preparation for a Top Change.

"I'd like to demonstrate the method Thompson used with a single card, The Ace of Spades. By snapping it forcefully a few times I can place a subtle bend in the card."

In the act of snapping the card, perform a standard Hofzinser Top Change. Turn the left hand palm down (still holding its cards), and with the left fingers cut the twenty card packet sitting on the table. Drop the supposed Ace of Spades onto the packet on the table, then drop the cards being held by the left fingers onto the supposed Ace, burying it.

Push the twenty card packet toward the spectator and have her pick it up. Say, "Please give the packet a straight cut."

As if to demonstrate what you want done, cut the cards in your left hand at the natural separation and drop the top packet to the table. Complete the cut, leaving the cards on the table. You have now brought your sixteen card set-up directly above the Ace of Spades.

Have the spectator shuffle their twenty-card packet, then drop their cards onto the remaining cards on the table. Pick up the deck, and in the act of squaring, obtain a pinky break between your set-up and the cards the spectator dropped on top of them. The crimp, of course, will make this easy.

"Thompson could actually feel the cards with the tips of his fingers, and find the ones he'd marked."

Square the cards, and in the act of placing the deck back down in front of the spectator, perform a classic pass at the break. This forward movement of the arms is perhaps the best misdirection for a classic pass — next to stepping on a spectator's foot. The pass will go undetected.

Have the spectator cut at least twenty cards from the top and hand them to you. Hold the cards in the left hand in preparation for a Reverse Faro shuffle. Begin the shuffle by outjogging the first card (see Photo 1). The next card stays put, while the



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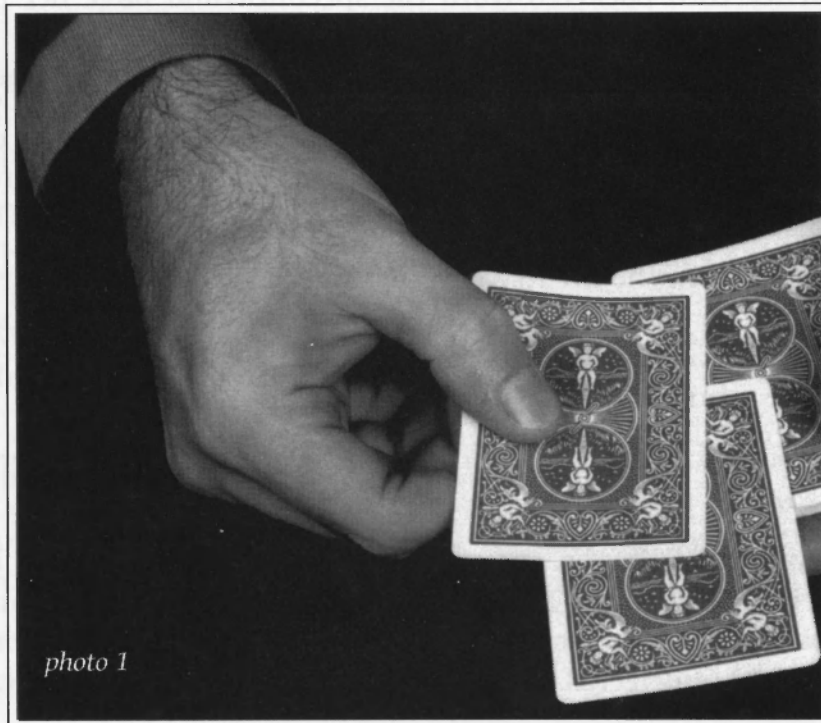
third is outjogged, the fourth stays put, the fifth is outjogged, and so on until you reach the last card. Strip out the outjogged cards with the left hand.

Pretend to weigh the cards between your hands. Say, "Not in this one." and drop the cards you just stripped out to the table to your left.

Repeat the Reverse Faro three more times. "Weigh" the packets each time you do so, always dropping the left hand (outjogged) packet to the table next to the packet you previously discard. No matter how many cards the spectator cut, you will always be left with one card in your right hand.

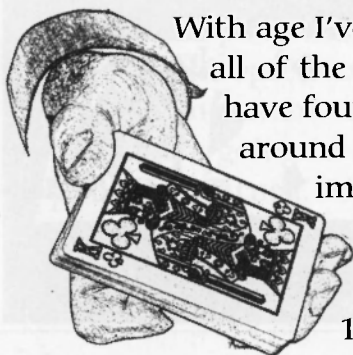
Dramatically snap this card over to reveal the Act of Spades. The trick appears to be over. Say, "Thompson liked to bet on the cards on top of the packets which he'd cut to. Any takers?"

Pause, then slowly turn over the top card of each packet to reveal the Royal Flush in Spades to end.





## Psychic Poker



With age I've grown fond of routines where I do none of the work and get all of the credit. This trick fits perfectly into that category of magic. I have found that it is not a piece to be performed in a show, but rather around a dinner table, or for a few select friends or clients you wish to impress.

The following routine is based upon a binary sorting process of Phil Goldstein's, published under the name "Out of Sorts" in 1984. The idea of using marked cards is Ted Lesley's, and can be found in his wonderful treatise, *Paramiracles*.

**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** The performer offers to demonstrate his ability to read thoughts. A spectator is handed a wallet and asked to remove eight cards from within. The spectator is asked to think of one of the cards. The performer first divines the color, then the suit, then the value of the mentally selected card. At no time does the performer touch the eight cards, nor pump the spectator for any information.

**PROPS NEEDED:** The trick employs eight marked cards. The marking system I employ is Ted Lesley's and can be purchased from most magic dealers. Any marking system which allows you to clearly and quickly read the backs of the cards will suffice. The eight cards used are the Six of Clubs, Seven of Diamonds, Ten of Hearts, Three of Spades, Queen of Hearts, Ace of Spades, Two of Diamonds and Jack of Clubs.

You will also need a billfold-type leather wallet. The model I use is the Fred Kaps/Ed Balducci wallet, although the wallet's secret construction has nothing to do with this particular routine. What matters is that the wallet looks elegant, and has the air of importance. This is an essential element to the routine, so please don't pass it by.

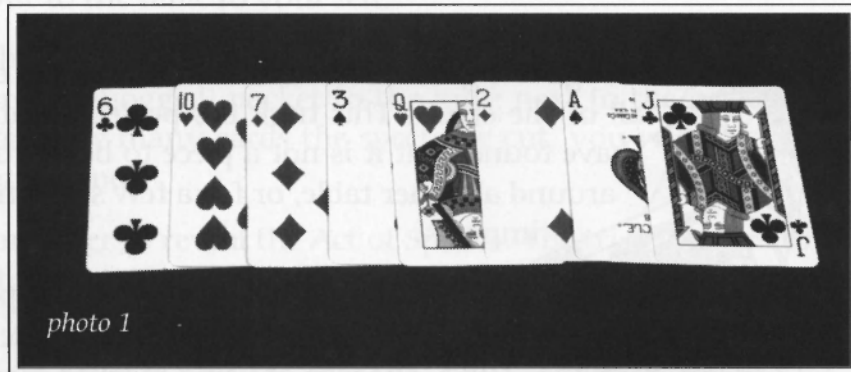
In your possession you will also require a felt tip pen, preferably a Sharpie, and a cocktail napkin.

**THE WORK:** To appreciate this routine's construction, a basic understanding of Phil Goldstein's binary sorting process is necessary. The spectator is handed eight cards and instructed to deal them face up into a pile and merely think of one of them. Next he is asked to deal these cards alternately into two piles of four each, as if dealing a two-

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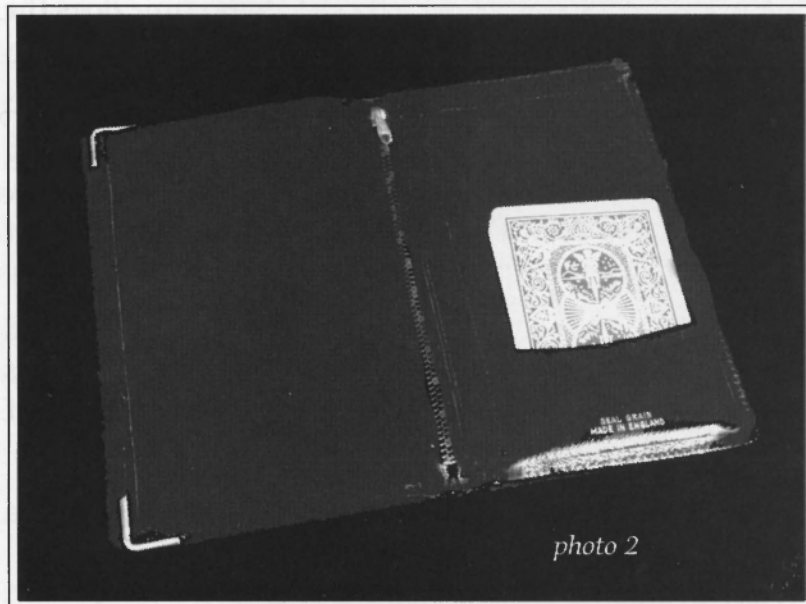
handed game of cards. The spectator now picks up the pile containing his chosen card, and holding these cards face up, places the other pile face up onto those in his hand. By repeating this dealing process twice, and then turning the packet face down, the spectator's mentally selected card will be the third card from the top.

Needless to say, this is an interesting mathematical principle. On its own, it is hardly a great trick, but by employing the eight marked cards previously named, you can turn it into a true miracle. Here's how.



The eight cards are stacked using Joe Berg's system for his Ultra-mental Deck (the numerical value of each pair equals thirteen, with diamonds paired with clubs, hearts with spades). Then, the cards in each pair are alternated with the cards of the next pair. This results in the cards in the following order, from the top down: Six of Clubs, Ten of

Hearts, Seven of Diamonds, Three of Spades, Queen of Hearts, Two of Diamonds, Ace of Spades, Jack of Clubs (see Photo 1). Now, perform the trick on yourself (mentally select one, then go through the sorting process). After the third deal, turn the packet face down and read the back of the top card. This card will be the mate of your mentally selected card!



cards into the credit-card slit in your wallet. See Photo 2. Put the wallet away until you are ready to begin. Also have a felt-tip pen handy and a cocktail napkin nearby.

**TO PERFORM:** Invite a spectator to assist you in a game of Psychic Poker. Explain

**SET-UP:** Arrange the eight marked cards as previously described. Slip the

that you will try to read their mind three times. Remove your wallet and open it, exposing the cards tucked into the credit card slit. Extend the wallet toward the spectator and ask them to remove the eight cards. Close the wallet and drop it onto your working surface.

Ask the spectator to turn the eight cards face up and to mentally select any of the eight cards. Explain that you will try to read the mentally selected card's color, suit and value. Ask the spectator to deal the eight cards into two alternating hands onto the table. It is important to watch the spectator as he/she carries out these instructions, since you are going to ask them to repeat this dealing process two more times while your back is turned. After the spectator has dealt out the two hands, reach into your jacket and remove your pen, uncap it, then pick up the cocktail napkin from the table. Turn your back and say, "Please pick up the hand which contains your mentally selected card and concentrate on your card's color."

As the spectator does this, scribble on your cocktail napkin. I like to write an R and a B on the top of the napkin. Remember, you are supposedly reading their mind here, so play the part, and write something on the napkin!

Ask the spectator to pick up the hand remaining on the table, drop it onto the cards in their hand, and leaving the cards face up, deal another pair of hands onto the table. When they are done, ask them to pick up the hand which contains their mentally selected card, and this time to concentrate on the card's suit. Keeping your back turned, scribble something on your cocktail napkin.

Finally, ask the spectator to pick up the hand remaining on the table, drop it onto the cards in their hand, and leaving the cards face up, deal another pair of hands onto the table. Ask them to pick up the hand which contains their card, and this time focus on the card's value. Scribble away on your cocktail napkin.

Now, have the spectator pick up the hand on the table, drop it onto the cards in their hand, and turn the packet face down. Turn around and pick up your wallet. Open it and ask them to drop the eight cards into the wallet (see Photo 3). As you close the wallet, sight the top card of the packet. Let's say it is the Seven of Diamonds. You now know that the mentally selected card is the Six of Clubs. Close the wallet and slip it into your pocket.

Pick up your cocktail napkin and say, "I tried to read your mind three times. The first time you looked at the cards, I saw the color black. Was your card black?" They will acknowledge that it was. Say, "The second time you looked, I saw a clover. Was your card a Club?" Again, you will get a positive response. Say, "And the last time, I

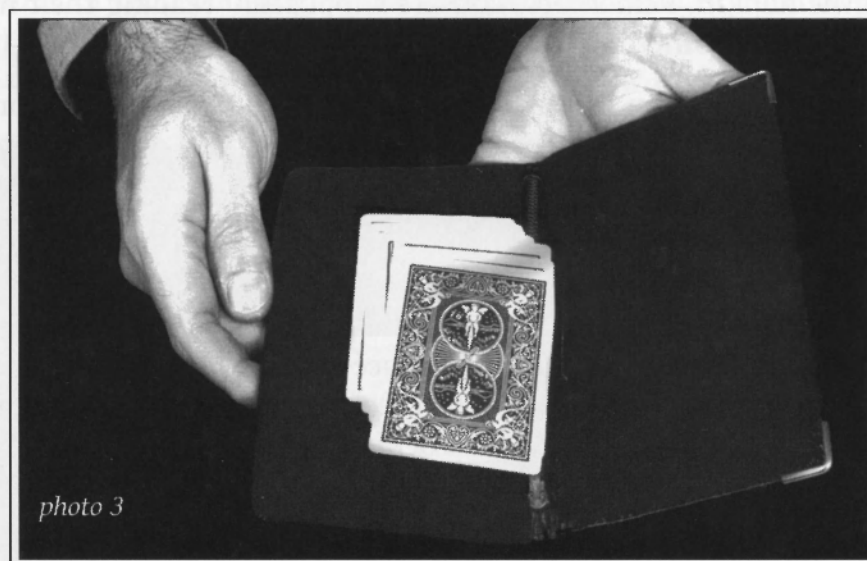
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asked you to concentrate on your card's value. I saw a Nine, but I think it was upside down. Was your card the Six of Clubs?" Again, you will get a "Yes," and hopefully, a terrific reaction from your spectators! Crumple the napkin into a ball and take your bow.

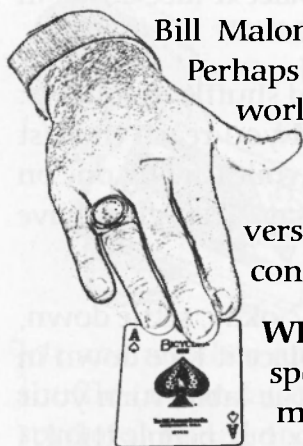
**FINAL NOTES:** What makes this routine so powerful is its construction. By having the spectator take the cards out of the wallet in the beginning, it is only natural that they return the cards to the wallet at the end. This allows you to read the back of the top card without arousing suspicion.

Do not pass up the ruse of writing down the color, suit and value on a cocktail napkin. This will convince your audience that you are really reading the spectator's mind, and take the heat away from the dealing of the cards on the table. If you work surrounded, try to make your scribbling fairly legible, so that someone looking over your shoulder won't be staring at gibberish.





## BILL MALONE'S "Cut 'em High and Tie"



Bill Malone is one of the few magicians whom I never tire of watching. Perhaps it is because of he's one of the best routiners of magic tricks in the world. Every detail of every routine Bill performs is honed to the nth degree, with nothing left to chance. There are hundreds of Spectator Cuts the Aces in print; Bill's presentation is the only version I've seen where a table of laymen will scream upon the trick's conclusion. How many card tricks garner that kind of reaction?

**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** A deck is shuffled. Four different spectators are invited to join in a game of cutting high card. The magician explains whoever cuts to the highest card will be the winner. When the spectators turn over their cards they are dumbfounded when everyone has cut to an Ace. "A tie!" the magician announces.

**PREPARATION:** Get the four Aces to the bottom of the deck. This may be easily accomplished between routines or arranged ahead of time.

**TO PERFORM:** Shuffle the deck without disturbing the Aces. Reverse double undercut two of the Aces to the top and you are set.

Ask the audience if they have ever heard of the game called "Cutting High Card". The magician explains that gamblers would play this game usually towards the end of the evening. When the game was almost over the remaining players would put all their money into the pot and then cut high card to win everything. Whoever cut the highest card would be the winner.

While talking, perform a slip cut of about fifteen cards and hold a pinky break between the packets. Transfer the deck along with the break to Biddle grip in the right hand. Your right hand places the deck on the table as your right thumb riffles up the pack and cuts all the cards above the break. This is done as a demonstration to a spectator on your right who we'll call Spectator #1. Tell Spectator #1 that you want her to "reach down like this and cut a small packet of cards." While Spectator #1 cuts the cards your right hand continues to hold its packet.

After spectator #1 cuts off the first packet, your right hand replaces its packet on



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top of the remainder of the deck on the table. Pick up the assembled packet and hold it in dealing position. This is done as you say to Spectator #1 "Place your cards face down in front of you. We'll see how you've done in a moment."

Look at another spectator while extending your left hand with the deck and say, "We're going to let you play against him. Cut off a small packet, place it face down in front of you."

After Spectator #2 has complied, give the cards a casual overhand shuffle as follows: draw the top and bottom cards together and then shuffle off until you reach the last card, which you throw on top. This shuffle brings an Ace to the top while leaving one on the bottom. Look at the packets on the table while you shuffle and say, "You guys have done this before!"

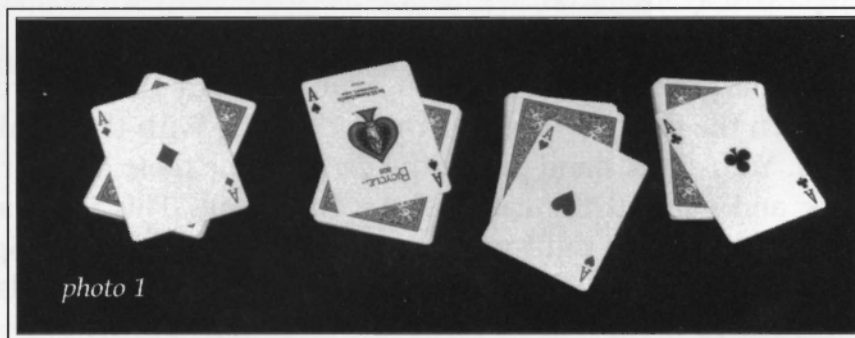
You now extend the deck towards a third spectator and say "Okay, okay, settle down, you can play. Just do like they did and cut off a small packet and place it face down in front of you." After Spectator #3 has cut a packet and placed it on the table, turn your attention to someone new in the crowd and say, "I want to play too, but people think I cheat. Would you mind cutting the cards for me?" As you say the above line, your right hand side-steals the Ace from the bottom to the top. Have Spectator #4 place the packet they cut in front of you. This makes sense because he is cutting for you.

Now, addressing everyone you say, "Everybody put your fingers on top of your pile like this." Demonstrate by placing your fingers on the 4<sup>th</sup> pile. "Now, on the count of three, everybody turn your top card over. It's important that we all do this at the same time. Ready? One, Two... Three!"

The three spectators will flip their cards over at the same time, revealing the four Aces (see Photo)! After the applause has subsided, say, "Sorry, no winners. I think it's a tie."

It is crucial to the trick's success that everyone turns over their card at the same exact time.

**FINAL NOTES:** If you work for laymen, you will use this. It kills.



Bill's handling is based upon Harry Riser's. An excellent variation of Riser's handling can be found in *Solomon's Mind, The Card Magic of Dave Solomon*.

## 21st Century Cards Across



**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** a baffling, nearly sleight-free version of Cards Across.

**SET-UP:** Place any Three on top of the deck and place another Three 20th from the top. The rest of the cards can be in any order. This is a relatively simple set-up, and can usually be arranged in between tricks.

**TO PERFORM:** You will need two spectators, one sitting on your left and another on your right. Take the deck and give it a casual in-the-hands false shuffle (a few false cuts will work equally well). Then drop the deck in front of the spectator seated on your left, who we'll call Spectator 1.

Ask Spectator 1 to deal twenty cards face down into a pile on the table. When she is done, have her place the remainder of the deck aside — it will not be needed for the remainder of the routine.

Tell Spectator 1 to cut the twenty-card packet "somewhere in the center." Because of your set-up, there will be a Three on the bottom of one packet, and a Three on top of the other. Watch Spectator 1 as she cuts the cards and memorize which packet is which.

Tell Spectator 1 that she can choose either packet. Say she chooses the packet with the Three on top. Point at the selected packet and say, "I have not touched those cards, correct?" Once she has agreed, have her take the packet and slip it beneath her leg or into a convenient pocket.

Pick up the remaining packet on the table and give it a short overhand shuffle, secretly bringing the Three from the bottom to the top. During the shuffle, catch a left pinky break beneath the third card from the top. Square the packet while maintaining the break. Note: if Spectator 1 had instead chosen the packet with the Three on the bottom, there would be no need to shuffle, as the packet you pick up already has a Three on top.

Just spread the top three cards over, establish a break and square the cards.

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Without pausing, swivel your body so you are facing the spectator on your right, who we'll call Spectator 2. Casually turn the packet in your hands face up. While doing so, secretly reverse the bottom three cards using Ken Krenzel's Mechanical Reverse (a Half-Pass or the Christ Twist can also be used). This move is done as the hands are moving forward and the face-up packet is being handed to Spectator 2.

Instruct Spectator 2 to hold the packet tightly so the cards won't fall (nor expose the three reversed cards on bottom). Have her pinch the top card at its rear end, forefinger on top, and pull it toward her. Say, "Take the top card, pull it back, turn it over, put it on the bottom and say 'One'".

After Spectator 2 has counted the first card, have her repeat this down-under deal for the rest of the cards. Say the count ends at "Seven". The packet, in fact, holds ten cards. Have Spectator 2 deal the top card of the packet (a Three) face-down to the table, and then slip the packet beneath her leg or into a pocket.

Turn to Spectator 1 and say, "Now Mary, if Jane has seven cards, and you counted out twenty, with no help from your neighbor, how many does that leave you with?"

Spectator 1 should reply "Thirteen."

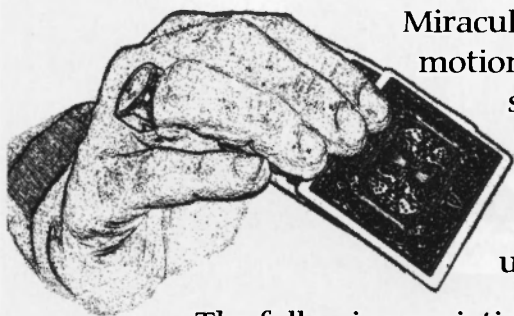
Tell the audience that the card on the table will act as a shuttle. Say, "Whatever value that card is, that's how many cards we will make jump from Mary's packet to Jane's packet. Sound fair?"

Have Spectator 2 turn over the card on the table and reveal the Three. Have her place the Three with the rest of her cards.

At this point, the trick is technically over. Spectator 1, who believes she has thirteen cards, has ten cards; Spectator 2, who believes she has seven cards, actually has ten. Magically cause three cards from Spectator 1's packet to invisibly jump to Spectator 2's packet. Take your bow.

**FINAL NOTES:** This routine incorporates moves, bits of business, and subtleties from three different routines. They include Jim Ryan/Johnny Paul's "Cheek to Cheek" (see Tom Mullica's *Showtime at the Tom Foolery*); a Cards Across routine of Paul Harris which was put on video many years ago; and Bill Malone's "Card on the Swing" from the September, 1995 *Genii* Magazine. The idea of having a spectator force the Three on themselves during the counting process is, I believe, an original one.

## Birds of a Feather



Miraculous card routines which can be performed in slow motion are few and far between. In 1992, Daryl published such a routine in "The Card Corner" column of The Linking Ring entitled Daryl's Seven Card Assembly. Like so many wonderful things which have been put into print, the routine went virtually unnoticed by the magic fraternity.

The following variation of Daryl's trick serves as an ideal "opener" for the two routines which follow.

**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** The four Aces and the four Kings are openly displayed. The four Aces are placed in a packet to the performer's right, while the four Kings are placed in a packet on the performer's left. There can be no doubt that the cards are exactly where the performer has placed them.

One Ace and one King are openly transposed. Instantly the three Aces join the Ace which was moved, while the three Kings migrate and join the other King. This is repeated two more times, each time under test conditions.

**SET-UP:** Remove the four Aces and four Kings from the deck and place the balance of the deck aside. They will not be used for the remainder of the routine. Arrange the eight-card packet from the face as follows. Ace of Spades, any Ace, any Ace, any Ace, red King, black King, red King, black King.

**PHASE I:** Spread the eight card packet face up between your hands. Secretly obtain a left pinky break above the bottom King as you square the cards. Openly deal the Ace of Spades off the face of the packet onto the table, then slide it to the upper right corner of your working surface (see Photo 1). With the right hand, take the six cards above your left pinky, and use them to flip the supposed three Kings (actually only one) face-down in your left hand (see Photo 2). Now drop the packet in your right hand onto the face-down King in your left, catching a break beneath the packet as you square.

You are now going to openly display/switch the three remaining Aces for the Kings using Brother Hamman's Swivel Switch. Here's how. Thumb over the Ace at the face of

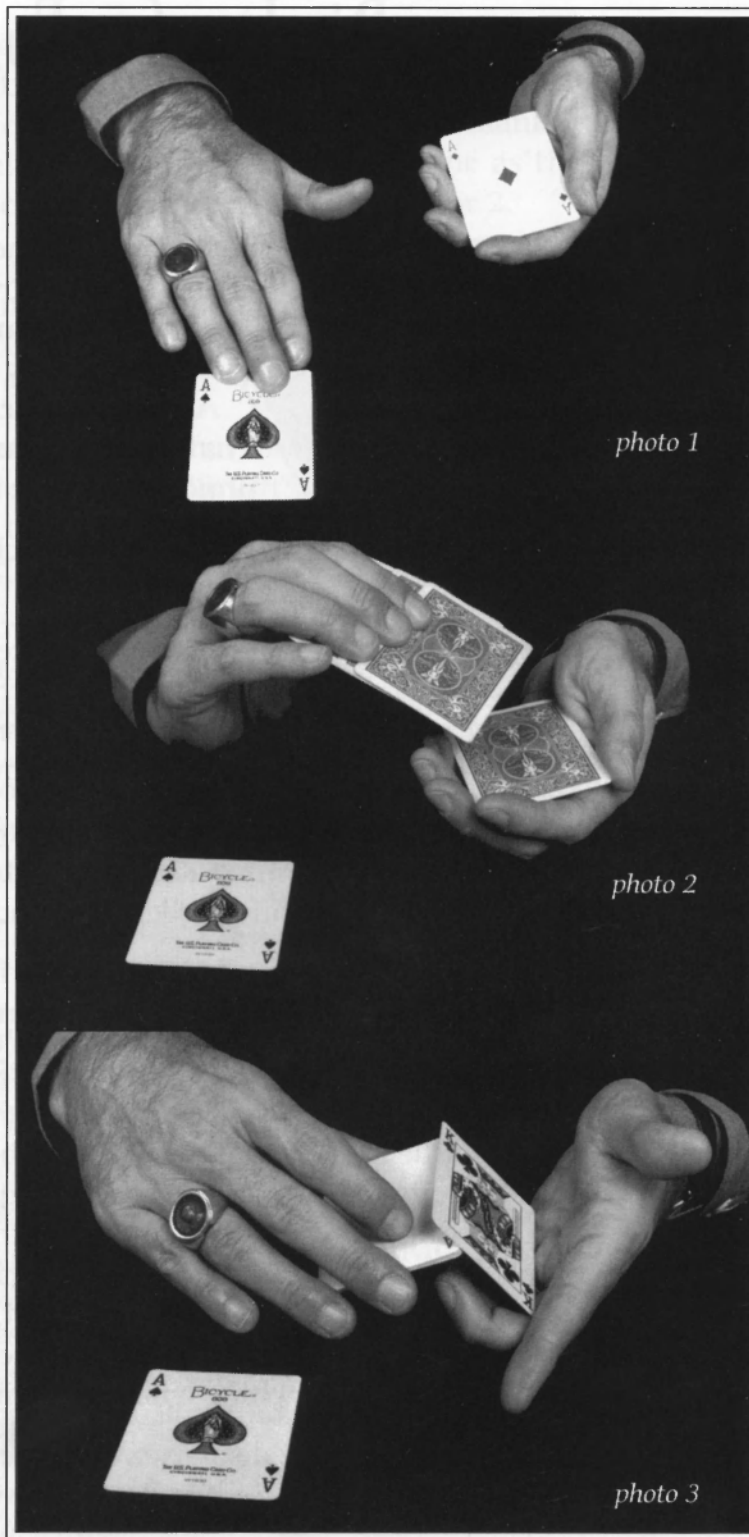


the packet and take it at its right long side between your right thumb and fingers. As the right hand take this Ace, it turns palm down, briefly displaying the back of the card.

Turn your right hand palm up while the left thumb pushes over the next Ace. Take it, slightly stepped, beneath the Ace already in your right hand. Using the same motion as before, turn the right hand palm down, briefly flashing the back of the two cards.

Without breaking your rhythm, turn the right hand palm up, while the left thumb, which is resting on the edge of its packet, pushes over all four remaining face-up cards as one. This move is made simple by lightly buckling the bottom card of the packet, and gently pushing the four cards above it over to the right. They will move as an aligned block. At the same time this is happening, your right hand lowers its two cards, hiding the thick edge of the multiple card, and grasps the card in a stepped fashion. Turn the right hand palm down, flashing the back of the three cards (see Photo 3).

In one continuing action,





turn the stepped cards face up in the right hand, and immediately flip them face down onto the single card in your left hand. Thumb over the top three cards. You have just switched three Aces for three Kings. To the uninitiated, this sequence might seem bold, but a few trials will reveal the move's brilliance. If a constant rhythm is maintained during the flashing of the backs, the spectators' eyes will be unable to detect the thickness of the third card. It is a perfect illusion.

Push over the top three face-down cards. Miscall them as Aces. Apparently take them with the right hand. Actually, the third card is secretly left behind as the right hand squares two cards against the left thumb and takes them away.

Openly slip the two cards in your right hand beneath the Ace of Spades sitting at the outer right corner of your working surface. You are left with five cards in your left hand. These cards are a King, followed by three Aces, followed by a second King.

You will now perform Larry Jennings' modification of Daryl's display sequence to show four Kings to the audience. First, hold the packet in the right hand by the right long side, thumb on top and fingers below, as if performing an Elmsley Count. With the left thumb peel the top card into the left hand, holding it in a normal dealing grip. Peel the second card into the left hand, letting it fall on top of the first. Peel a third card into the left hand, leaving a double pinched in your right fingers. With your right fingers cleanly turn this double card over onto the cards in the left hand, exposing a King.

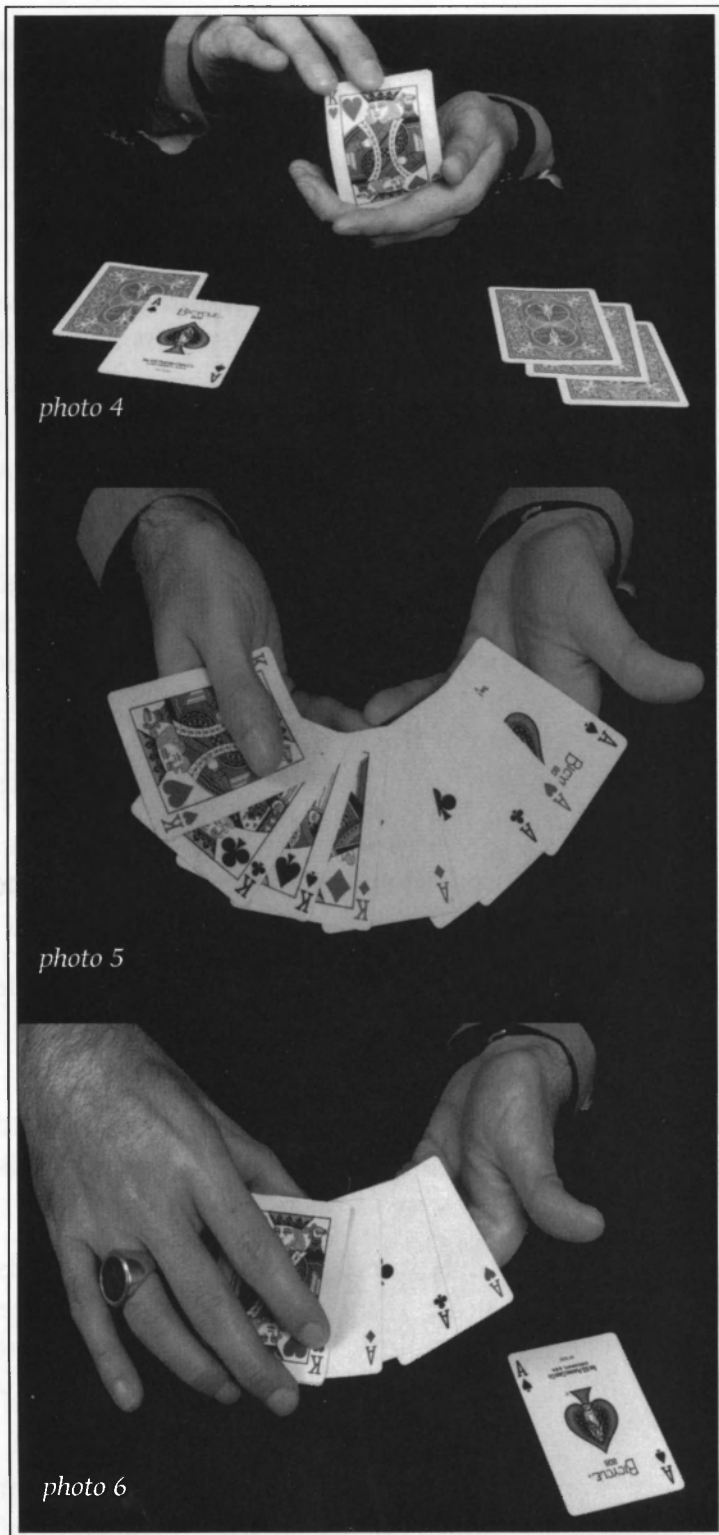
Perform a double turnover and deal the supposed King (actually an Ace) to the outer left corner of your working surface.

Repeat this sequence, peeling two cards into the left hand and performing a double turnover. A second King will show. Perform another double turnover and deal the top card onto the other supposed tabled King, forming a spread.

You are left with three cards in your left hand. Repeat the sequence, peeling one card into the left and then flipping over the double. The first King will show again. Flip this double face down and deal the top card onto the tabled spread.

You are left with two cards, both Kings, in your left hand. Grasp these two cards from above in Biddle grip and use pressure from your right forefinger to bow the cards. Once you have enough pressure on the double, allow it to snap off the right thumb and "catch" it in the waiting left hand. This is a Snap Turnover and is very deceptive (see Photo 4).

Perform the Snap Turnover a second time. Grasp the face-down double with the right hand and openly slip it beneath the face-up Ace of Spades packet sitting to the right of



your working surface. The right hand then picks up the face-up Ace of Spades, turns it face down, and deposits it onto the supposed King packet sitting to the left. Snap your fingers over the cards and say, "Birds of a feather flock together."

Use both hands to simultaneously turn over the two packets, showing the transposition.

**PHASE II:** To perform the second phase, you will need to arrange the eight cards in the following order. Starting from the face, the cards will run red King, black King, black King, red King, any three Aces, Ace of Spades (see Photo 5).

Say, "Perhaps you'd like to see that again, to see if you can catch me. Watch, I'll do it slowly."

Spread over the four Kings, pause a beat, then square the cards, secretly obtaining a left pinky break beneath the third King from the face. This should be a large break. Grab the packet from above in a Biddle grip, the right hand shielding the right side of the packet. With the left fingers drag out the bottom card (Ace of Spades) and deposit it face up onto the table, to your left. With the left fingers drag the three remaining Aces out from the the bottom of the packet, Ascanio-style.

Display these Aces to the audience (see Photo 6).

Push the three Aces flush with the packet as your left pinky and third finger secretly enter the break being held by the right hand. In one continuous action, perform a Classic Pass of the top three cards (see Photo 7, exposed view). As these cards come around the packet, turn them face-down and fan them, then drop them behind the face-up Ace of Spades. This might feel like an "open" move, but the audience sees nothing. No one will notice that the face King has changed. As Alex Elmsley said after seeing the move several times, "Ah, new magic with the Pass!"

The right hand turns its cards face down and fans them. Allow the top three cards of the fan to fall to the table, keeping the bottom card (the King) in your right hand. Turn this card face up and drop it onto the three cards (see Photo 8 of layout).

Pause, then pick up the visible Ace and King and transpose them, turning each card face down before you drop it onto its packet. Say, "Birds of a feather flock together." and show that the cards have magically transposed.

**PHASE III:** Offer to do the effect a final time. Pick up the four Aces with the right hand and hold them face up and slightly spread in that hand. With the left hand, pick up the four Kings. Drop the Aces onto the Kings. Secretly obtain a left pinky break below the fifth card from the face (a King) and casually square the packet.

With the right hand, pick up all the cards above the left pinky break in Biddle grip (four Aces followed by a King). Use this packet to flip the remaining Kings in the left



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hand face down. Openly drop the packet in the right hand onto the packet in the left, maintaining a left pinky break between them as you do.

You now deal three Aces to the table, turning each Ace face-down as you deal. This dealing is a stud-like action and is totally fair. When you come to the fourth Ace, your right fingers enter the break being held by the left pinky and grasp the double card. With the right fingers firmly holding this card(s), snap the double off the left thumb, then flip it face down. Openly slip the top card (a King) beneath the three Aces on the table, and push this packet to the outer left corner of your working area.

You will be left with four face-down cards in your left hand. Without showing their faces, deal these cards onto the table in a pile, reversing their order as you do so. Square the packet on the table, and with your right hand, push this packet to the outer right corner of your working surface.

You now engage in a little bit of time delay to throw off your spectators. What I like to do is make a point of pulling back each of my sleeves and then rubbing my hands together, showing them empty. The point I'm trying to get across to the audience is that this last phase is something special, and they need to watch my hands carefully. Needless to say, nothing could be further from the truth!

Both hands now approach the packets. This is done slowly and mysteriously. Lift the packets from behind and simultaneously remove the bottom card of each packet with your right hand left fingers. I like to pull these cards out quickly, which hides where they're coming from.

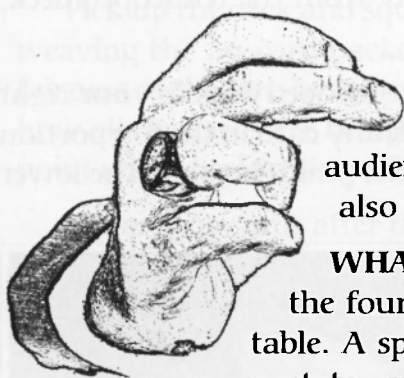
Holding these two cards at your fingertips (and without exposing their faces), slowly bring the cards together and perform a mid-air transposition. Separate the cards and for the first time expose their faces by performing a revolution of each card in each hand. After the cards have performed a complete revolution, openly drop them face down onto their new packets, then click your fingers in a magical fashion. Say, "Once again, birds of a feather flock together."

Turn over each packet, showing the four Aces sitting in the packet on your left, and the four Kings sitting in the packet on your right. Take your bow.

**FINAL NOTES:** Some magicians may be thrown off by Phase Three, because nothing actually happens. What makes this phase so effective is that you've conditioned the audience into believing you can make the Aces and Kings transpose, so they focus on trying to catch you instead of watching the trick itself. In the end, the trick happens because you say it happens. The audience will have no choice but to believe you.



## Divining Rod



This routine is extraordinarily powerful; so much so, that I have used it on only certain occasions, reserving it for audiences who are knowledgeable about cards (or card magic). It is also an exceptional piece of entertainment, if properly presented.

**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** The performer magically causes the four Aces to fly out of a shuffled pack and land face-up on the table. A spectator then freely peeks a card. The deck is handed to the spectator, who cuts and shuffles it. The Aces are lost in the deck, and the performer gives the cards a single faro shuffle. The Aces not only find the spectator's selection, but its three mates as well!

**SET-UP:** This routine requires a full-deck set-up, and therefore is best performed as an opener (or closer if you know a good deck switch). From the top down, set the cards as follows: 4 Aces (any order), the rest of the deck separated into groups of four of a kind, with the order of each group being Clubs, Hearts, Spades, Diamonds from the top down. These groups may follow each other in any order. You must also have a Joker on the bottom of the deck.

**TO PERFORM:** Remove the 53-card deck from its case and give it a quick false shuffle. If you want, you can turn the deck face up and give it a ribbon spread. To the casual observer, the cards will appear to be in random order. Pick up the deck, turn it face down and comment how a deck of cards is like a diving rod. Say, "With a diving rod, you can find precious objects. Well, the same is true with a pack of cards."

While pattering, cut off the top 26 and in-weave them into the remaining 27 cards for approximately one-third their length (Note: since you're working with a full deck set-up, you can note the 26 card from the top prior to the trick, which will allow you a quick visual check when you do your cut. This card will always be a Heart).

With the right hand, grasp the deck in its telescoped position by taking the half with 27 cards and turning the entire deck around in your right hand. Your right hand now pinches the 27 card portion with the right thumb holding the cards firmly on top, while the right first and second fingers hold the cards firmly below. This is a tight grip with enough pressure being exerted so the telescoped cards won't move.

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You are now going to magically reveal the 4 Aces by performing LePaul's revelation from "Gymnastic Aces". To quote the master: "A sharp, whip-like shake of the cards will cause the top card of the upper half to leap from the deck." Give this the practice it deserves, and you will be able to not only make each Ace fly from the telescoped deck, but land face up on the table as well.

After the Aces are revealed, you are left with a partially telescoped deck in your right hand. Place the cards into the left hand. Have a spectator peek any card in the top portion using the standard Marlo handling (see Photo 1), holding a left pinky break in the lower portion as the card in the upper portion is peeked.

Strip out the upper/telescoped cards, place them atop the lower portion and cut at the break. This will automatically bring the selected card 23rd from the top of the deck. Square the deck and casually peek the bottom card. Remember the suit of this card.

The suit of the bottom card will tell you the suit of the card peeked by the spectator. For example, if you peek a Club on the bottom, you know that the spectator's selection is a Spade (and vice versa). If you peek a Heart, the spectator's selection is a Diamond (and vice versa).

Once you know the suit of the spectator's card, you must perform one of the following actions:..If you peeked a Spade, the selection is a Club. *Do nothing*...If you peeked a Diamond, the selection is a Heart. Undercut one card from the bottom to the top of the deck...If you peeked a Club, the selection is a Spade. Undercut two cards from bottom to top.If you peeked a Heart, the selection is a Diamond. Undercut three cards from bottom to top.

Once this is done, place the deck on the table in front of the spectator. Ask her to cut it into three approximately equal packets. Watch closely, noting which packet is the original top portion. When the spectator is finished cutting, have her pick up the original top portion and give it a thorough shuffle.

When she is finished shuffling, have her drop the packet onto the middle packet. Pick up the Aces on the table and, leaving them face up, drop them onto the combined middle

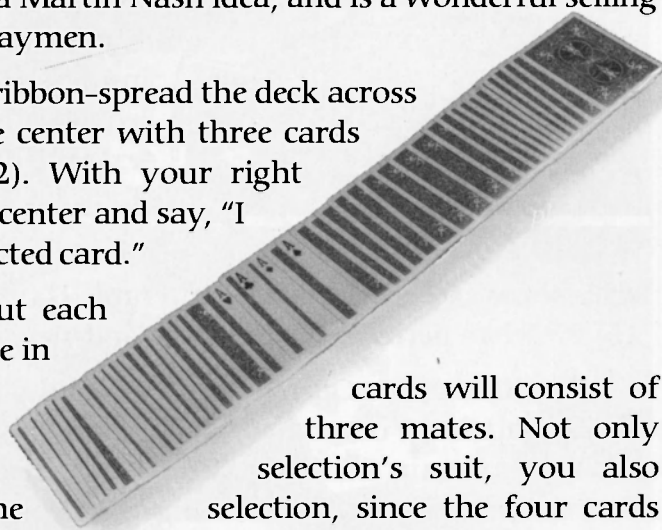


packet. Now have your spectator pick up the original bottom portion, shuffle it thoroughly, and drop it onto the middle packet, effectively burying the face-up Aces in the center of the deck.

Pick up the deck and square it. Cut 26 cards off the top and perform a faro shuffle, interweaving the 26-card packet into the remaining 27. If you like, you may point out the fairness of the faro by spreading the telescoped deck across the table, letting everyone see how all the cards are being mixed. This is a Martin Nash idea, and is a wonderful selling point when performing a faro shuffle for laymen.

Square the cards after the shuffle and ribbon-spread the deck across the table. The Aces will be face up in the center with three cards sandwiched between them (see Photo 2). With your right forefinger point at the face-up Aces in the center and say, "I believe the Aces may have found your selected card."

Use your right forefinger to push out each face-down card which rests above each Ace in the spread. Believe it or not, these four are the spectator's selection and that card's mates. That's because you already know the selection, since the four cards are still in Club, Heart, Spade, Diamond order



cards will consist of three mates. Not only selection's suit, you also selection, since the four cards from the top down.

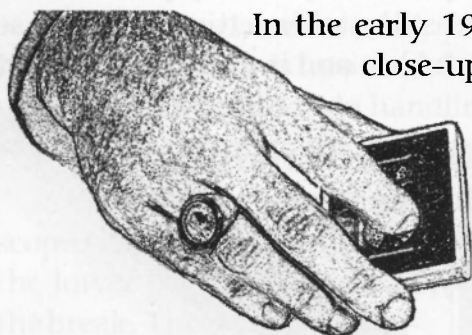
Hold the four face-down cards in a fan in the left hand. Say, "I'm certain that one of these cards is the one you saw."

Dramatically remove the card from the fan which you know to be the selected card. Have the spectator name their selection. Turn the card over to reveal that you found it and drop the card face up to the table. Take the next card in the spread, turn it over, and drop it next to the selected card. Do this two more times, revealing the selected card's mates to end.

**FINAL NOTES:** If you would like to perform this routine without the set-up, check out the opening sequence from *MIRACULOUS*. It allows you to take a new deck and set it up while apparently giving the cards a few shuffles, and is completely disarming.

The sequence in which the spectator cuts and shuffles the cards is the brainchild of Ed Marlo, and may be found in the *Faro Notes* pamphlet of his Revolutionary Card Technique series.

## Miraculous



In the early 1970's I had the opportunity to see Fred Kaps perform close-up magic at the Boston S.A.M. National Convention. Along with his marvelous presentation and skill, what impressed me most about Kaps was his wonderful selection of material. Everything he did was strong and extremely direct. His magic was truly a joy to behold.

The following routine is based upon a routine which Fred Kaps performed at the S.A.M. Convention. It also uses some excellent ideas of Frank Thompson and Darwin Ortiz. It is an ideal effect to use when performing with a brand-new deck of cards.

**TO PERFORM:** Open a new deck and discard the jokers and any advertising cards. While pattering, overhand shuffle as follows: run 13 single cards and throw the deck on top. Now run 13 single cards again, throw deck on top. The order of the deck from face to rear will now be Ace-King, Ace-King, Ace-King, Ace-King.

Give the deck two perfect out-faro shuffles. Splitting the deck for each out-faro is easy because each time you will be cutting to an Ace. The order of the deck from face to rear will now be Four Aces, followed by four Deuces, four Threes, etc., up until the four Kings on top (the idea of deriving this setup from a new deck is Darwin Ortiz's). To the audience, the deck will appear thoroughly mixed.

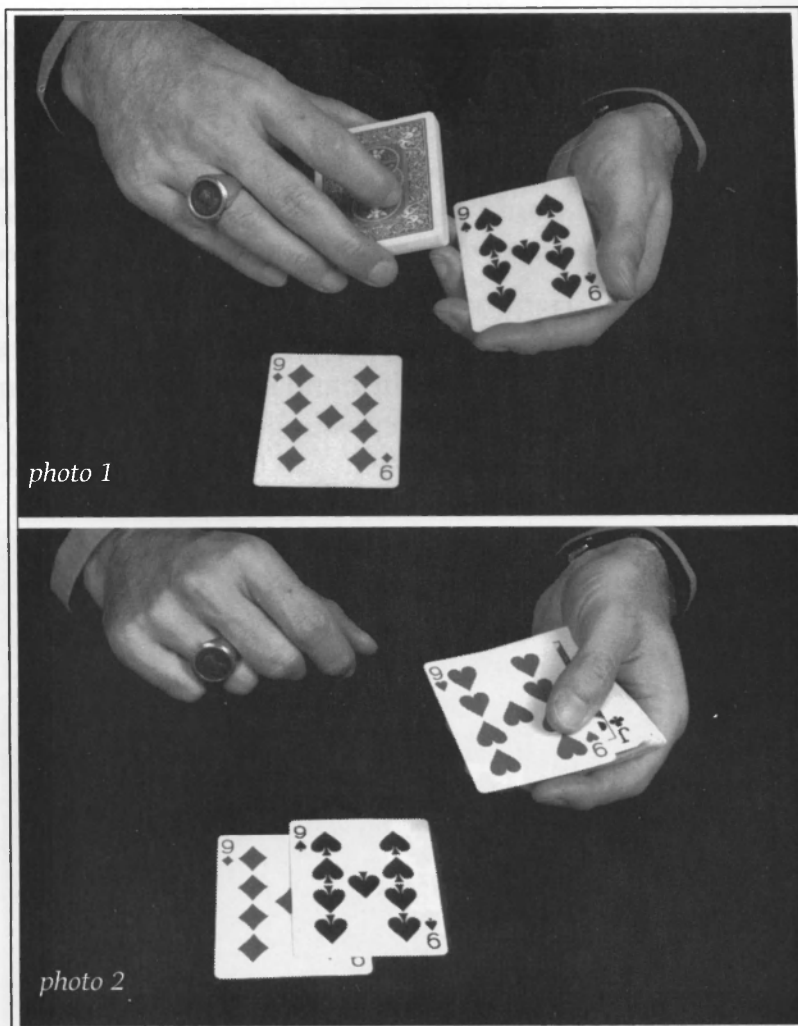
With your left pinky, secretly crimp the right rear corner of the bottom card downward. This crimped card is an Ace.

Spread the deck between your hands, silently counting groups of four from the top as you spread. Ask a spectator to select a card. When the spectator does so, secretly note where the cards which match the selection lie. For example, if the spectator takes the 17th card, you know that the three cards which lie directly beneath the 17th card will match it. Perform a double undercut sending two of the matching cards to the bottom, the other to the top of the deck. Table the deck.

Have the spectator turn their selection face up and leave it on the table (say it's the 9 of Diamonds). Tell the audience you will try to find the other three 9's. You will now perform a sequence of Frank Thompson's: holding the deck in left hand dealing grip, per-



form a bottom slip cut (or Harry Lorayne's HALO cut), leaving one of the 9's on the bottom of the cards in the left hand, and the other 9 on the bottom of the cards in your right hand. Use the cards in the right hand to flip the packet in the left hand face up, revealing a 9 on the bottom (see Photo 1). Thumb this card to the table next to the spectator's selection. Now flip the face-down packet in the right hand face up onto the packet in the left. Another 9 will show. Thumb it to the table next to the other two 9s (see Photo 2). For a finale, flip the entire deck face down, pause, then use the left hand to lever the top card over to reveal the third 9. To laymen this looks miraculous — a card was selected from a shuffled deck, and its three mates were instantly cut to.



Cut the deck at the crimp, sending the crimped card back to the bottom while maintaining the remainder of your set-up. Spread the deck between your hands and secretly obtain a left pinky break above the bottom four cards (the Aces).

Ask a spectator if they think they're up to helping you find another four of a kind. Spreading the cards between your hands, and while holding the break above the Aces, have a spectator touch the backs of four different cards in the spread, outjogging them for half their lengths as they're touched. Square the deck proper, leaving the touched cards outjogged. You will now perform Derek Dingle's NOLAP Switch/Second Application, as follows: your right hand moves over the deck and your middle finger angles the four outjogged selections to the left. This angling enables your right hand to

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grasp the deck comfortably from above with your middle finger at the outer end and thumb at inner end. Your left hand, which still holds a break above the Aces, cradles the deck from beneath (see Photo 3).

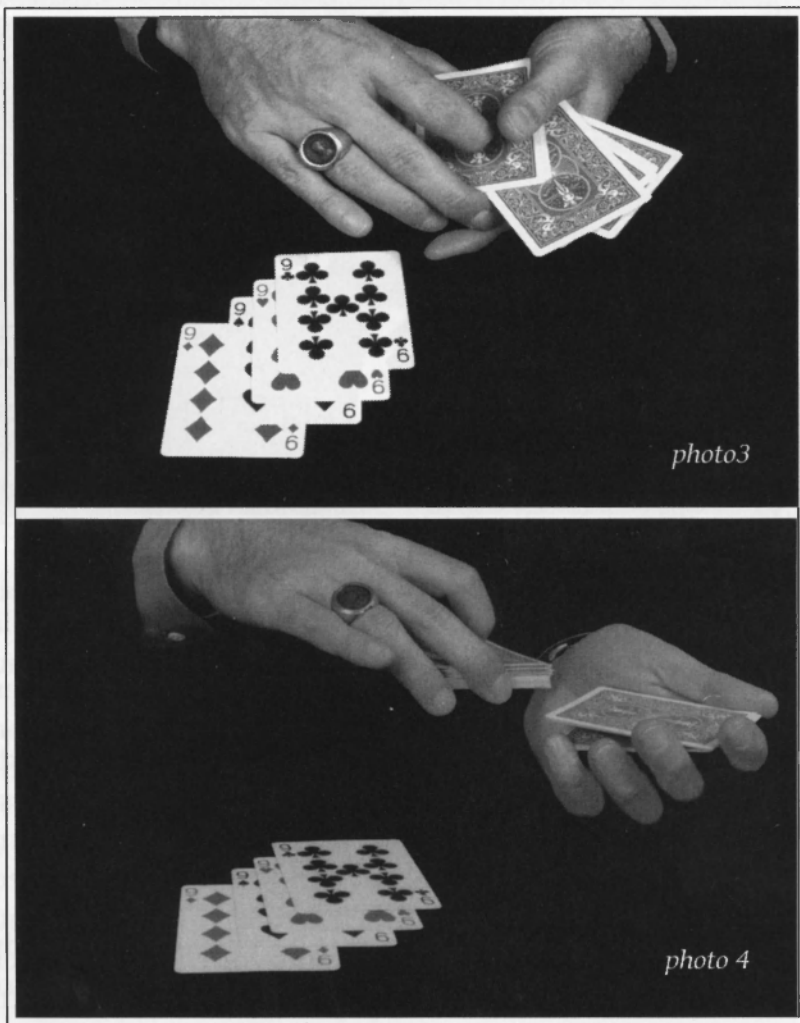
Moving your left hand forward, bring the Aces beneath the outjogged selections. Move your left thumb onto the outjogged cards and strip them onto the Aces, maintaining a left pinky break between the packets as you do (see Photo 4, exposed view).

Move your right hand forward with the deck and pass directly over the left hand and its packet. As the deck passes over your left hand, steal the four cards above the break onto the bottom of the right hand's cards. Without any break in rhythm, continue to move the deck forward, depositing it on the table, where it is given a wide ribbon-spread. You have invisibly switched the four selections for the Aces. One at a time, turn

over the four cards in your left hand to reveal the four Aces.

Now for Fred Kaps' routine: there is a pile of face-up Nines on the table, and in a row beside it, a pile of face-up Aces. The face-down deck has four Kings secretly on top. Pick up the deck and dribble it into the left hand, holding back three at the end of the dribble. Drop these cards, catching a left pinky break beneath them as you do so.

Use your right hand to scoop up the Aces and add them to the top of the deck. Pick up all seven cards above the break and perform the following variation of the Braue addition to switch three Aces for three Kings. Holding the seven cards in the right hand in Biddle Grip, pull the top



card of the packet (an Ace) onto the top of the deck while moving the left hand forward. Use the left fingers to pivot the Ace face down onto the deck. This flourished action draws attention to the Ace while taking heat off the unnatural position of the right hand.

Perform these same actions to turn down the next two Aces. Drop the last Ace (and the three face-down Kings hidden beneath it) onto the deck, then move the deck forward and turn the last Ace face down, using the left fingers only.

Take the top four cards off the deck without reversing their order and drop them to your right in a small fan. These cards from top down are Ace, King, King, King.

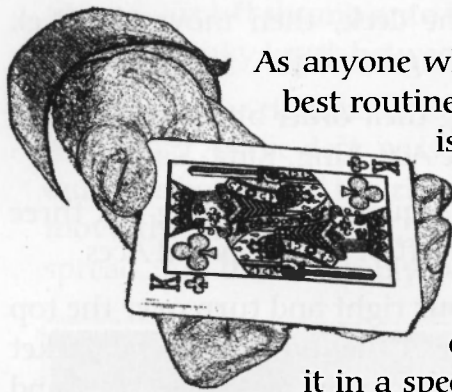
Pick up the four Nines and perform the exact same sequence, switching out three Nines for three Aces. Place the cards in a small fan to the left of the supposed Aces.

Say, "I have four Aces here (point to the packet on your right and turn over the top card, revealing an Ace) and four Nines over here (turn over the top card of the packet on your left, revealing a Nine). Explain that you will magically make the Aces and Nines switch places. While patterning, perform an overhand shuffle with the remaining cards in your left hand by chopping off about half, in jogging the first card, and shuffling the rest of the cards onto the in jog. Table the deck, being careful not to disturb the in jogged card protruding from the rear.

Openly take the face-up Ace and switch it for the face-up Nine. Click your fingers, and turn over the cards beneath the face-up Ace, showing the four Aces are now together. Pause, letting your audience think the Nines are on the left (this is Kaps' subtlety) and say, "You know, I can do this with any cards — really." Pick up the deck and spread it between the hands until you reach the in jogged card. Break the deck beneath this card and perform a straight cut, bringing your set-up back to the top. Take the top four cards, and without reversing their order, drop them in a fan on the table. These cards are, from top down, Nine, Nine, Nine, King. Remove the bottom card of this packet (the King) and turn it face-up, dropping it onto the packet. Openly switch this King with the face-up Nine. Click your fingers over the face-up Nine and turn up the cards beneath it to show all four Nines together. Pause, then almost as an afterthought remark, "Some people ask me — What about the King?" and turn up the three cards beneath it to reveal the three other Kings.

**FINAL NOTES:** This routine is a small act in itself, as there are five different effects which take place. It is not difficult to perform, but a certain attention to detail is required if the sequences are to run smoothly. Practice, as always, is the key. The transposition part of this routine is Irv Weiner's and was published in a manuscript entitled *Irv's Triple Transposition* in the 1950's.

## Equivocally Triumphant



As anyone who has performed magic for a buck knows, some of the best routines and bits come during performances. This is when magic is truly born, as the performer gets to see the trick's birth at the same moment as the audience. The following routine is such a trick; it happened one night during an impromptu show and garnered an amazing reaction. The trick is neither an opener nor a closer, nor would I classify it as a regular part of my repertoire. However, use it in a special occasion with the right crowd, and you will be more than gratified by the reaction you receive.

**EFFECT:** After performing a few tricks (preferably in which riffle shuffles are involved) the performer demonstrates how children shuffle cards. Turning half the deck face up, it is shuffled into the face down half. The cards are then displayed in a haphazard condition, some face up, some face down. A spectator names a card. Without further ado, the cards are ribbon spread, and all are seen to be face up except for a lone face-down card in the spread. Upon revelation, it is seen to be the very card named by the spectator!

**METHOD:** As the title suggests, you will need to be adept at the art of Equivoque, and know how to perform one of the many excellent versions of Triumph which are now in print. Vernon's original handling from *Stars of Magic* will also work well. Since most magicians have a favorite method of performing Triumph, I would suggest using the method you're comfortable with. My handling is to turn half the deck face up and perform a Zarrow shuffle under the top card, then immediately execute an Up- The- Ladder-Cut, and then employ Daryl's Cutting Display from *Secrets of a Puerto Rican Gambler*. I right the top half (and reverse the original top card) using Vernon's method from *Stars of Magic*. If you're not comfortable with this, a sleight-free method is included in FINAL NOTES.

Whatever method you choose, the end result must be the same: after the face-up, face-down shuffle, all the cards should be going the same way, except for a reversed card in the center.



**TO PERFORM:** In between tricks, get any Four to the top of the deck and memorize it. I find the easiest way to do this is by sighting the top few cards each time you do a riffle shuffle. This is not hard, and usually after three or four shuffles a Four will turn up. Memorize this card. For the sake of explanation, let's say this card is the Four of Hearts.

Now perform your favorite method of Triumph while talking about how little kids shuffle playing cards when they're bored and have nothing to do. I like to make a big deal out of the mixing and subsequent display of the face-up, face-down cards. When you're finished with your shuffles, leave the deck face up on the table. (The cards should now be all going the same way except for your memorized Four, which is reversed in the deck's center).

Turn to a spectator who you feel comfortable with (preferably one who's already assisted you and is easy to work with) and say, "Pick a color, red or black."

Using Equivoque, force the red. Say, "Hearts or Diamonds?"

Again, use Equivoque to force the Hearts. Remember: neither the audience nor the spectator assisting you knows what you're doing, so you will meet little resistance during this innocuous sequence. Now say, "Name a number between One and Five." Most of the time, they will name the Four. If they name the Two or Three, eliminate it, then use Equivoque to force the number Four.

Pause, then say, "Remember how I shuffled the cards face up and face down? Well, while you weren't looking, I straightened them all out!" Ribbon spread the cards face up across the table. The righted condition of the pack will garner a terrific reaction. Point at the reversed card and push it out for half its length. Say, "You named a card a moment ago — which one was it?"

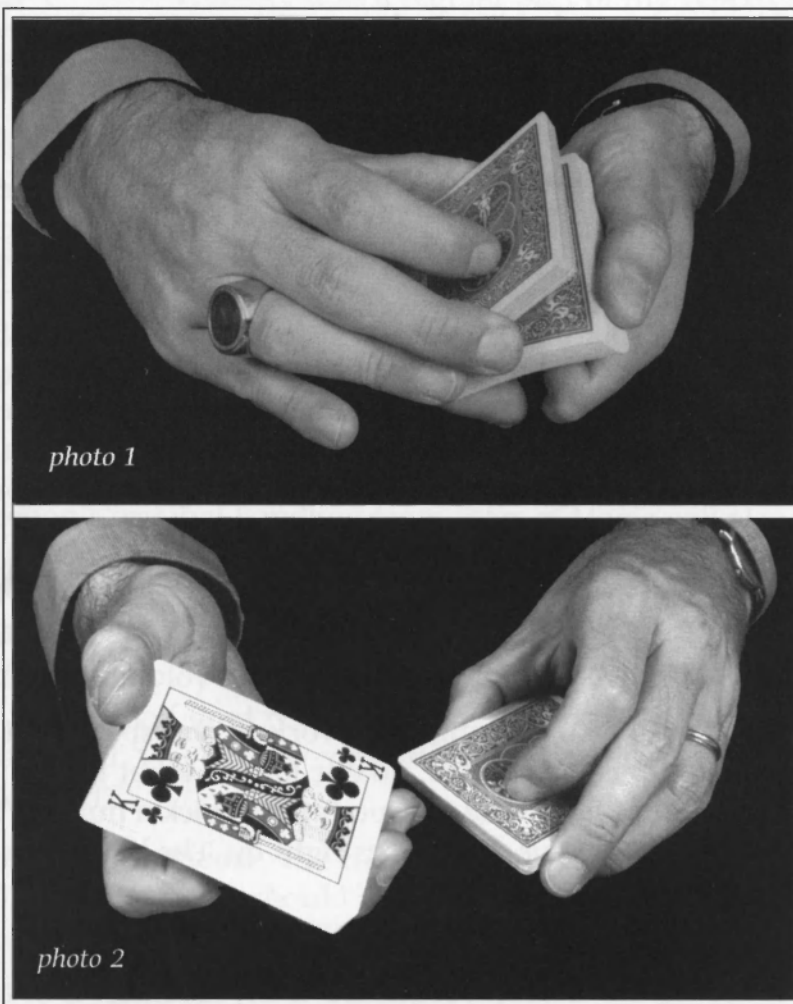
Get the spectator to say, "Four of Hearts." Often, another spectator will call out the card for you. Dramatically turn over the reversed card in the center of the spread to reveal the Four of Hearts to conclude.

**FINAL NOTES:** The key to making this work is the speed and casualness with which you ask the questions. Remember, no one knows what the hell you're doing, so don't make a big deal out of it. Asking the spectator to pick a number between One and Five might seem blatantly obvious, but it flies right by. The key is to keep moving until you hit the Four.

If my assistant is female, I try to get the Four of Hearts or Four of Diamonds to the top and reverse it during the Triumph sequence. If my assistant is of the opposite sex, I

will usually use the Four of Spades or Four of Clubs, which seem to be easier to force on males.

**SIMPLE METHOD:** An easy way to perform this routine is to get the card you wish to force on the bottom, and reverse it during a few casual shuffles. Hold the deck in the left hand and riffle down with the left thumb and have the spectator say stop (see Photo 1). Grab the top half from above with the right hand, and turn both hands over at the same time (see Photo 2). Because of the reversed card on the bottom of the left-hand cards, no one will notice that the packet has been reversed. Riffle shuffle the two halves together, burying the reversed card (your force) in the center as you do. Do whatever sequence you want to show the haphazard condition of the cards, then proceed with the routine as described. (The turnover move described above is Tenkai's, from the *Tarbell Course in Magic*, Volume 1)



## The Miracle Deck



Several years ago, I purchased a glim from Tony Giorgio. For those unfamiliar with this device, it is dime-sized polished mirror which, if held in the correct position in the hand, allows the performer to glimpse the indexes of the cards coming off the top of the deck. Many card hustlers have made a nice living knowing how to work a glim, and the manuscript which Mr. Giorgio provided gives valuable insight regarding how to use this versatile prop.

The glim is also a wonderful prop when performing card magic, and can lift the most ordinary of tricks into the miracle class. Unfortunately, the prop's size is its biggest drawback; I discovered that the glim was easily dropped, and worse, misplaced. Fearful of losing it during a show, I put it away in a drawer, losing a great deal of powerful magic in the process.

Unhappy with this situation, I began experimenting with alternate methods of reading cards from an ordinary deck. A reflective metal watch band was played with and later discarded; so was a gimmicked card box which contained a mirror. Like the glim, these props required good lighting, and I was looking for something which could be done anywhere and at any time.

After several years of experimenting with memorized stacks and other mentally taxing methods, I finally hit upon The Miracle Deck. If I could market this to magicians I certainly would, for it opens up a whole new world of possibilities with a deck of cards. Imagine this effect: several cards are selected from a normal deck by different spectators, who in turn individually lose their cards into the pack. Instantly, the magician knows the identity of each card without asking a single question. Or this: a spectator takes a handful of cards from the deck, selects one, memorizes it, and shuffles it with his other cards. Again, the card is instantly known, yet the performer does not look at the faces of the cards at any time.

These are just two of the routines which are possible with the Miracle Deck. More will certainly come to mind. If this all sounds like a lot of hyperbole, then read on. I'm certain that by the time you're finished with this section, your enthusiasm will be equal to mine.

**THE MECHANICS:** You will need a deck in Si Stebbins order. For those not familiar with this special arrangement, it is quite easy. The cards are arranged by suit, ChaSeD, with each card three values higher than the one above it, King, 3, 6, 9, Queen, 2, 5, 8, Jack, Ace, 4, 7, 10, and so on throughout the deck, starting with the King of Clubs. With the deck in this order, you can look at the bottom card after the deck has been cut, and instantly know the identity of the top card, as well as those beneath it.

For those familiar with my work, you by now are aware that I am partial to Darwin Ortiz's ingenious Si Stebbins Secret, which can be found in *Darwin Ortiz At The Card Table*. This wonderful deceit allows the performer to openly arrange a brand new deck of cards in Si Stebbins order right under an unsuspecting spectator's nose, and works for both Hoyle and U.S. Playing Card Company decks. I urge you to check it out.

Now for the work. Give the deck a casual straight cut, then spread it between your hands and ask a spectator to touch the back of any card and pull it out. As the card is taken, separate the hands so the spectator can remove the card without fear of dropping any other cards in the spread. As the card is removed, the cards in the right hand are squared with those in the left and a left pinky break is established between the halves. Bring the hands back toward your chest while the spectator looks at their card and memorizes it.

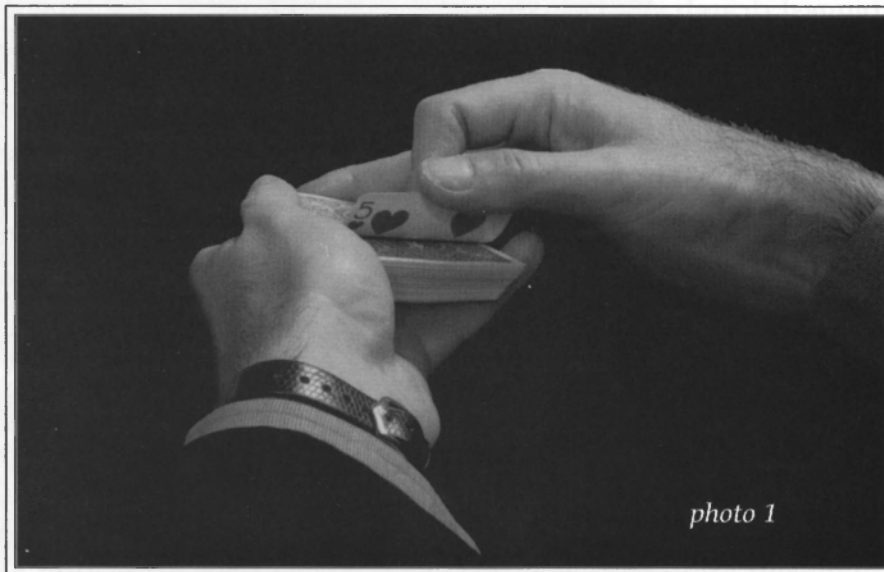


photo 1

As this is being done (and the cards are being drawn toward your chest) secretly perform a Riffle Pass, allowing the cards to fly off the right thumb as the deck is riffled. By putting a heavy bend in the cards as the Riffle Pass is executed, you will be able to glimpse the new top card of the deck as the riffle is completed (see Photo 1, slightly exaggerated). This glimpse is undetectable and happens in a flash. Remember, all you need to see is the index of the new top card.



Let's say the card is the 5 of Hearts. Since this card was sitting directly beneath the card now held by the spectator, you can learn the identity of the spectator's card by going backwards in the Si Stebbins arrangement. This means the spectator's selected card is the 2 of Clubs. Practice this a few times to get a feel for it. It is not difficult to do.

Drop the deck in front of the spectator. Have them replace their selection on top, and give the deck a straight cut, losing their selection and restoring your Si Stebbins order. You may now have more cards selected using the same process. If you find the thought of performing the Riffle Pass multiple times daunting, don't worry! Not only will the spectator be absorbed by your instructions, but she will be looking at her card. While the spectator's eyes are focused on her card, she won't be able to burn your hands. Pulling a card from a deck and memorizing it is a big responsibility for most people, and the misdirection is unbelievably strong.

When performing the pass, remember to keep your hands moving backward as the move is done. This should not be hurried. Once the top card is glimpsed, drop the deck casually on the table. Nothing could be more fair.

Another favorite routine with The Miracle Deck is to have a spectator remove a poker hand (five cards) from anywhere in the center. As the poker hand is removed, break the deck so the right hand is holding the cards that were above the poker hand while the left hand is holding the rest. Ask the spectator to remove the five cards, then select one card from the spread. Note the selected card's position in the spread, then ask the spectator to shuffle their selection with the other four cards. Let's say the selected card was third in the spread.

While they are shuffling, bring the hands together and get a left pinky break above the bottom card of those in the right hand. Close the spread, bring the cards inward and perform the Riffle Pass, noting the new top card. Let's say this card is the 4 of Diamonds. By working forward in the Si Stebbins arrangement, you know that the next five cards are the 7 of Clubs, 10 of Hearts, King of Spades, 3 of Diamonds, 6 of Clubs. Since the selected card was third in the spread, you know it was the King of Spades. Proceed with your miracle.

Another excellent trick employs the Miracle Deck and a second deck with a contrasting back design. Have a card selected from the Miracle Deck and as it is noted perform a Riffle Pass and note the new top card. Hand the deck to the spectator and ask them to place it beneath the table. Have the spectator take their selected card and place it reversed somewhere in the center of the deck.

While this is being done, pick up the second deck and give it a wide face-up ribbon

spread across the table. Quickly note the location of the match of the spectator's selected card. Let's say this card is the Ace of Diamonds. As you gather the cards, it is a simple matter to bring this one to the top (rear of the deck) as the cards are assembled. Turn the deck face down, and perform Vernon's Triumph, reversing the top card in the center of the deck in the process.

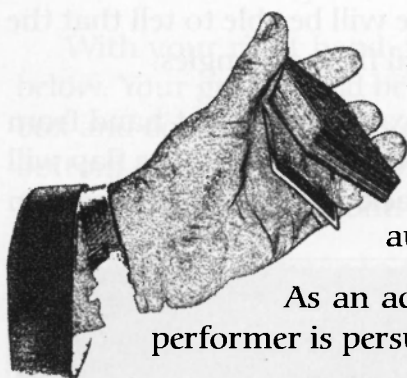
Turn the deck face up and leave it on the table. Ask the spectator to remove their deck from beneath the table, turn it face up, and spread it across the table. One card will be reversed in the center. Spread your deck face up. One reversed card will show in the center. Remove your card at the same time as the spectator, and have both turned over to reveal that they match.

**FINAL NOTES:** There is a very special form of misdirection which is in play when using the Miracle Deck. It is so strong that, in all likelihood, you will never be caught doing the Riffle Pass (How many moves in card magic can claim that?).

The misdirection which is employed it is based upon something a gambler pointed out to me years ago, and was most recently explained by Dustin D. Marks in his book *Cheating At Cards Squared*. In explaining how to past post at blackjack (i.e.: add chips to a bet after a hand has been played), Mr. Marks states: "It is important to understand the misdirection this move uses. The cheater supposedly makes a mistake by not spreading his cards. As the cards are then spread, attention is on the cards and then on the cheater's hand, but the move has already taken place. When the move occurred, there was no attention on the cards or the cheater's hand. It is only after the move that the cheater misdirects attention back to the cards... If a person understands this concept he or she will be able to use the correct misdirection to control a person's attention. Once a cheater can do this, virtually anything can be accomplished."

I should also note that it was Dai Vernon who first showed me a pass with the hands in motion. At the time, Vernon was in his early eighties. In his hands this method of the pass was totally invisible and a thing of real beauty.

## The Last Good Trick



Every once in a while, a magician will come upon an audience that won't let him quit (it happens). This trick was designed with such a situation in mind. It is strong and has a sense of finality to it. When its over, the audience will know you're done.

As an added benefit, it can serve as an excellent deck switch, if the performer is persuaded to do "just one more."

**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** A card is selected and the deck shuffled thoroughly by the spectator. The cards are boxed and the boxed deck given to the spectator to hold. The spectator is told to hold the deck tight, whereupon the magician knocks the boxed deck from the spectator's grasp. To the spectator's shock, their selected card remains in their hand!

**TO PERFORM:** Give the deck a shuffle and spread it between your hands. Invite a spectator to touch the back of any card. As the spectator reaches for a card, open the spread at the section of the deck their hand is heading toward. Once you have determined which card they want, reach under the spread deck with your right pinky and put a crimp in the lower right corner of this card. Break the deck at their selected card, and raise the cards to eye level, allowing the spectator to see the card.

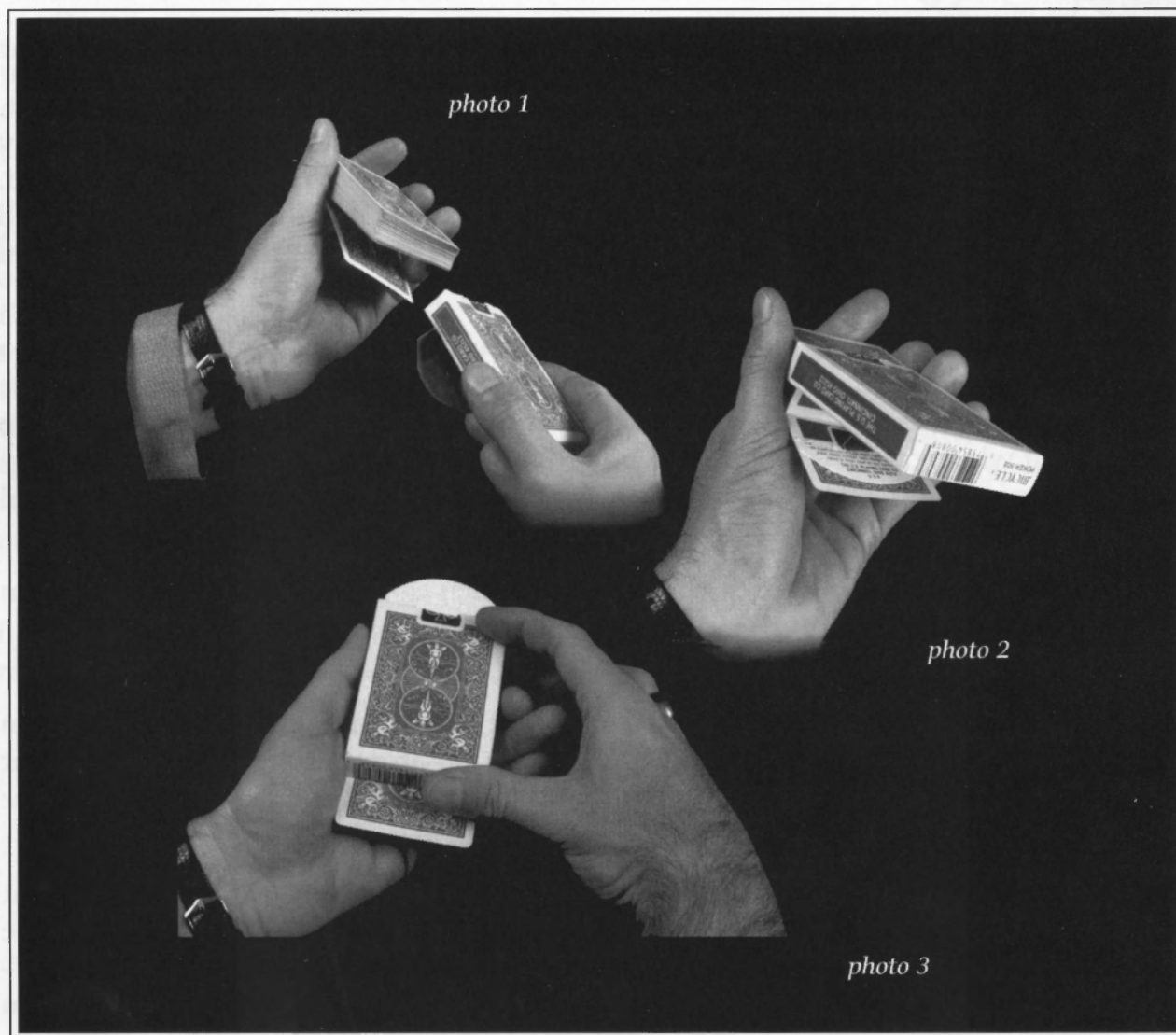
Ask the spectator to memorize their selection, then close the spread and hand them the deck. Mimic doing an overhand shuffle and say "Please give the cards a quick mix." This is an excellent way to have a card selected, as it connotes utter fairness.

Take the deck back from the spectator and spot your crimp. If it is not visible from the side of the deck you're looking at, perform an all-around square up, and look at the other side. Once you've spotted your crimp, cut it so the crimped card goes to the bottom of the deck. Drop the deck into your left hand in dealing grip.

With the right hand, pick up the empty card box as follows. Hold the box by its flat sides, the thumb on the half-moon side and your three fingers underneath. The forefinger is left free. Use the forefinger to pull the box's flap away from the half-moon side and against your fingers on the other side of the box. Buckle the bottom

card of the deck (the selection) with the left forefinger, obtaining a large break between the selection and the rest of the deck. Bring the box to the deck from behind (see Photo 1, performer's angle) and slip the box over the deck while allowing the selection to ride underneath the box. This will cause the flap to become pinned between the selected card and the boxed deck (see Photo 2, exposed view). No one will be able to tell that the bottom card does not go into the box, as the move is covered from all angles.

Once the deck is completely inside the box, grasp the box with the right hand from above in Biddle Grip. Move the box forward quickly for about two inches. The flap will disengage and fly out, as it should. Quickly bring the box back over the selected card in





your left hand. The bottom card will only be exposed for a fraction of a second, and only to you (see Photo 3). Grasp the flap with your right fingers and insert it into the box. The selection now rests secretly beneath the boxed deck. This is a Gene Maze move, and is a thing of real beauty.

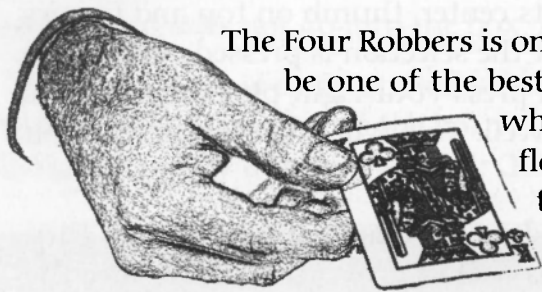
With your right hand grasp the boxed deck at its center, thumb on top and fingers below. Your grip should be very tight, insuring that the selection is pressed against the box and does not bow. As extra insurance, you can press your right pinky against the bottom of the box, and hold the card against it as well. This will prevent the selection from flashing at the front.

Invite the spectator to pinch the boxed deck. It does not matter which corner they choose to pinch, just be sure that the spectator has a firm grip on the box. Once the spectator has a secure grip, pull your hand back. Pause a few seconds, then forcefully slap your right hand on the box, sending it to the table or floor. The face-down selected card will remain pinched between the spectator's fingers. Pause to let this sink in, then ask the spectator to name their card. Have the spectator show the audience the card, pocket the boxed deck, and take your bow.

**AS A DECK SWITCH:** This is quite easy. Simply drop the boxed deck in your pocket and remove an identical boxed deck which you placed there previously. No one will be watching you, as all attention will be on the spectator. However, if you feel guilty about such things, turn your body to the spectator holding the card and switch the deck with the hand which is hidden from the audience.

**FINAL NOTES:** Several years ago during a show, I performed this routine with the intent of ringing in a stacked deck. When it came time to make the switch, I dropped the boxed deck into my right jacket pocket, only to discover that the other deck was not there. I removed my hand from my jacket, reached into my left jacket pocket with my other hand, and found the stacked deck. I removed the deck from the wrong pocket without anyone in the audience — which included fifty-plus magicians — being the wiser.

# The Four Robbers



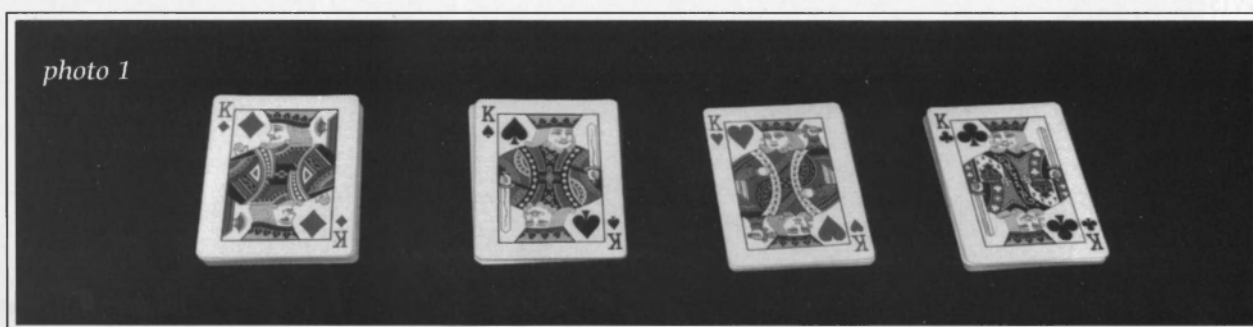
The Four Robbers is one of the oldest plots in card magic. It also happens to be one of the best. The story concerns four brothers (the four Kings) who rob a hotel, with each brother working a different floor in the building while the fourth stays on the roof to act as a lookout. Seeing the police enter the hotel, the fourth King sounds the alarm, and his three brothers magically join him on the roof.

The following handling of this classic plot is something I've been doing a long time. It is angle-proof and extremely baffling, as the four Kings appear face up on top of the deck after having been inserted face-down a few moments before. The routine will require practice, but the effort will be well rewarded.

**SET-UP:** None. Any deck can be used.

**TO PERFORM:** Openly cull the four Kings out of a face-up deck and put them on the table in a small fan. Holding the deck face up in the left hand, give it a firm concave bend, then cut it into four relatively equal piles on your working surface. Now pick up the Kings and spread them face up between your hands. While pattering, square the Kings, giving them a firm convex bend, and drop each King onto the face of a packet on the table (see Photo 1). For sake of explanation, we'll have the Clubs, Hearts, Spades and Diamonds reading from left to right. You're set to begin.

"I'd like to show you one of the very first tricks I've ever learned," you say. "It's called the Four Robbers, and it concerns four brothers who made a living robbing hotels."



With your right hand, pick up the packet on the left which contains the King of Clubs on the face, and place this packet into your left hand. Point at the King of Clubs with your right index finger and say, "The first brother, the King of Clubs, was a burly sort, and was used to kick in the front door."

With the right fingers grab the King of Clubs packet as follows: place the right thumb on top, the other four fingers beneath, the grip similar to the one used by the right hand when performing an Elmsley count. With the right thumb maintaining pressure on the King of Clubs, slide this card a half inch to the right, then use the right fingers to flip all the cards beneath the King face-down. This might seem awkward at first, but it will flow smoothly after a little practice.

You are left with a face-down packet of cards in your left hand and a face-up King of Clubs in the right (see Photo 2). Place the King onto the top of the packet and clip it against the packet with the left thumb. In one continuing action, the right fingers flip the King of Clubs face down, catching a Greek (Heel) break beneath this card as it is turned over.

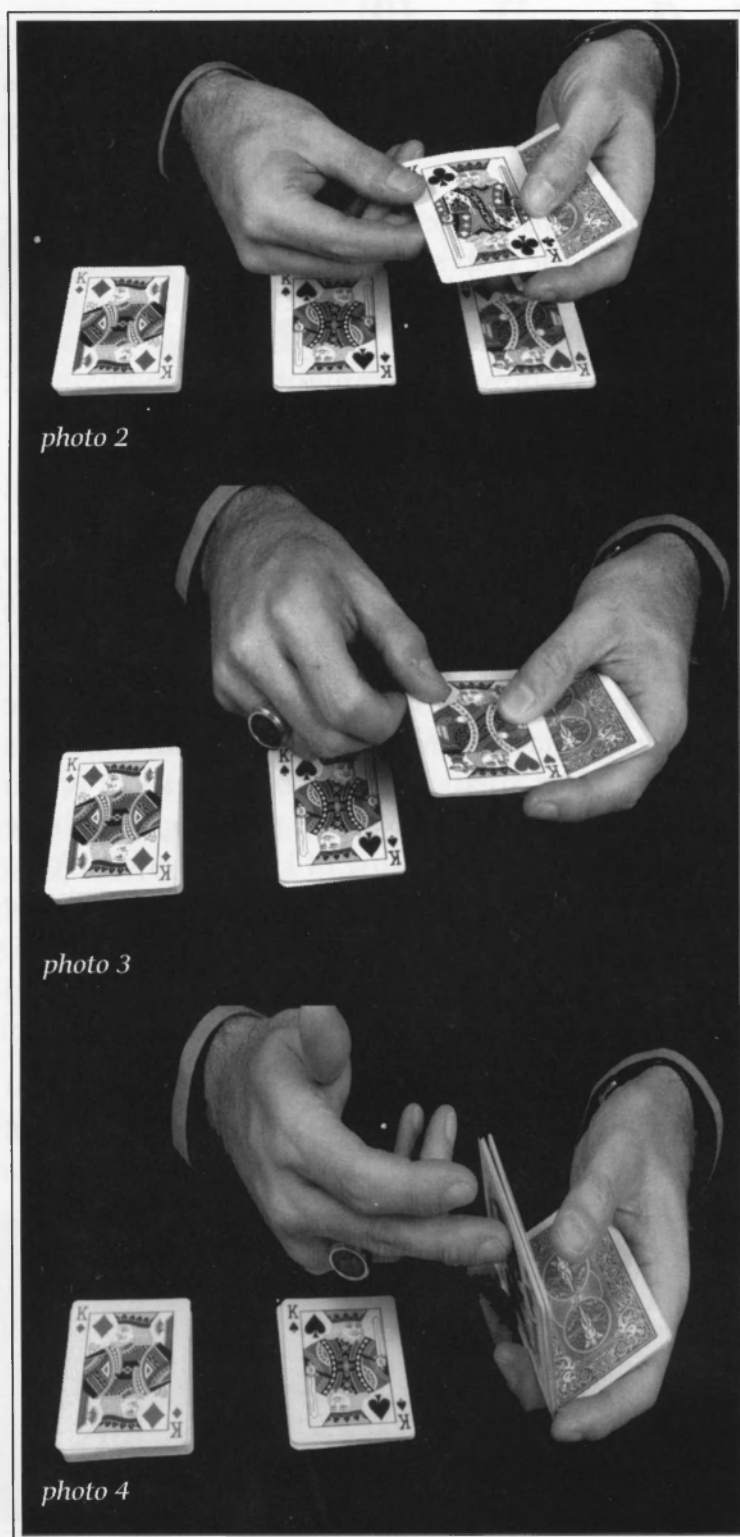
Your right hand now picks up the face-up King of Hearts packet, and drops it on the face-down packet in your left hand. Your right hand immediately moves all the cards above your Greek break to the right, and holds them stepped for half their width against the top of the deck (see Photo 3). Unbeknownst to your audience, you have secretly transferred the King of Clubs to the bottom of the King of Hearts packet. Point at the King of Hearts and say, "The second brother, the King of Hearts, used to work the first floor of the apartment, and would steal things like TVs and toasters."

With your right fingers, take the King of Heart off the face of the packet and turn it face-down in stud fashion. Place this King flush beneath the extended top packet, which is immediately flipped over onto the packet in the left hand (see Photo 4). You have openly righted the packet while secretly stealing the King of Clubs beneath the face-up King of Hearts.

From the top down, the cards should read: face-up King of Hearts, face-up King of Clubs, and the rest of the face down deck.

Perform a double turnover of the two Kings on the face. The best way to do this is with a double push-off, which is made easier due to the convex bend you placed in the cards earlier. If you can't do a double-push off, do a hit double lift, and turn the double over that way. As the two cards turn face down, obtain a Greek break beneath them.

The King of Spades packet is picked up with the right hand and dropped onto the



deck. With the right hand grasp all the cards above your Greek break and move them to the right, holding them stepped for half their width against the deck. You have secretly stolen the King of Clubs and King of Hearts beneath the King of Spades packet. Say, "The third brother, the King of Spades, was a little more sophisticated. He used to crack safes and steal valuables and jewelry."

Your right fingers now take the King of Spades off the face of its packet and turn the King face down in stud fashion. The King is placed flush beneath the extended packet, which is flipped over onto the other cards in the left hand. From the top down, the cards will now read King of Spades, King of Hearts, Kings of Clubs (all face up) rest of deck face down.

Perform a triple-turnover of the top three cards. As the King(s) turn face down, catch a Greek break beneath them as before.

Pick up the last packet, the King of Diamonds, and drop it onto the cards in the left hand. Immediately pick up all the cards above your Greek break and move them to the right, holding them stepped for half their width with your left thumb. Point at



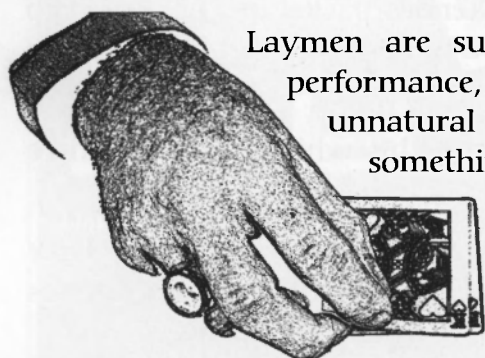
the King of Diamonds and say, "The fourth brother, the King of Diamonds, was the lookout. He carried a whistle, and his job was to stand on the roof and watch for the police."

Your right fingers take the King of Diamonds off the face of its packet, turn it face down in stud fashion, and place it flush beneath the extended packet on the deck. Flip this packet face down onto the cards in the left hand. You have openly righted the cards while secretly bringing all four Kings to the top!

"And if the King of Diamonds saw the police, he blew his whistle, and his three brothers immediately ran up to the roof and joined him."

Deal the Kings to the table in an overlapping row, revealing the three brothers have joined the lookout on top. Spread the rest of the deck face up behind the row of Kings so the audience will see you're not using any duplicates, then take your bow.

## 21st Century Assembly



Laymen are suspicious of fast movements in any type of magic performance, especially one in which cards are involved. Any fast or unnatural action immediately belies to the audience that something surreptitious has taken place or is about to take place.

The fact that the laymen doesn't know what that action does is immaterial: they caught you, and that's all that matters in their minds.

It is my belief that every time you perform, you should include a trick which can be performed in slow motion. This trick can be something very basic (Brother John's The Twins and Dr. Daley's Last Trick immediately come to mind, or see Birds of a Feather elsewhere in this book). By performing slowly (and with your sleeves rolled up) you will allow skeptical members of the audience to indulge themselves by burning your hands while coming no closer to the trick's secret.

The following routine was developed with just this criterion in mind. I use it as a "challenge" effect. The mechanics are straightforward and one hundred percent angle-proof, and the ending will knock their proverbial socks off.

**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** The magician culls the four Kings out of the deck and places them in a face-up pile on the table. The deck is cut into four packets. One at a time, the Kings are placed on top of each packet, with the last King being dropped face up onto its packet. The magician snaps his fingers, then picks up the packet with the face-up King and deals four face-up Kings to the table!

For a finale, the Kings are cut into the leader packet, and a face-up Ace appears on top of the packet. The top cards of the other three packets are turned over to reveal the other three Aces!

**SET-UP:** Prior to the routine, get the four Aces on top of the deck. This can be accomplished a variety of different ways — the easiest is to use the Aces in another trick, then leave them on top, and perform a routine which does not disturb your top cards.

**TO PERFORM:** Holding the deck face up, openly cull through the cards and upjog

the four Kings. It is necessary for the Kings to be in alternating color sequence for the trick to work (If they're not, don't worry; you'll have a chance later on to get them in the right order). When you've found the last King and upjogged it, lift the spread towards you, and spread until you come to the last three cards (three Aces). Close the spread while getting a pinky break above these three cards. Grasp the deck with the right hand from the rear, your fingers going between the deck and the three Aces. Move the left hand forward and add the three Aces below the break to the upjogged Kings as they're stripped from the deck. This is the Vernon's Strip-out Addition, and is completely invisible.

With the right hand, turn the deck face down and slip it beneath the seven-card packet in the left hand. Keep a break between the deck and the seven card packet with your left pinky.

If the Kings were not in alternating color sequence when you first stripped them out, now is the time to get them in the proper order.

Square the Kings onto the deck. With the right thumb, secretly pick up the face-down card directly below your pinky break. Maintain a break between this card and the King packet in preparation for Marlo's AFTUS move. With your left thumb, peel two of the face-up Kings onto the top of the deck. As you peel the third King onto the deck, secretly drop the single card which you stole off the deck a moment before. Now push the third King off the deck and add it to the rear of the packet in your right hand. Drop this packet face up on your working surface. The order of this packet, from the face, will be a King, three Aces, and a second King which is a different color than the face King.

Pick up the deck with the right hand in Biddle Grip. Place the right forefinger firmly on the top card, then cut the deck into four equal packets. Slide the last packet behind the first three packets you cut, forming the familiar T-formation. By placing your forefinger onto the top card, there is no chance of it bowing, and exposing the face up Kings hiding beneath it. For sake of explanation, we'll call these packets A, B, C, and D, with A being to your immediate left, B in the center, and C to your immediate right, and D behind the other three.

Pick up the face-up King(?)packet and flip it face down. Hold the packet in the right hand as if to do an Elmsley Count. With the left fingers, peel three single cards into the left hand. A double card will remain in the right hand. Flip this double onto the left hand cards. A King will show. Turn the double face down, and deal the top card onto Packet A.

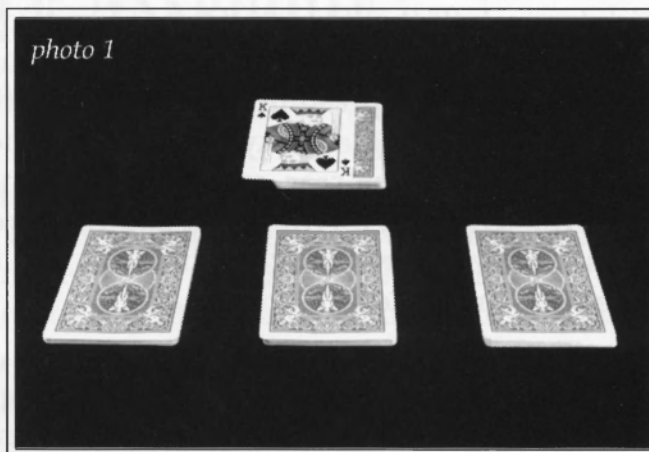
Grasp the King packet with the right hand as if to do an Elmsley Count. With the left fingers, peel two cards into the left hand, leaving a double in the right. Flip the double onto the left-hand cards. A second King will show. Flip the double face down, and deal the top card onto Packet B.

The packet in your left hand now consists of three cards. Pull a double off the bottom, and flip it face up. A King will show. Flip the double face down, and deal the top card onto Packet C. You are now left with a double card in your



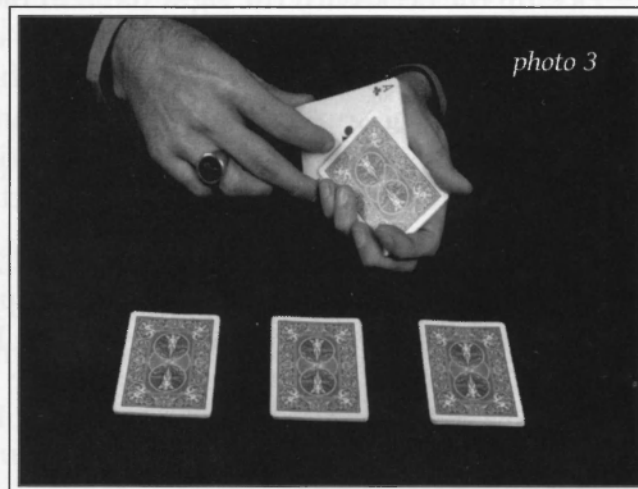
Pause. Recap what you've done (in slow motion, no less). The audience believes three face-down Kings are sitting on the top of Packets A, B and C, while a face-up King sits atop Packet D.

Pick up Packet D and slowly push the King on top (the double) flush with the packet. Click your fingers magically over the cards. Now deal the four Kings to the table, dealing a single King, a double card (a face-up King with a face



left hand, which consists of two Kings. This is Larry Jennings' modification of Daryl's display sequence.

The last King (a double) is snapped face up in the left hand. Take this face-up double from above with the right hand in Biddle Grip and hold it a few inches over packet D. Drop the double onto Packet D, leaving a portion of the face-down card on top exposed (see Photo 1, audience's view).





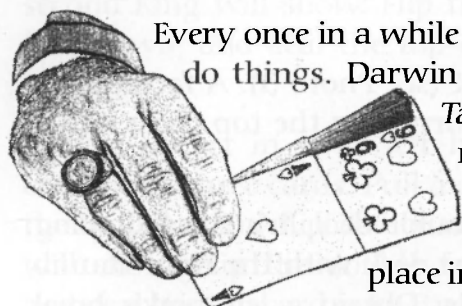
down Ace beneath it), and then two more single Kings (see Photo 2). This is a startling revelation, as the audience just saw you place the Kings face down onto the other packets.

Now for a wonderful ending. Pick up the Kings with the right hand, and flip them face down on the packet in the left.

Immediately give the packet an in-the-hands slip cut (see Photo 3). A face-up Ace will show. Drop the packet to the table, then rapidly turn over the top cards of the other three packets to reveal the rest of the Aces.

**FINAL NOTES:** if you're not comfortable doing a double-deal, try the following: holding the deck in the left hand, riffle up the rear of the deck with the right thumb, stopping when the right thumb is holding three cards. Obtain a left pinky break beneath these three cards. Remove the top card in Biddle Grip and drop it on the table, then come back to the deck and remove the double (easy because of your break) and drop them onto the King already on the table. Deal the remaining two Kings onto the pile on the table to conclude.

# The Explosion



Every once in a while someone comes up with an idea which alters the way we do things. Darwin Ortiz's Si Stebbins Secret (see *Darwin Ortiz at the Card Table*) is such an example. Darwin's secret allows a magician to take a brand-new deck of cards and, during the act of shuffling it, secretly place the cards into Si Stebbins order. It is truly a miracle move, and deserves a place in every serious card magician's repertoire.

Whenever I open a brand-new deck of cards, I place it into Si Stebbins order using Darwin's method. As a result, the following routine has found a permanent place in my work.

**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** The magician removes a deck and shows it to be shuffled. He invites a spectator to give it a cut. Three cards are removed at the spot where the spectator cut. These card shown to three different spectators. The cards are replaced and the cards are cut by several spectators. The magician throws in several shuffles to really mix the cards. There is no doubt that the selections are lost.

The deck is split and one half is telescoped into the other. The magician offers to find each selection, along with each selection's three mates. Twelve cards are magically shaken out of the deck; they prove to be the three selections and all of their mates!

**SET-UP:** You will need a deck in Si Stebbins order. For those not familiar with the Si Stebbins order, it is this: the cards are arranged by suit, CHaSeD, with each card three values higher than the one above it — King, 3, 6, 9, Queen, 2, 5, 8, Jack, Ace, 4, 7, 10 — and so on throughout the deck, starting with the King of Clubs. When the deck is prearranged in this manner, you can glimpse the bottom card after the deck has been cut, and instantly discern the identity of the card on top of the deck, as well as those beneath it.

**TO PERFORM:** Take a deck in Si Stebbins order and give it a casual in-the-hands false shuffle followed by a straight cut. If you don't know any in-the-hands false shuffles, simply give the deck a few straight cuts, since this will not alter the Si Stebbins arrangement. Turn the deck face up and spread it between the hands, letting the audience see its "random" order.

Turn the deck face down and hand it to a spectator. Ask the spectator to give the deck a straight cut. Complete the cut for them, pick up the deck, and remove the top three

cards in a small fan. Hold these cards so they face the audience. Ask three spectators to each memorize a card. Turn your head as you make this request, so it is obvious that you could not know the identities of the cards. As the cards are being remembered, secretly glimpse the bottom card of the deck. (Just turn the deck over with the left hand and look at the bottom). Memorize this card. Let's say it's the Two of Clubs. You now know the identities of the three selections (5 of Hearts, 8 of Spades, Jack of Diamonds).

Replace the three cards and cut the deck. Have the spectator who gave them the first cut give the deck another cut. You can, if you want, have the deck cut again, although it's not essential.

Turn the deck face up and tell the spectators you will try to locate the three selections. Quickly spread the top 10-12 cards until you come to any Two. Cut the Two to the face of the deck and say, "This is going to be harder than I thought."

Turn the cards face down and give the deck a perfect faro shuffle (either an in-faro or out-faro will work). Tell the spectators you'll cut to their selections. Cut the deck with the right hand and hold the cards so the face card is exposed to you but hidden from your audience. If this happens to be one of the selections, replace the packet and cut again. The idea is not to cut to one of the selections.

Display the face-card to the first spectator. Announce that this is their card. They will deny it. Show the card to the other two spectators and politely inquire if this happens to be their card. Both will say no. Act puzzled and drop the packet onto the deck. Under your breath say, "Maybe I'd better try this again."

Give the deck another perfect faro shuffle (either an in-faro or out-faro will work). You have now secretly separated the deck with the four 5s on the top, followed by the four 8s, followed by the four Jacks, and so on, with the four Deuces on the bottom. This is an interesting feature of the Si Stebbins system and worth exploiting.

Tell the spectators you'll try and cut to their selections. Cut somewhere near center and expose the card at the face to the three spectators. They will all deny this is their card.

Act dejected, then announce that you'll try and redeem yourself. Not only will you magically find the three selections, you say, but you'll also find each card's three mates. Considering your inability to locate the selections, this claim will usually be met with skepticism by your audience.

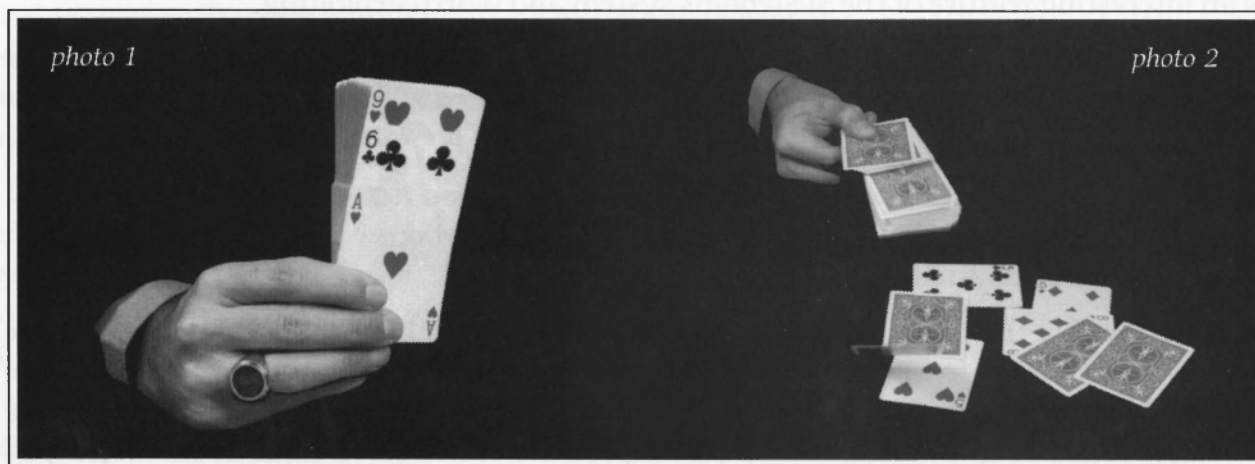
Cut no more than 25 cards from the top and faro them into the lower portion of the deck in preparation for Paul LePaul's Gymnastic Aces (See The Divining Rod). You are now going to shake twelve cards out of the deck using the LePaul revelation, but before you do, turn the right hand palm up and expose the bottom two cards of the telescoped

deck. With your left forefinger, reach up and push in the face card of the outer half of the telescoped deck for approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch, exposing the card beneath it (see Photo 1). There are two reasons for doing this. One, you let the audience see that the selections are not on the bottom. And, by pushing this card in, you are insuring that it won't accidentally fly out of the deck during the LePaul revelation. This wonderful idea is the brainchild of Del Ray.

Turn to the first spectator. Begin to violently whip the telescoped cards up and down with your right hand. The idea is to get four cards to fly out of the deck and land on your working surface. Without pausing, turn your body so you are facing the second spectator and continue to make cards fly out until another four cards are lying on your working surface, then turn and make another four cards fly out for the third spectator (see Photo 2). In all, you will shake 12 cards fly out of the deck, and each one will come out slightly differently (some face down, some face up, and some will do somersaults). The effect is truly an "explosion" and will be remembered by your audience for a long time.

Once the 12th card has appeared, push the telescoped cards together and spread them face up on your working surface. The shuffle will effectively destroy the deck's set-up. Use both hands to turn any face-down revelations on the table face-up while asking the three spectators to name their selections. Let everyone see that you made good on your claim, and made not only the selections appear, but also each selections' three mates.

**FINAL NOTES:** The idea of using the LePaul move to produce a large number of cards was first developed by a Japanese bar magician, who published his routine in the Card Corner of *The Linking Ring*. In this routine, a card was selected and hidden; then the magician telescoped the deck, and using the LePaul move, produced the other twelve cards with the same suit as the selection.





## Too Many Jokers



**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** a deck is cut and shuffled repeatedly. Each time the magician turns over the top card, a Joker appears. This occurs four times. These Jokers are dropped in a pile on the table. For a finale, the pile of Jokers is shown to have turned into the four Aces, and the shuffled deck is shown to be in order, with the four Twos on top, followed by the four Threes, then the Fours, and so forth, with the four

Kings on the bottom. The Jokers are nowhere to be found.

**SET-UP:** The easiest way to prepare the cards is to use a new deck. For the purpose of this explanation, I will use a deck of Bicycle cards, which come in the following order from the factory: from the top down, Ace-King of Hearts, Ace-King of Clubs, King-Ace of Diamonds, King-Ace of Spades. A new deck also includes one Joker, an extra Joker, and some junk cards. Save the Joker and throw the other cards away.

To set the deck, cut the lower 26 cards to the top, then overhand shuffle 13 cards, drop the deck on top, overhand shuffle another 13 cards, and drop the deck on top. This will leave the cards in the following order from the top: Ace-King of Hearts, Ace-King of Clubs, Ace-King of Diamonds, Ace-King of Spades. Take the Joker and place it second from the top (between the Ace and Two of Hearts) and you are ready to start.

**TO PERFORM:** Remove your prepared deck from its case and give it a false cut or two (you can use Marlo's False Cut described elsewhere in this book). Tell the audience that you want to show them a great trick. Say, "This trick works with any card in the deck." While pattering, perform a double-turnover of the top two cards, exposing the Joker. Say, "Except the Joker."

Turn the double face-down and deal the supposed Joker (really the Ace of Hearts) to the table. Cut the deck at 26 and give the cards a perfect In-faro shuffle (the cut is made easier by the fact that the King of Clubs is residing at the 26th position and acts as a key card). Cascade the deck between your hands upon completing the faro. Follow with another false cut. Say, "We'll use the new top card."

Perform a double-turnover to reveal a second Joker. Act perplexed, turn the double face down, and deal the supposed Joker (actually the Ace of Diamonds) onto the table.

You are now left with a 51-card deck. Cut the cards so there are 25 cards in your right hand (your key card here is the King of Hearts, which will be at the face of the right-hand packet) and straddle faro these into the 26 card packet in your left hand. Cascade the cards between your hands upon completion of the shuffle.

Say, "How about this one?" and perform a double-turnover to reveal a third Joker. Turn the double face down and deal the supposed Joker (actually the Ace of Spades) onto the other two Aces on the table.

Give the deck a false cut and turn over the top card. A fourth Joker will show. Mutter "This isn't going to work..." and turn the card face down. Hold it in the right hand in preparation for a top change. Look up into the faces of your audience and say, "I've got too many Jokers." while performing a top change of the Joker. Hold the supposed Joker over the pile of other supposed Jokers and wave the card over the pile. All eyes will be on these cards. Take advantage of this opportunity and dump the Joker as follows: if standing, simply drop the deck to your side and let the Joker fall to the floor, or toss it on your seat. If sitting, thumb the Joker off the deck into your lap. There is plenty of misdirection here so don't sweat this. Once the Joker is gone, casually place the deck onto the table.

For a finale, show the card in the right hand has turned into the Ace of Clubs. Flip over the other Aces on the table. Drop them onto the deck, then turn the deck face up and perform a wide right-to-left ribbon spread. The audience will see the four Aces followed by the four Twos, Threes, Fours, all the way to the bottom where the four Kings reside. This is a very pretty display which is made equally perplexing by the fact that the four Jokers have vanished!

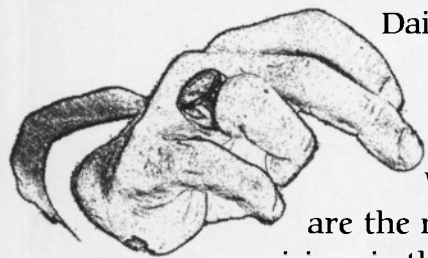


Any time you wish to force a card, it is essential to perform this force on a person who is in your own physical plane. If the spectator is sitting, so should you; if standing, then you must be standing as well.

The left pinky is holding a break below the card you wish to force. There are many ways to get into this. You can riffle up from the back at an opportune moment and sight a card, then hold a left pinky break above it. Or, in the act of doing an overhand shuffle, you can position a previously sighted card somewhere near center, and by joggling a card next to it, keep the sighted card's position marked in the deck until you wish to obtain a left pinky break below it.

Bring the deck up to the spectator's eye level, the cards held about a foot and a half to two feet from their eyes. Since pecking a card is not something most laymen are familiar

## The Look-Away Force



Dai Vernon once said that all you needed to perform great card magic was a pass, a force, and a good top change. Since these are the staples of most successful close-up magician's arsenals, The Professor was probably right. What Vernon failed to mention was that these three sleights are the most difficult in card magic, and there have been few card magicians in this century who could claim to perform all three flawlessly.

Of these three sleights, I believe the force is the most difficult, especially when performed in the classical manner. The move requires a certain rhythm which some performers innately have, while the vast majority of us do not. During the two years I spent working magic in a bar, I got extremely good at forcing a card in the classic manner, as I had plenty of people to practice on. When my bar days ended, so did my ability to perform this sleight one hundred percent of the time.

As a result, I developed the following method of forcing. The mechanics are identical to the standard peek force, which will be briefly discussed. What is important to understand about this sleight is why it works; once that is grasped, the force will practically work itself.

**THE MECHANICS:** Hold the deck in standard peek position in the left hand. The spectator you wish to force a card on should be situated on your left. It is essential to perform this force on a person who is in your same physical plane: if the spectator is sitting, so should you; if standing, then you must be standing as well.

The left pinky is holding a break below the card you wish to force. There are many ways to get into this. You can riffle up from the back at an opportune moment and sight a card, then hold a left pinky break above it. Or, in the act of doing an overhand shuffle, you can position a previously sighted card somewhere near center, and by injogging a card next to it, keep the sighted card's position marked in the deck until you wish to obtain a left pinky break below it.

Bring the deck up to the spectator's eye level, the cards held about a foot and a half to two feet from their eyes. Since peeking a card is not something most laymen are familiar



with, I always preface the force by saying, "A deck of cards is like a book with fifty-two pages. Please stop me as I riffle the cards."

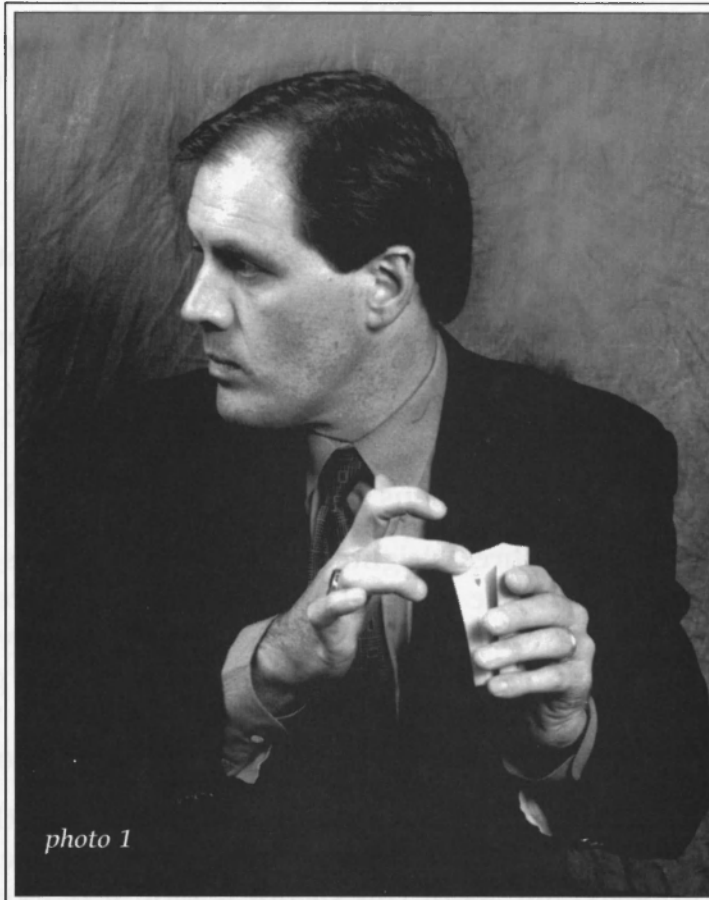
Bring the deck a few inches closer to their face. Place the right middle finger against the upper right corner of the deck. Before you begin the riffle, turn your head away from the spectator (see Photo 1) and say, "And I won't look."

This is the crux of the move. By turning your head away and breaking eye contact, the spectator's guard will drop. You have placed yourself out of the picture. The spectator will relax. It is the perfect attitude to take when forcing a card.

Using your right middle finger, riffle the cards and tell the spectator to "Say when." Listen for the spectator to say "Stop." and speed up as the word begins to come out of their mouth. This is not as hard as it sounds: in fact, it's amazingly easy. Strange as it may seem, laymen are far more willing to do what you want them to do if you're not looking at them. (Needless to say, you must have the mechanics of the standard peek force down pat before you attempt to perform this force. The riffling of your right middle finger must be uniform, and you must be able to stop at the force card without any noticeable break in tempo.)

Ask the spectator to memorize the force card and close the deck. With your head still turned, hand the deck to the spectator and ask them to shuffle. I will often mime the act of shuffling the cards overhand-style to give them an idea of what I mean. Keep your eyes turned as the cards are shuffled.

Turn to face the spectator. An interesting thing will now occur. The spectator will want to hand you the deck, and see if you can find the card! This force (if properly handled) will leave absolutely no doubt in a layman's mind that they had an



absolutely free choice of a card. If the trick allows it, let them keep the cards until you reveal the selection. This little touch will add immeasurably to the overall effectiveness of this move.

**FINAL NOTES:** Many years ago, Slydini showed me a method of forcing a card in a classic manner with the cards held behind his back. According to the master, this method was actually easier than the normal method, as laymen would tend to take the route of least resistance when a performer turned his back and spread out the cards. Along the same lines, Al Koran also used (and published) the idea of closing his eyes during the classic force.

In understanding why this method of forcing is so effective, it's important to look at the act of selecting a card from the spectator's point of view. Many years ago, I did an informal survey of my friends, and learned that when I did tricks where selected cards were later magically found, the majority of my friends shared one of two thoughts.

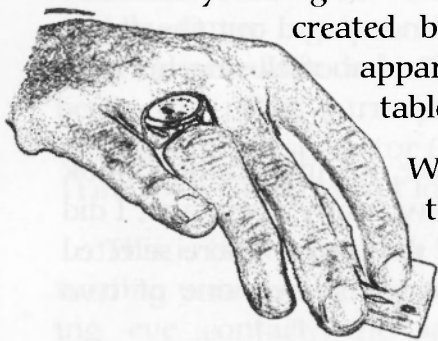
1) The cards I was using were marked. Otherwise, my friends said, how could I possibly know which card they'd picked?

2) I was trying to make them to take a certain card. This came up more than I would have liked. The old gag of doing a pressure fan and making the bottom card move back and forth has done a lot more harm than most magicians realize.

The Look Away Force cancels out both of these assumptions. Since the performer never looks at the cards, it doesn't matter if the cards are marked or not. And, by turning your head, you are freeing the spectator to make a "free" selection. In reality what you are doing is freeing the spectator to drop their guard, and let you force a card on them. When properly executed, I know of no more satisfying move in all of card magic.

## STEVE BEDWELL'S Control Variation

Several years ago I was shown a very clever method to control a card that was created by Dr. Steve Bedwell of England. A selected card was apparently tossed into the deck as it was dribbled face down to the table. The illusion of the spectator's card being lost was terrific.



While experimenting with Bedwell's move, I discovered that the control could be done with the cards dribbled face up, creating quite a different illusion. This is one of those things which will look as good to you as it does to the spectators.

**TO PERFORM:** Hold the deck face up in the right hand in Biddle Grip. Begin to dribble cards into the left hand, inviting a spectator to say stop. Try to time the spectator to stop you between a third and a half of the way down, no more.

Let's say the spectator stops you halfway down. Use the right forefinger to point at the card on the face of the packet in the left hand. For sake of explanation, let's say it's the Nine of Hearts. Ask the spectator to memorize the card. Begin to dribble cards from the right hand packet onto your working surface (see Photo 1). You will now apparently "toss" the Nine of Hearts into the cards being dribbled. In fact, you will mimic the actions of doing a false deal, pushing the Nine of Hearts to the left for about an inch, allowing its right edge to hit cards falling in the dribble. This will cause several cards in the dribble to shoot to the right (see Photo



2, exposed view). As this happens, turn the left hand palm down and pull the Nine of Hearts onto the face of the packet (See Photo 3). The action is identical to the well-known Rub-a-Dub-Duh vanish. All eyes will be on the cards which have shot out to the right. Ninety-nine percent of the time, one or more of these cards will be the same suit as the selected card. Because the audience can only see the bottom right indexes of these cards, their eyes will trick them into believing that one of these cards is the selection. Try this in front of a mirror, and you will see how wonderful the illusion is.

Lean back slightly, bringing both hands together. Let the right hand naturally cover the face of the cards in the left hand. Push the selection into the right palm as the cards are turned face up and casually dropped onto those on the table. Don't rush this or look at your hands.

Drop your hands to your side and invite a member of the audience to shuffle the deck. Produce the selected card at your discretion.



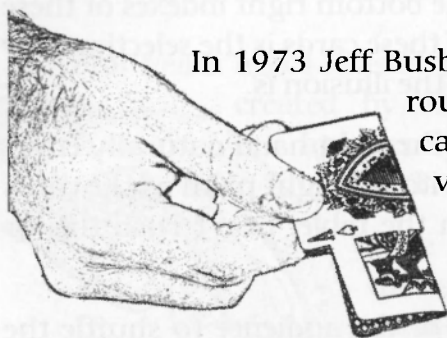
photo 2



photo 3



## Card Warp Display



In 1973 Jeff Busby released "Into The Fourth Dimension", a multi-phase routine. The opening effect was an unusual trick where a card appeared to turn inside out. A short while later, the versatile Scottish magician Roy Walton revamped the trick, added several touches of his own and created an instant classic called "Card Warp".

In the early 1990's, Bob McAllister released a clever variation of "Card Warp" which replaced the outer card with a dollar bill. This added an interesting angle to the trick, as it allowed a convincing display of the turned card inside the bill. Bruce Cervon created an brilliant handling which he was kind enough to teach me. Bruce's handling really sells the trick, but requires prior preparation and is not easy to do.

The following handling of "Card Warp" allows you to show the turned card without the use of bills or other devices. It is devilishly easy as a few trials will show.

**PREPARATION:** To perform, you will need two cards with Bee backs. Either blue or red backs will work; however, I prefer red as they tend to show up better. For the sake of this explanation, one card will be the Ace of Spades, the other the King of Hearts.

To prepare, hold the King of Hearts face down and begin to tear it in half widthwise, starting at the center of one long side. Stop the tear just short of center of the card (see Photo 1). When making the tear, be sure to tear upward with the right hand, as this adds greatly to the success of the trick. Place



the Ace of Spades above the torn King and stick both cards into your wallet.

**TO PERFORM:** Remove the two cards from your wallet and offer to demonstrate an unusual trick. Hold the two cards in the right hand, the torn King hidden beneath the Ace. The tear should be pointing to your right. Grab the top card (the Ace) with the left hand and separate the hands while exposing the faces of the two cards to the audience. The presence of your right fingers will hide the torn condition of the King. Pause, then drop the hands and place the Ace back onto the King, keeping the tear hidden.

Fold the two cards in half lengthwise, the faces inward. Remember to fold the right side under the left. Crease the fold sharply.

Remove the inner card (the torn King) and drop it on your working surface, the tear facing the table. Open up the Ace and fold it in half width wise, face inward (see Photo 2, exposed view).



photo 2

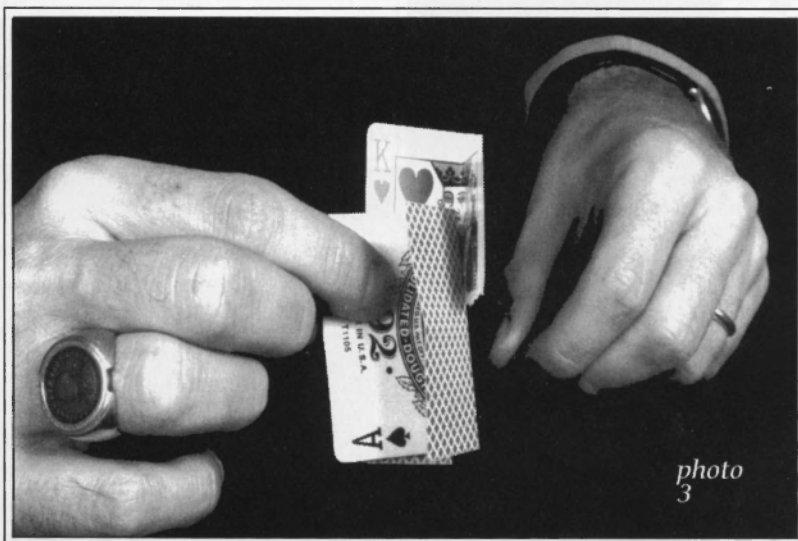


photo 3

Hold the folded Ace in the right hand. Pick up the King with the left fingers, keeping the tear downward and the opening facing right. Insert the Ace into the tunnel formed by the King's fold, starting the insertion at the outer end. Move the Ace downward and secretly feed it into the tear, allowing it to pass under the inner half of the King (see Photo 3, exposed view).

If the tear is stubborn, apply force with the right hand card and spread the tear.

Hold the two cards firmly with the left fingers. Slip your right thumb into the fold of the Ace and open both cards, turning them inside out in the process (see Photo 4).

The face-up King appears a prisoner of the Ace. In fact, half of the King (the torn half) has been secretly reversed. By pushing the King through the tunnel, it will appear to magically reverse itself. These are the basic mechanics of Card Warp.

But before you do that, grab the cards with both hands, and slip the tips of your thumbs into the tunnel formed by the Ace. Slowly open the two folded cards, exposing the Bee's diamond backs (see Photo 5). Keep your left thumb over the tear (it will be easy to find) and let everyone see the backs of the cards. Because of the confusing design of the Bee's, nothing will appear amiss. Just remember to keep the two cards slightly pinched together, and the tear will remain invisible to everyone, including yourself!



photo 4

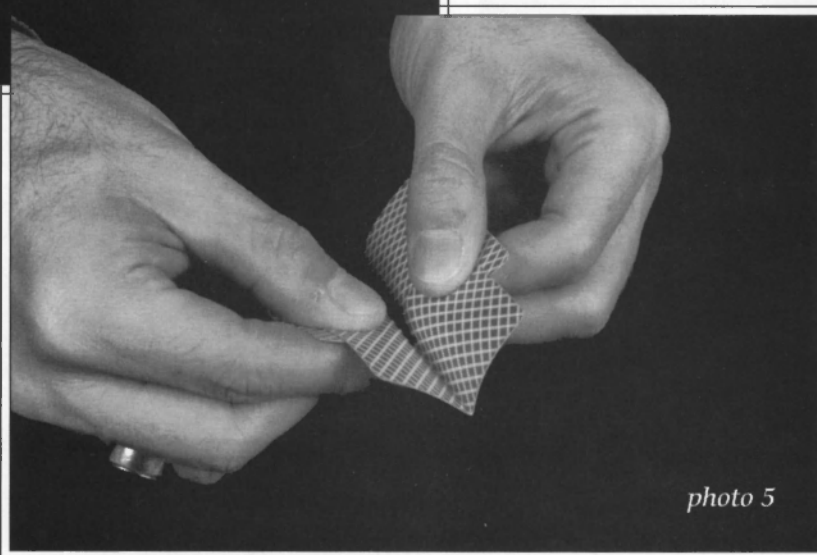
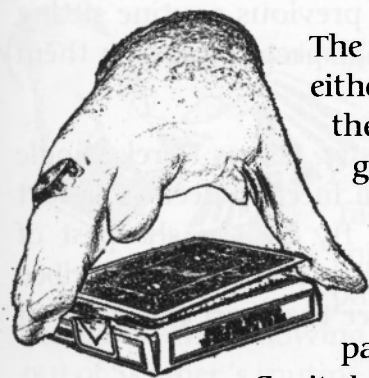


photo 5

## Unloading a Card



The world of card magic is filled with packet tricks which employ either extra cards or gimmicked cards. The problem with doing these tricks for laymen is that you do not end clean. You can gambler's cop the extra cards out at the trick's conclusion, but I've worked in too many situations where laymen are standing behind me, and this clean-up is not feasible.

The following method of cleaning up was developed for a particular packet trick which I perform all the time — The Capitulating Cards. This is a marketed item and available from most dealers. The move works great for other routines, and will fly right past the most observant spectator.

**SET-UP:** You will need a deck in its box. The back design of the box must match the back design of the card you will be getting rid of. Position the box so it is sitting on your working surface near the inner edge. The half-moon side of the box should be facing up. The half-moon side should also be pointing away from you, toward the spectators.

**TO PERFORM:** You have just performed your favorite packet trick. The card which you need to ditch is on the bottom of the packet. The back of this card (which matches the box) is facing up. Get a left pinky break above this card. Grasp the packet in the right hand in Biddle Grip and angle jog the card to the right. Regrip the card with your right thumb at the protruding inner left corner and your pinky at the outer right corner. This action takes a split-second and will be invisible to your audience.

Your hands should be comfortably in front of you, a foot above the card box. With your left fingers, grasp the left long side of the packet. Your left thumb should be on top, your left fingers beneath. Move your hands forward. When your hands are above the box, your right hand drops the angle-jogged card onto the box while your left fingers fans the packet, then tosses these cards to the table (see Photo 1, exposed view). The fanning and tossing of these cards will hide the unloading of the card, the human eye unable to watch both actions at once. And, the back design of the angle-jogged card will blend with the back design of the box, arousing no suspicion.



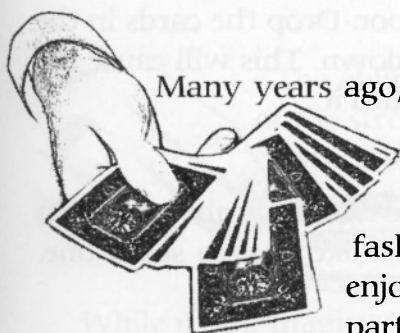
With your right hand, slide the card box off your working surface into your waiting left hand. Turn your left hand palm down. The right fingers pop the box open and remove the deck from within. Place the deck onto your working surface and slip the box into your left jacket pocket.

Start your next miracle, then "notice" the cards from the previous routine sitting on the table. Pick them up and toss them aside, or, if you see a spectator eyeing them suspiciously, pass the cards their way.

**FINAL NOTES:** This move is based upon The Vernon Transfer. It was Derek Dingle who pointed out that Vernon's transfer could be done with a face-up deck. The fact that the face card changes as the cards are picked up will fly by the sharpest of spectators. This principle can be employed with the unloading move just described (unloading a different colored back on the box) but only under the most favorable of performing conditions.



## Peek, Stop, Touch



Many years ago, Michael Skinner published a routine called "Three Different Ways". Three cards were selected in different (and apparently fair) ways, then revealed in startling fashion. What drew me to the routine was the idea of having cards taken in different fashion during the course of one routine. Laymen, I discovered, enjoyed the variety, and apparently thought it was harder on my part to later find the cards when they were chosen in different manners. The following method of having three cards selected and controlled was born out of Skinner's routine.

**THE MECHANICS:** You will need three spectators, one to your immediate left, one across from you, the third to your immediate right. For sake of explanation, we'll call these folks Spectator 1, Spectator 2 and Spectator 3.

To start, address your audience as follows. "A magician has three different ways in which he can have a card selected. A card can be peeked, stopped at, or touched."

Give the deck you're using a casual in-the-hands shuffle.

Square the cards and turn to Spectator 1, the spectator on your immediate left. Hold the deck in the left hand in standard peek position. Bring the deck up to the face of Spectator 1 and say, "A deck of cards is like a book with fifty-two different pages. As I run the cards off my thumb, please tell me when to stop. So I don't see the card's reflection in your eyes, I'll turn my head."

Try to have the spectator stop you somewhere near the center. (It is worth noting that whenever I have a card peeked — either freely or when I'm forcing — I turn my head away and avert my eyes. This little touch adds a great deal to the effectiveness of having a card peeked. Once Spectator 1 has noted and memorized their card, drop the card with the right middle finger, then obtain a left pinky break in standard fashion. Release the cards being held by the right middle finger.

Turn to Spectator 2 and perform a standard riffle force. This is done by riffling down with the left thumb and inviting Spectator 2 to tell you when to stop. Time your riffling so that she stops you somewhere near center, where the break is being held. Once she's said "Stop", the left hand tosses the cards above the break into your right

hand. This is J.K. Hartman's "Throw Force" from *Card Craft* and is very convincing.

The right hand lifts its packet so that the face card is staring Spectator 2 in the face. Say, "This is the one you stopped me at. Please memorize it."

Lower the right hand so Spectator 2's card is facing the floor. Drop the cards in the right hand onto those on the left, tilting the left hand packet down. This will cause the face card of the falling packet to injog as it hits the cards beneath it.

This is an idea of Jerry Andrus.

Square the cards. Push down on the injogged card with the right thumb and obtain a left pinky break above it. Turn to Spectator 3 and say, "I'd like you to select one. Please pull a card out halfway."

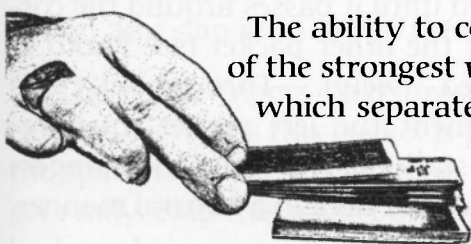
Spread the cards, stopping around fifteen or so down (well above from your break). Have the spectator touch one of these cards. Outjog this card halfway out of the spread. With the right hand holding the spread, the left fingers continue to spread cards until you come to your break (see Photo 1). Say, "You could have taken any one of these cards."

With your left hand, openly strip the selected card from the spread and hold it sidejogged against the cards in the left hand. Lift the left hand and let everyone see the face of this card (see Photo 2). This is a very innocent gesture, and openly places Spectator 3's selected card directly above Spectator 2's card, which is sitting above Spectator 1's card.

Lower the left hand, allowing Spectator 3's card to fall flush with the top of the left packet. Place the spread in the right hand on top of the cards in the left, secretly obtaining a left pinky break above Spectator 1's card. Now perform either a Pass, double-undercut, or some other ruse that will bring the three cards to the top of the deck. Begin your trick.



## Two Full-Deck Controls



The ability to convincingly false shuffle an entire deck of cards is one of the strongest weapons in the entire realm of card magic. It is a move which separates the men from the boys. The following two controls will hopefully find a place in your arsenal of sleights.

### VERSION #1

While many magicians know how to perform Zarrow shuffles and push-throughs and strip-outs, few have bothered to make these shuffles look convincing by incorporating them in natural-looking sequences when handling the pasteboards. The following sequence was developed after seeing a blackjack dealer in Reno handle the cards in this manner.

**WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE:** The deck is given a riffle shuffle, followed by a triple cut, an up-the-ladder cut, and finally a straight cut. All actions are clean and straightforward. Upon completion, a full-deck order is retained.

**THE WORK:** Place the deck in front of you in preparation for a riffle shuffle. Cut off about twenty cards from the top and place them to your right. Perform a riffle shuffle, starting with a few cards from the right packet, then shuffle normally. Finish the shuffle with approximately 10-12 unshuffled cards on top of the left-hand packet. (See Photo 1) (Note: the top card, the Ace of Spades, has been reversed for the sake of explanation).

As the cards are squared, perform a push-through, angling the cards on the left through those on the right. For those not familiar with this action, here is a brief description.

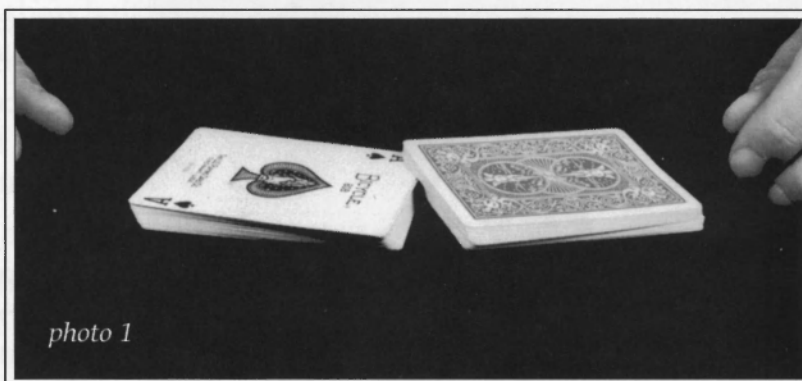
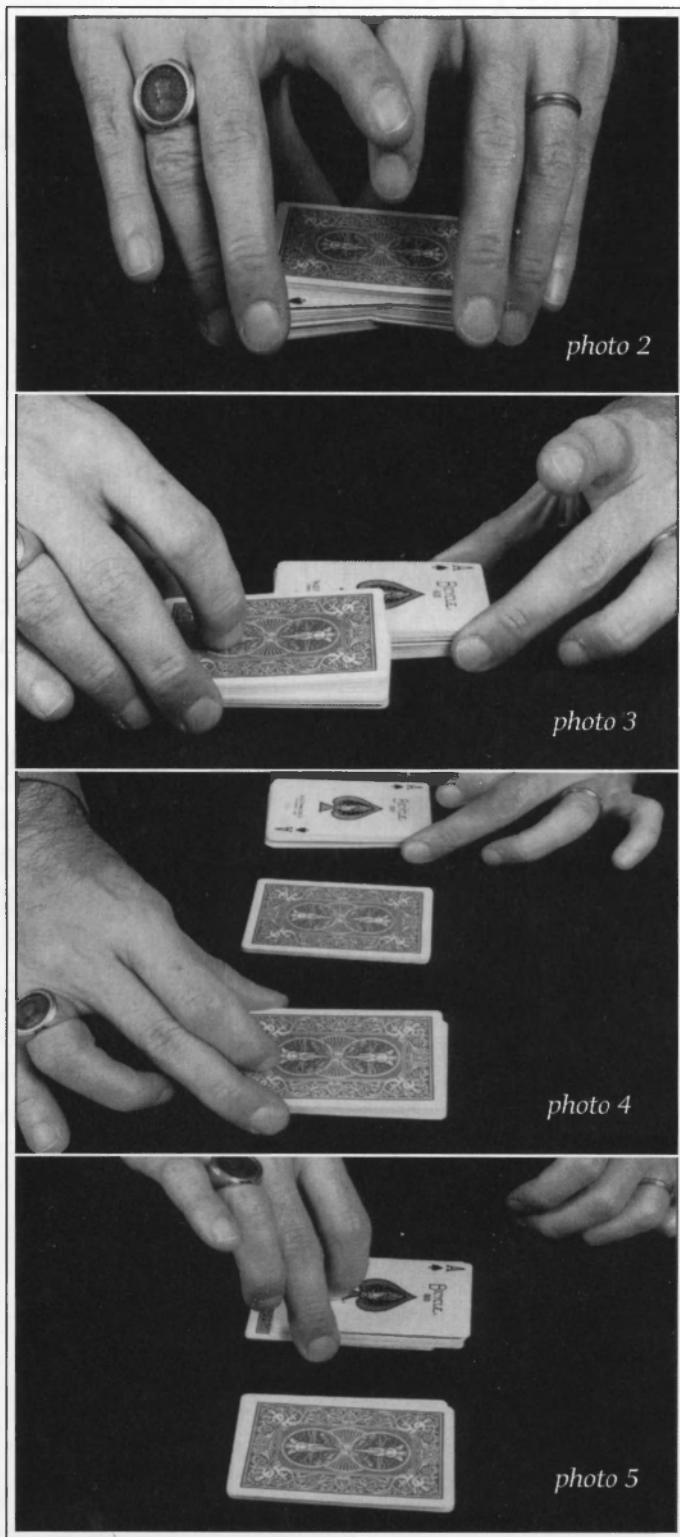


photo 1

As the packets are about to be squared, place the sides of the third fingertips against





the edges of the packets and as closely as possible to the outer corners. As the right third finger pushes its packet diagonally inwards, the packet is also pushed forward and continues to be pushed until it passes around the corner of the other packet (see Photo 2, exposed view). Throughout this movement the left packet must remain stationary, with the left fingers hugging the deck in a natural manner.

Once the push-through action is done, you will find that the fleshy pad of the right third fingertip will be in contact with the corner of the pushed-through packet. Grasp this packet with the right third finger at the front and the right thumb at the rear. All that is left to do is pull the packets apart.

Back to the false shuffle sequence. Perform the push-through as explained. As the right hand's packet is stripped out, slap it on the table in front of the first packet (see Photo 3, exposed view). Give this packet another cut, carrying the cut packet forward (see Photo 4). This action nicely simulates the mechanics of a triple cut.

With the right hand, grab the rear packet and slap it onto the center packet so that the center packet is sidejagged to the right for approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch (see Photo 5, exposed view). In a continuing action, pick up this combined packet and slap it onto

the front packet. You should now have a packet of 10 - 15 cards sticking out of the right side of the deck. This is covered by your right hand.

Slide the deck back to its original position on the table and grasp the left side with the left fingers. The right hand grasps the packet sticking out of the center and slaps it on top so it projects for  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch to the right. Immediately pull out the lower half of this packet and slap it on top of the deck, the left edge in line with the lowermost cards.

The right fingers now grasp the projecting packet and pull it out (see Photo 6, exposed view). As this packet is pulled out of the deck, the left thumb obtains a break in the space which it leaves upon its removal. This action is automatic, and requires no get ready. Slap this packet on top, square, and cut the deck at your break. The cards are back to their original order.

#### VERSION #2

In writing Dai Vernon's *Revelations*, Persi Diaconis revealed some of the finest work on push-through shuffles to be found in print. In discussing the many variations possible after the strip-out, Diaconis writes: "The possibilities of combining the false riffle with various block transfers and cuts are practically limitless."

The following sequence certainly falls into the category of limitless variations. It is worth noting that this sequence is identical to a method of shuffling used by blackjack dealers in Puerto Rico.

**WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE:** The deck is given a riffle shuffle, then an up-the-ladder cut, then a single straight cut. The entire deck order is retained upon completion.

**THE WORK:** Cut off more than half the deck (around 30 cards) and place them to your right in preparation for a standard riffle shuffle. Start the shuffle with the right packet by leaving a block of 15-18 cards on the table before you begin the actual shuffle. Shuffle the rest of the cards normally. Finish the shuffle with the left cards falling last.

Perform the push-through as described in Version #1. A quick check will show that there is a large block of cards on the bottom, followed by interlaced cards (see Photo 1, exposed view, Ace of Spades reversed on top for sake of explanation). With the right thumb, very slightly lift the interlaced cards, leaving the block on the table. The left thumb and middle finger hold the interlaced cards, allowing the right fingers to grasp the bottom block.

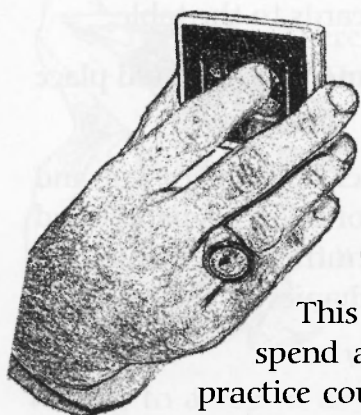
Slap the bottom block on top so it projects approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch to the right.

Perform an up-the-ladder false cut, stripping small packets out and tossing them on top. This will give the deck a haphazard look and help hide the telescoped cards sticking out of the left side.

Simulate a squaring action of the deck with both hands, secretly maintaining the telescoped condition of the lower portion of the deck. Grasp the interlaced cards with the left thumb and middle finger while the right hand grasps the remainder of the deck. Move the right hand forward, stripping the cards (see Photo 2, exposed view). Slap this packet onto the table. Return with the right hand, grasp the portion being held by the left, and slap it on top. The deck has been restored to its original order.



## The Dummy Force



Many years ago while watching Steve Forte's Gambling Protection series, I was struck by an interesting comment that Forte made. He stated that before a professional hustler would cheat in a card game, the hustler would first study how the other players handled the cards. The hustler would then conform to that style of play so as not to arouse suspicion.

This comment opened up my eyes to the fact that hustlers must spend a great deal of time watching laymen handle cards, and then practice countless hours to make their moves look similar. It occurred to me that this might also be a worthwhile pursuit when it came to card magic. In studying laymen, I decided to focus on two areas: the first being how laymen handled cards normally, the second being how laymen handled the pasteboards when asked to help with a trick.

As a result of this study, I've developed a series of sleights which I refer to as "Dummy" moves. This label has a twofold meaning: these sleights are painlessly easy to do/and take advantage of the way lay people clumsily handle the pasteboards.

The "Dummy Force" is probably my favorite of all the "Dummy" moves I've discovered. It is based upon a "canceling out" principle which occurs when the average layman handles a deck of cards, and requires no sleight of hand.

**WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE:** A deck of cards is shuffled and placed before a spectator. They are asked to give it a few cuts. A card is taken, looked at and memorized, and lost in the deck. Although the magician has not touched the cards through the entire process, the selection is forced.

**THE WORK:** To begin, secretly memorize the top card of your deck, then give the deck enough shuffles to convince your spectators that the cards are hopelessly mixed. Two or three riffle shuffles should suffice. On the last shuffle, get one card above your memorized card. Square the cards, then give the deck a slip cut. Hand the deck to a willing spectator.

Ask the spectator to cut the cards somewhere near the center and place the cut-off



portion to the right of the bottom portion. Point to the bottom half and say, "About how many cards would you say that leaves?"

Since most laymen are not adept at estimation, the spectator will have to look at the bottom half and make a guess. Once a number has been named, ask the spectator to pick up the bottom half, and cut approximately half of these cards to the table.

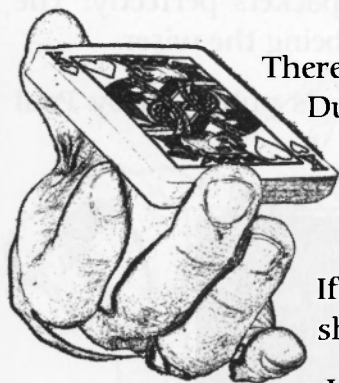
Point at the original top half and say, "Please take that card, memorize it, and place it on the half you just cut."

Once they have noted the force, have them put it on the packet they just cut and bury it with the cards they hold in their hands. Have the spectator take this packet and riffle shuffle it into the original top half. Having the spectator shuffle the cards in this manner is important, as it further takes their mind off the mechanics of the selection process.

Proceed with your routine.

**FINAL NOTES:** This force flies right by people. It is based upon the simple fact that if you ask a layman to perform a task during a trick (like shuffling, cutting, or guessing at the number of cards in a packet), the layman will concentrate on this task and forget the task which took place before it. The "Dummy Force" is effective because you are making the spectator perform three tasks: first they cut the cards, then they guess the number in the remaining half, then they cut the cards again. These three simple tasks are choreographed so that the second and third tasks will effectively cancel out the first task.

## The Dummy Pass



There is a trick which I've seen dozens of laymen perform. I call it The Dummy Trick. It looks like this. A layman awkwardly spreads the cards, has one selected, memorized, and put back in the deck. The deck is squared, the layman makes a funny face, then cuts the deck and exposes the face card. "Is that it?" the layman asks.

If the card at the face is the selection, a miracle! If not, the layman shrugs and the audience has a good laugh!

What makes The Dummy Trick so interesting is that laymen are willing to accept it as a bona fide piece of magic! Despite its amateurish structure, it conforms to any other card trick (a card is taken, lost, and the magician tries to find it). The following move, which I have dubbed the "Dummy Pass" mimics the mechanics of The Dummy Trick, and will allow you to invisibly control the selected card.

**THE WORK:** Spread the deck between your hands and have one selected in the time-honored fashion. Have the card memorized and returned. Secretly get a left pinky break above the selected card as the cards are squared. While holding the break, I like to then rap the bottom of the deck against the table, which gives the illusion that no breaks are being held. It is quite easy to hold a pinky break while performing this action, as a few trials will show.

With your right hand, grasp the deck from above in a Biddle grip. Position the fingers of both hands in preparation to perform a classic pass (see Photo 1, exposed view).

Say, "Is this your card?" As these words are being spoken, your two hands perform a classic pass, with one difference. The right hand turns its palm straight up to the ceiling, exposing the card on the bottom to the spectators (see Photos 2 & 3 for an exposed view of this action). The movement of the right hand is very quick, and is accomplished by the right hand breaking at the wrist as it turns its half up so the card on the bottom is exposed. If properly performed, this pass is absolutely invisible. More importantly, it employs the best possible misdirection, since you are asking a question and flashing the face of a card at the same time.

The spectator will respond in the negative. Drop the half in the right hand onto the half in the left, completing the pass. The selected card is now on the top of the deck,

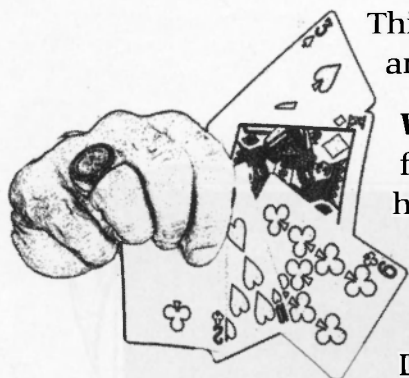
ready to be revealed in the most magical of manners.

**FINAL NOTES:** Don't pass this up (no pun intended)! If you've ever practiced the classic pass I guarantee that you will be able to perform this move flawlessly. The wide swing of the right hand masks the transposition of the two packets perfectly. The move can be literally done under a spectator's nose without his being the wiser.

The mechanics of The Dummy Pass are very similar to a pass published by Paul Curry in the late 1970's.



# The Dummy Fan Force



This is an easy way to force a card that flies right by magicians and regular people.

**WHAT THE MOVE LOOKS LIKE:** Five cards are removed from a shuffled deck and held in a face-down fan in the right hand. The magician turns his head away and asks a spectator to remove one of the cards and memorize it. The spectator then takes the other four cards from the magician's hand, shuffles the selection into them, then adds all to the deck. Despite the honest nature of the handling, the magician knows the identity of the selected card.

**THE WORK:** You will need to memorize five cards during the course of doing a shuffle. The easiest way to accomplish this is by doing an overhand shuffle with the backs of the cards to the audience and the faces facing you. Draw five single cards off the bottom with the right thumb, secretly memorizing them as you do. Continue to shuffle normally until you run out of cards.

Turn the deck face down in the left hand and perform a false cut. To anyone watching, it should appear that the cards were shuffled and cut, nothing more.

Ask a spectator to assist you. Tell them you would like them to select a card in the fairest possible manner. While pattering, do a casual overhand shuffle, in-jogging the first card over your memorized five-card stack. When the shuffle is completed, square the cards, secretly obtaining a left pinky break above your stack.

Riffle down with the left thumb, asking the spectator to say stop. Perform the classic riffle-force, and cut the cards at your break. Your five-card stack is back on top.

Thumb off the top five cards with the left thumb and hold them in the right hand in a tight fan. Say, "You could have stopped me at any five cards, but you stopped me at these."

Turn your head and say, "Please take any one of the cards. I won't look, promise."

Hold the fan tightly. As the spectator removes a card, fan the five cards a bit more



with the right fingers, which will allow the card to leave the fan cleanly. It will also allow the right fingers to feel how many cards were above the selected card (see Photo 1, exposed view). There is nothing to this: your fingers will know which card was taken just by following these simple actions. And since the five cards are memorized, you will know the selected card's identity even before the spectator does.

Proceed with your miracle.



photo 1

JAMES SWAIN

MICHAEL SKINNER'S  
*Placement Principle*

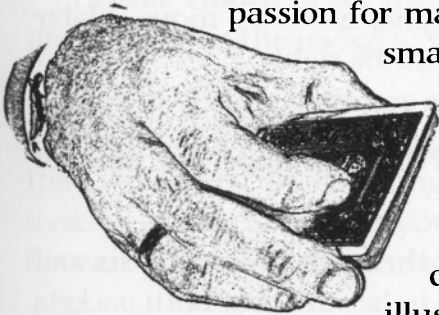
# Tricks of the Masters



JAMES SWAIN

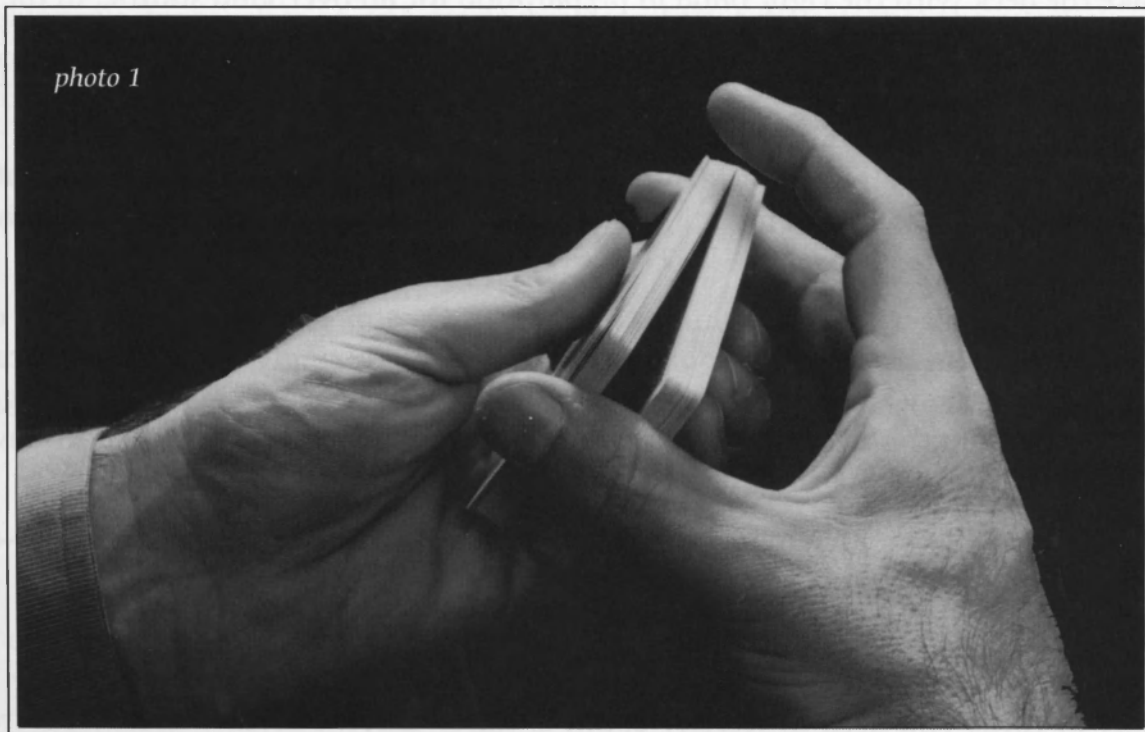
## MICHAEL SKINNER'S Placement Principle

Michael Skinner was one of the greatest magicians of the twentieth century. His passion for magic was unequalled, his repertoire limitless, his skill with small objects unsurpassed. To be in his company for any extended period of time was to be forever influenced by him. He was that good.



But Michael was more than just a great close up performer. He was well versed in mentalism, did excellent cold readings, understood all forms of stage magic and illusions, and also had an incredible knowledge of gambling and hustling. There was little about magic that Michael didn't know. Here's an example of just how knowledgeable Michael was.

In the early eighties I met the legendary Ed Marlo in Chicago. During our session, I mentioned that I'd recently seen the incomparable Del Ray perform, and told Ed that



I'd been fooled by Del's superb blackjack routine. Marlo was also a fan of Del Ray's, and admitted he'd seen the blackjack routine on three separate occasions, and still did not know how Del managed to deal himself the winning hand every time.

A few weeks later, during a phone conversation with Michael, I mentioned Del Ray's blackjack routine and asked Mike if he'd ever seen it. Skinner hadn't, and asked me to describe the routine in detail, which I did. When I was done, Mike paused briefly, then proceeded to explain what he believed Del Ray had done, move by move. I later took out a deck and put Mike's method to the test. He was 100% right.

The following move of Mike's is a terrific weapon and a wonderful piece of finesse. It will allow you to secretly count any number of cards in the deck under the guise of giving them a sloppy overhand shuffle.

**TO PERFORM:** You will need a fifty-two card deck. Cut the cards at twenty-six and hold them in preparation for a faro shuffle. Visually check to be sure that both packets in fact do contain twenty-six cards by starting a faro, then disengaging the cards. Then take the packet in the right hand and casually drop it onto the packet in your left, secretly maintaining a left pinky break between the packets as you do. This is Marlo's Faro Check from his *Revolutionary Card Technique* series.

Take the deck with the right hand in preparation for an overhand shuffle. In the act of grabbing the deck with the right hand, pick up your break with your right thumb (see Photo 1, performer's view). Grip the cards tightly and the pad of the right thumb will keep the two twenty-six card packets separate.

Let's say you secretly need to count fifteen cards for the routine you're about to perform. You will need to perform a simple calculation. Subtract the number of cards you wish to count from twenty-six. This leaves eleven. Remember this number.

Begin the shuffle by running clumps of cards off the top, giving the appearance of a loose shuffle. Upon reaching your break, run eleven cards singly, injog the next card, and run the remaining cards in clumps. Square the cards while picking up the injogged card with the right thumb. Obtain a left pinky break beneath this card. You now have a break below 15 cards and can proceed with your routine.

This is how Mike's Placement Principle works for any number under twenty-six. For more than twenty-six, the handling is slightly altered.

Perform Marlo's Faro Check as previously described. Grab the deck to do an overhand shuffle while maintaining the break with your right thumb. Let's say the number of cards you need to secretly count is thirty-three. Subtract twenty-six from



this number. This leaves seven. Remember this number.

Begin the shuffle by dropping clumps of cards off the top, giving the appearance of a loose shuffle. Upon reaching your break, run seven cards singly, injog the next card and shuffle off. In the act of squaring, pick up the injogged card with the right thumb and obtain a left pinky break beneath it.

Double Undercut all the cards below your pinky break to the top, maintaining a break between the packets. You now have a break beneath thirty-three cards.

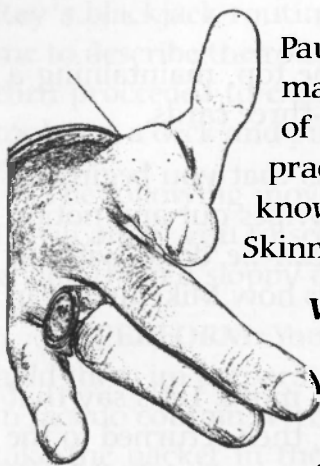
One of the great things about Skinner's Placement Principle is that you begin and end each shuffle by dropping clumps of cards, which effectively wipes out any notion that you could be counting cards. Best of all, these shuffles can be done without looking at the cards after you perform Marlo's Faro Check. This is how Mike used it in his work, and why it was so disarming.

Here's another example of Skinner's thinking when using this move. Let's say that you are performing a trick which requires that a card be selected, then returned to the deck and controlled to a specified position. This is standard for dozens of card tricks. It also requires that the selection be controlled while the spectator is burning the deck. This is risky even for the most experienced card handler.

Skinner's approach is as devious as it is deceptive. Let's say that the selection must be controlled to the twenty-seventh position from the top. By employing the Placement Principle, Mike would get a pinky break above twenty-seven cards. He'd then employ a standard riffle force and have the spectator remember the card sitting at the twenty-seventh position in the deck. The cards would then be assembled and the magic would begin.

## PAUL CUMMINS

### Count On It



Paul Cummins has been a friend since childhood. We grew up in magic together and had many of the same influences. Paul's sleight of hand is superb and his thinking is wonderfully refreshing and practical. The following is my handling for one of Paul's better-known creations. It includes ideas from Bill Malone as well as Michael Skinner's Placement Principle.

**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** A card is selected and replaced in the deck and the cards shuffled. The spectator is invited to name a number between ten and twenty. Without any fumbling or apparent counting, the magician spin cuts a packet of cards from the center of the deck and hands it to the spectator who selected the card. The spectator is invited to deal down to her number. The packet proves to contain the exact number of cards the spectator named!

The spectator is then asked to name their selection, whereupon the last card dealt is turned over and proves to be the same card.

**TO PERFORM:** In the act of shuffling the cards, secretly get a left pinky break beneath the top fourteen cards using Michael Skinner's Placement Principle. With the right hand, grab these fourteen cards as if to do a Hindu shuffle. Put a bridge into this packet from the rear and slap it on the table. Cut a group from the left-hand cards and slap them onto the tabled packet. Drop the remaining cards from your left hand onto the tabled cards, then pick the cards up and square them in your hands. A packet of fourteen bridged cards rests at the bottom of the deck.

Have a card selected without disturbing your bottom stack. Have this card memorized and returned. You must now control the selection to the bottom of the deck without the fourteen card stack being disturbed. There are many controls which will accomplish this; a side steal, the Hofinzer spread control, or simply have the selection returned to the top of the deck, and double undercut the card to the bottom.

Explain that you've been handling cards all of your life and have developed an exceptionally delicate touch. Pick up the deck and place it in the left hand in dealing grip, secretly getting a break above the bridged packet. Ask the spectator who selected

the card to name any number between ten and twenty. You will get one of three different responses. Here is how you respond to each.

For a number between ten and fourteen, quickly spread the cards between your hands. When you reach your break, push the necessary number of cards off with your left thumb until the bridged packet holds the number of cards which the spectator named. (Remember: you added the spectator's selection, so the packet now contains fifteen cards) For example, if the spectator named thirteen, you would push two cards off with your left thumb. Immediately get a left pinky break above the thirteenth card and square the spread.

For the number fifteen (which is named most of the time), there is no adjusting. Proceed with the trick.

For the numbers sixteen to twenty, grasp the deck with the right hand from above and take over the break with the right thumb. Use the thumb to drop off the appropriate number of cards onto the bridged packet. Obtain a new left pinky break at this point.

Back to the trick. Grasp the deck with the right hand in Biddle Grip and take over the break with the right thumb. With your right forefinger, swing cut approximately fifteen cards into the left hand. Bring the right hand's cards over this packet, and leave all the cards above your right thumb break outjogged on the lower packet. Draw the remaining cards in the right hand back so they are square with the lower packet. Done quickly, it will appear as if you adroitly cut a packet of cards out of the center of the deck.

Place your right forefinger on the left edge of the extended packet and spin the packet out of the deck (see Photo 1). Pretend to weigh it in your hand and remark, "Feels like (name the spectator's number). Here, why don't you check?"

Hand the packet to the spectator who chose the card, and ask them to deal the cards to the table, counting aloud as they do. The packet will contain the



photo 1

exact number of cards which they named. Pause, then ask the spectator to name their selection.

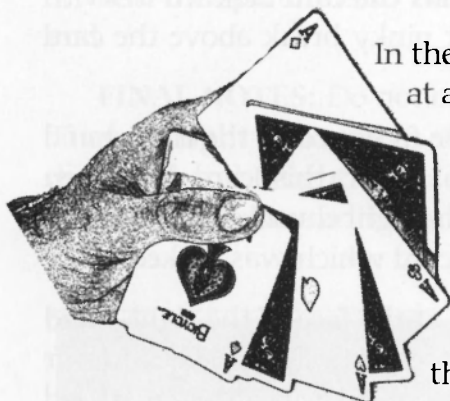
Have the spectator turn over the last card dealt to reveal their selected card.

**FINAL NOTES:** This is one of the best impromptu card tricks of the past twenty-five years. Paul Cummin's original routine can be found in his lecture notes, *...from a shuffled deck in use...impromptu* (see FINAL NOTES). Remove the four Aces and four Kings and put them on top of the deck with the Kings on top followed by the Aces. Now give the deck an in faro shuffle. Case the deck.





## Persi's Collectors



In the early 1970's I was introduced to the legendary Persi Diaconis at a magic convention. The introduction could not have come at a worse moment, as the great cardman was in the act of performing a routine for another well-posted magician. I could not hear what Diaconis was saying but I could see his hands, and I remember two things clearly: first, he performed a very clean- looking multiple lift, turning the Ace-of-Spades on top of the deck, and immediately followed this multiple-lift by performing an in-faro shuffle.

But then the ill-timed introduction was made. Being a gentleman, Diaconis pocketed the deck and shook my hand. To my dismay, the routine stopped at that moment, never to be completed.

For the longest time I played around with those two moves, wondering what trick Diaconis was about to perform. One day, while toying with Roy Walton's Collectors, I stumbled upon a wonderful handling using these two moves. Since Walton's trick was enjoying wide popularity at the time I met Diaconis, I feel safe in assuming that this was the routine he was about to perform. It is, in my humble opinion, one of the most elegant handlings of the Collectors that I know of.

**SET-UP:** Secretly get the four Aces to the top of the deck. The fourth Ace must be the Ace of Spades.

**TO PERFORM:** Ask three spectators to assist you. Break the deck as if to perform a faro shuffle and secretly note the 26th card from the top. Let's say it's the Two of Clubs. Remember this card. Now put the packets together and obtain a left pinky break beneath the Two of Clubs.

Casually spread the cards between your hands. Openly spread three cards past your break and obtain a new pinky break beneath this card (the 29th from the top). Close the spread and square the cards while maintaining your break.

You will now force three cards using the standard Riffle Force. Riffle down the left side of the deck with the left thumb, and have a spectator on your left call stop. Separate the

deck at your pinky break. Hold the right hand packet up, exposing the face card. Ask the spectator to memorize this card. You have just forced the card in 29th position from the top. This is the standard handling for a riffle force.

Drop the packet in the right hand onto the deck, tilting the left hand packet down. This will cause the face card of the dropped packet to injog as it hits the card beneath it. With your right thumb push down on this card and obtain a left pinky break above the card which was just memorized.

Perform the riffle force on a second spectator and have the face card of the right hand packet memorized. This card will be 28th from the top. After this card has been remembered, drop the packet as before, pushing down with the right thumb on the jogged selection, and secretly obtaining a left pinky break above the card which was looked at.

Perform the riffle force on a third spectator. After the card at the face of the right-hand packet has been memorized (the 27th card from the top), cleanly drop the packet in your right hand onto the deck. Square the cards, and if you'd like, give them a casual spread across your working surface. If you don't have a smooth working surface available, simply dribble the cards from hand to hand. In the act of squaring the cards, secretly get a left pinky break beneath the top four cards.

Explain that before the trick, you put a special card on top of the deck. Take the top card in the right hand and snap it against the left thumb. Drop the card on top, and immediately square the card with the three above your pinky break. Without hesitation flip the top four cards over onto the deck. The key here is not to hesitate and to perform the move fluidly (see FINAL NOTES).

The Ace of Spades will show on top. Cut the deck at the 26th card (this is easy, due to your earlier glimpse of the Two of Clubs.) Perform an in-faro shuffle. This shuffle will secretly interlace the 27th, 28th and 29th cards (the three selections) between the four face-up Aces.

If you'd like, you can now end the trick by waving your hand over the deck, then spreading the top seven cards to reveal the face-up Aces with three cards interlaced between them. However, I prefer the following ending, which is very magical.

Get a left pinky break beneath the top seven cards. An easy way to do this is to press down on the top left corner of the Ace of Spades, popping up the reversed cards beneath it, and allowing you to get your break. This is Lin Searles' Autobreak idea. Or, simply ride the right thumb up back of the deck, stop at seven cards and get your break.

Remove the Ace of Spades with the right hand and wave it over the deck, then drop it

onto the deck. Your left pinky now pushes up on its break, lifting all seven cards off the deck. Dig your left forefinger into the break (the action is similar to Marlo's Mechanical Second Deal). See Photo 1. Using the forefinger only, snap the seven cards open in a fan. See Photo 2. This is not difficult and is quite pretty.

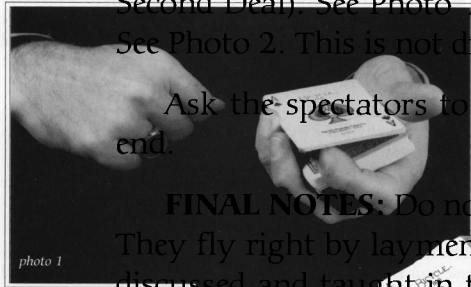


photo 1

Ask the spectators to name their selections, and pull each selection out of the fan to end.

**FINAL NOTES:** Do not be put off by the idea of doing a multiple turnover in a routine. They fly right by laymen, and are not terribly difficult to learn. Quadruple turnovers are discussed and taught in the first chapter of *Expert Card Technique*. You may also want to check out Ken Krenzel's work on the subject.

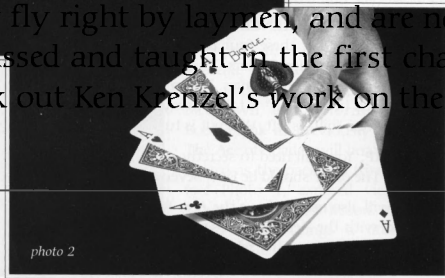
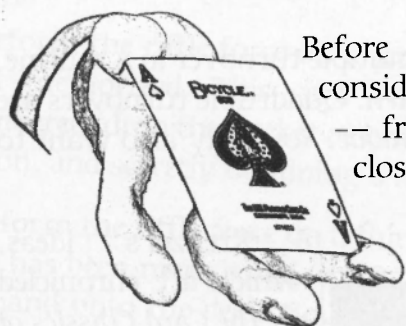


photo 2

Krenzel's ideas,

## FRED KAPS

# I am In Debt



Before his untimely death in the early 1980's, Fred Kaps was considered the greatest magician in the world. Whatever Kaps did -- from difficult stage manipulation, to comedy, to parlour or close-up -- was always superb.

Kaps choice of material was a lesson unto itself. Kaps strove to perform effects which could be clearly understood and the method was always well hidden. Any Kaps performance usually included at least one classic trick. Kaps was a true student of the craft, and had learned that the classics were far stronger than many newer, more fadish routines.

In the late 1970's, Kaps lectured in New York. If any one afternoon with another magician has ever influenced me, it was this particular occasion. Many of the routines and moves I witnessed that day still remain in my repertoire.

I Am In Debt is a particular favorite. While I have changed the handling considerably, the presentation is exactly as Kaps performed it, and is offered here as a homage to this great master.

**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** Four cards are removed from a deck of cards. The audience is told that these four cards will act as "bills". When the four cards are added together, they total Ten Dollars. The magician takes one of the "bills" away, and asks the audience how many that leaves. When the "bills" are again added up, the total is still Ten Dollars. Each time a "bill" is taken away, the remaining "bills" still add up to Ten Dollars, until only one "bill" is left. When it is turned over, it is shown to be a Ten!

**SET-UP:** You will need to secretly cull the Five, Seven and Ten of Spades to the top of the deck. The order should be Five, Seven and Ten from the top down.

You will also need to have the Ace, Two, Three and Four of Spades distributed through the deck, with the Ace being closest to the bottom, followed by the Two, then the Three and finally the Four. This set-up of the Ace-Four is not essential, but will prevent you from having to rearrange the cards during your cull.



**TO PERFORM:** Tell a story about how when you were a little boy your father decided to teach you about money. Say that instead of using real money, your father used a deck of cards. Holding the deck face down, spread over the top three cards (the 5-10 Spades set-up) and catch a left pinky break beneath them. Square the cards and maintain the break.

Turn the deck face up in the hands using Ed Marlo's Book Break from *The Cardician*. (For those not familiar with this move, here's a brief description. With the left pinky holding the break, the right hand grasps the deck in Biddle Grip and turns it over. As the cards turn face up, the three cards above your pinky will slide over as a block and become partially exposed. Once the deck has turned face up and is resting in the left hand, the left pinky pulls down on the block of three cards, and obtains a break above them.)

Spread the face-up deck between the hands while maintaining your break above the 5-10 set-up. Openly upjog the Ace of Spades, followed by the Two, then the Three and finally the Four. Using Vernon's Add-On move, strip these cards out while secretly adding the Five-Seven-Ten set-up. Place the deck face down onto your working surface.

Tell your audience that your father's lesson went like this. Remove the Ace and say, "The Ace represented one. When you add it to the Two, you get Three." Push off the Two

and place it beneath the Ace in your right hand. Point to the Three and say, "Add three more and you get six." Now push off the Three and place it beneath the Ace and Two in your right hand. Point to the Four (really four cards) and say, "And six plus four is ten."

Square the cards, secretly getting a break beneath the Ace of Spades with your left pinky. Turn the packet face-down, and perform the Marlo Book Break as previously explained. The Ace of Spades will become angle-jogged as the packet is turned down (see Photo 1, exposed view). Say, "That was my first lesson. Then my father made things a little more difficult. He took one away."



Suiting actions to words, the right hand removes the side-jogged Ace and flashes its face to the audience, then drops it face down on the deck. See Photo 2. Say, "Ten minus one equals what?"

Your audience will respond by saying, "Nine". Flip the packet face up in your left hand and say, "Actually, it leaves me with a Two, plus a Three, plus a Five... which equals ten!"

Push the Two into the right hand, then buckle the bottom card and take four cards as one beneath the Two, exposing the Five in the left hand. Snap the Five with the left fingers and put it onto the face of the packet. Square the cards, getting a left pinky break beneath the two face cards.

Turn the packet face down, again performing the Marlo move. This time, two cards will be side-jogged. Say, "My father did it again. This time he took the Five away."

Here the right hand comes over the packet and removes the side-jogged cards in Biddle grip. Flash the face of the double card, the Five, to the audience, and drop it onto the deck. Say, "Ten minus five equals what?"

Your audience will say, "Five." Flip the packet face up in your left hand and say, "Actually, it leaves me with three plus seven, which is still ten!" This time, buckle the bottom card (a Seven) and remove it while holding a triple card in your right hand. Place the Seven onto the triple.

Buckle the bottom card, secretly obtaining a left pinky break above it. Turn the packet face down, performing the Marlo move and side-jogging the bottom three cards.

Say, "My father did it one last time. This time he took the Seven away." With the right hand, remove the side-jogged triple card and expose its face to the audience. The Seven will show. Drop the triple onto the deck. Say, "Ten minus seven equals what?"

By now, you will usually get all sorts of answers. Snap the remaining card in your left hand face up, exposing the Ten, and say, "That's right — ten!"

**FINAL NOTES:** This routine has a great deal to recommend it. It is very humorous and it is also extremely logical. You start out with four cards, and one at a time you remove three until you are left with one. The fact that the cards continue to add up to ten is both baffling and entertaining. You'll have to try it to experience how potent the effect really is.

## LARRY JENNINGS

# Instant Aces



Back in the late 1960's, Karl Fulves published a superb trick of Larry Jennings called Instant Aces. The effect was straightforward — four Aces were inserted into four separate spots in the deck. The deck was immediately spread to show that the Aces had reversed themselves. The method was superb and always fooled people.

Unfortunately, the trick had a flaw, one which was pointed out to me by several layman. The magician began the trick by culling through the deck and removing the Aces. The Aces were displayed, then immediately inserted back into the deck. If I was really capable of making the Aces reverse themselves, laymen asked, why didn't I just leave them in the deck, click my fingers, and make them turn face up?

In the late 1980's I became friendly with Larry, and learned that he'd heard the same comment from laymen during his performances. Jennings pointed out that this was the problem with card tricks in which a four of a kind must be used.

For many years I wrestled with a more streamlined way to perform Instant Aces. In 1997, I finally hit upon what I consider an ideal solution. I hope you enjoy the results of my labor.

**METHOD:** Secretly get the four Aces to the top of the deck. This can be done by culling, or using the Aces in a previous routine and leaving them on top.

Shuffle the deck while secretly controlling the Aces. This can be accomplished by doing an overhand shuffle and injogging the first card, then shuffling off. Or, perform Jennings' method to control cards during an overhand shuffle described in *Jennings '67*. Here's a brief description.

Undercut half the deck with your right hand. Bring your hands together and place your left thumb onto the top card of the right hand packet. Press firmly downward with your thumb while your right hand relaxes its grip. As you move your hands apart, your left thumb will draw a group of cards off the right half. Owing to the thumb's pressure, these cards will spread sideways (see Photo 1, sidejogged cards exaggerated for



figure 1

explanation). Shuffle onto these cards until the right packet is exhausted.

Square the deck. Your left fingertips press against the exposed face of the sidejogged cards. Insert your left pinky tip beneath these cards. (Note: this diabolical way of obtaining a break has also been credited to Bob Stencil).

Back to the routine. Finish shuffling, obtain a left pinky break above the four

Aces, but do not square the deck completely. Instead, turn the deck face up in your hands, and perform Ken Krenzel's Mechanical Reverse. The unsquared condition of the cards will help mask this sleight.

Run through the face-up cards until you come to the four Aces in the center of the pack. Take all the cards in the right hand and place them underneath the deck. The condition of the deck is now as follows: four face-up Aces, a large packet of face-down cards, followed by a large packet of face-up cards. From the audience's point of view, it appears that you simply shuffled the cards, turned them face up, and ran through the cards until you came to the Aces. Although the trick has yet to start, the mechanics are nearly done.

Thumb off the first ace into the right hand. If you stare at the front of the deck, you will see a separation near the deck's center where the reversed packets meet. Insert the first ace a few cards above this separation. Angle jog the ace to the left.

Thumb off a second Ace and insert it seven or eight cards above the first Ace. Leave this Ace sticking out of the center.

Thumb off a third Ace and insert it seven or eight cards above the second Ace. Angle jog the third Ace to the right. Now grab the deck with the right fingers, thumb on the face, fingers on the back, and turn the hand over, flashing the backs of the cards. Everything will look normal.

Return the deck to the left hand. With the right fingers push the three protruding Aces flush with the pack. Tilt the far end of the deck downward so that the rear end is in your



direct line of vision. Lift up with the right thumb at the natural separation in the center. Two face-to-face cards should show. If not, riffle up a few cards until you find two face-to-face cards. Once you have found the natural separation, obtain a left pinky break. Continue to riffle the cards for effect.

Turn the deck face down and move the hands forward. This will give you plenty of cover to perform Krenzel's Mechanical Reverse, the larger motion of your arms covering the smaller motion of the lower half of the deck being reversed. Drop the deck on your working surface.

Ribbon-spread the deck. The four Aces have magically reversed themselves in different sections of the spread!

**FINAL NOTES:** Ken Krenzel's Mechanical Reverse has been written up in many excellent volumes of card magic, most notably *The Classic Card Magic of Ken Krenzel*. Here is a brief description for those not owning this excellent book.

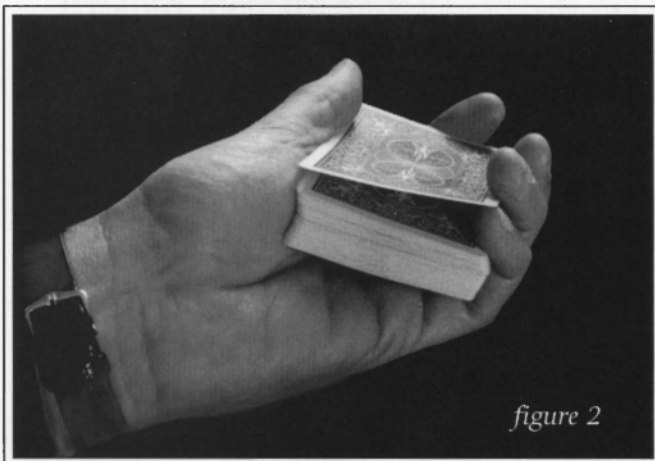


figure 2

Let's say you need to reverse the top card of the deck. Obtain a left pinky break under this card. This is a deep break, with the pinky inserted up to the first joint (see Photo 2). Grasp the deck in the right hand in Biddle Grip and flip it over. As the deck turns, your left fingers straighten out so your left pinky can stay in the break (see Photo 3). Your right hand now firmly grasps the deck from above. Curl your left fingers toward your palm, reversing the card below your break. Remember to

curl all four left fingers — don't stick out your left forefinger. The deck will end up squared in your left hand with a reversed card on the bottom.

Larry Jennings' original handling for Instant Aces can be found in *The Classic Magic of Larry Jennings*. A detailed explanation of the Stencil/Jennings jogging technique can be found in *Jennings '67*.

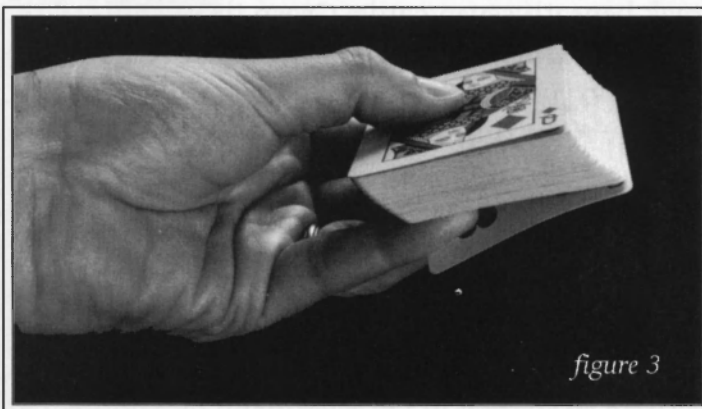
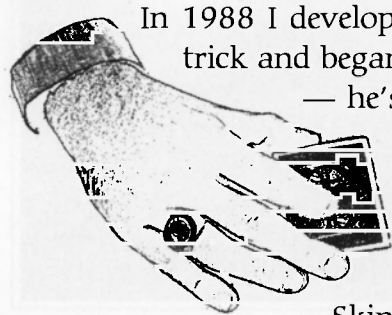


figure 3



## DARYL / BILL MALONE

# Shipwrecked



In 1988 I developed a handling for Daryl's Diamond Bar. Bill Malone saw the trick and began using it. One night, Bill calls from the hotel where he works — he's come up with the perfect presentation. A few weeks later at

The Magic Castle, I show Larry Jennings my handling coupled with Bill's presentation. Larry goes nuts! I teach him the routine and tell him to have fun.

A week later my phone rings. It's Saturday night and Mike Skinner is on the line. Larry has told Mike about the trick and Mike wants to learn it too. I explain to Mike that I have guests and I am about to sit down to dinner. Mike asks me to go over the basics. I find a deck and go into the bedroom with a cell phone. Forty-five minutes later I hang up and go back to my guests.

**PREPARATION:** Openly remove the four Kings and twelve high-valued, red spot cards from the deck. Place the remainder of the cards aside; you will not use them again.

Place the Kings on the face of the packet of twelve red cards. The Kings must be arranged so their colors alternate. Since Bill Malone's presentation is what makes this routine special, I offer it verbatim for your enjoyment.

"Once upon a time, these four gentlemen (show four Kings on the face) were shipwrecked on a deserted island for 15 years."

Spread the Kings and three red cards off the face. Close the spread and get a left pinky break beneath seven cards. Grasp these cards with the right hand in Biddle Grip. With the tip of the right thumb, pick up another card. Now perform Marlo's face-up Aftus Switch as follows: peel two Kings onto the cards in the left hand. Secretly drop the card being held by your right thumb over the Kings. Peel the third King off and openly slide it to the rear of the cards in the right hand. While performing these moves, say, "This one was French, this one Russian, this one American and the last one was Polish."

Place the packet in your right hand face-up on your working surface. It will contain a King at the face, three red cards, and a King of contrasting color at the rear. The audience believes it contains four Kings.

Turn the packet in your left hand face down. Overhand shuffle, drawing out the bottom

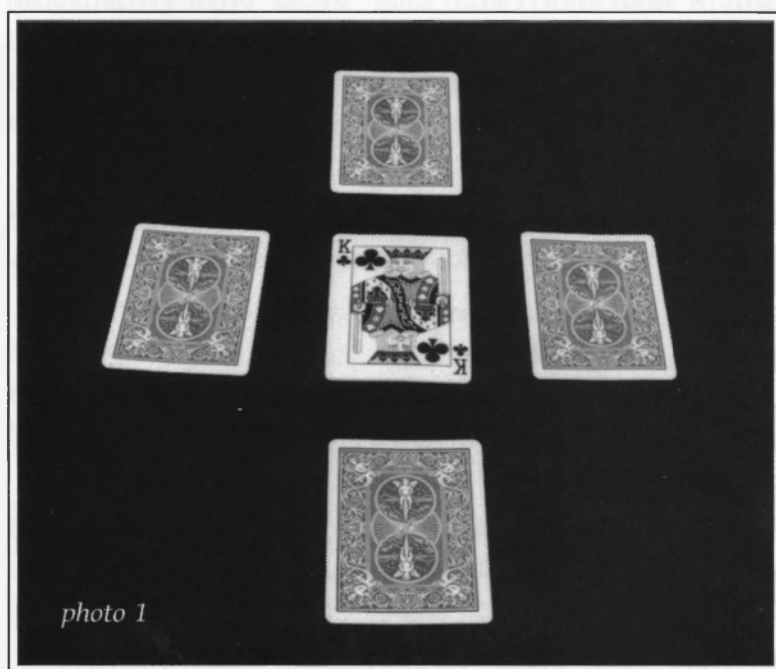
and top cards, then shuffle off to the last card. This will bring the two Kings to the top. Flip the packet face up. Grasp the packet with the right hand in Biddle Grip, and secretly drop the two Kings off the thumb. Hold a break above the Kings with your right thumb.

The left thumb peels three cards off the face into the left hand. Flip these cards face down and drop them to the left of the face-up King packet on the table. Say, "This will represent France, where the first King lived."

Peel a single red card into the left hand while secretly adding the Kings behind it. Maintain a pinky break between this card and the Kings. Peel two more red cards into the left hand. Now bring the left hand's packet behind the cards in the right hand, and secretly deposit the three red cards above your break onto the bottom of the packet. This should be one fluid motion, with no break in rhythm. Quickly turn the left hand palm down, and drop the two cards behind the face-up King packet on the table. Say, "This will represent Russia, where the second King lived."

Peel three more red cards into the left hand. Flip them face down and drop them above the face-up King packet. Say, "The third King lived way over here in America."

Peel the last three cards into the left hand, turn them over and drop them to the right of the King packet (see Photo 1). The fact that three red cards are seen twice during this display will not be noticed. Say, "And the last one lived here in Poland."



Point at the face-up King packet, "And in the middle are the four Kings, stranded on this deserted island for 15 years."

Pick up the face-up King packet, flip it face down, and place in the left hand in dealing grip. Say, "One day the four Kings found a bottle on the beach. They uncorked it and a Genie popped out. The Genie was so grateful that he granted each man a wish."

Pinch the King packet in the right hand as if to do an Elmsley Count. With the left thumb peel three cards off the top. The last

two will remain perfectly aligned. Flip these two cards onto the packet, exposing a King.

"The Frenchman went first. He said, 'I wish I was off this island and back at home in France.' The Genie said, 'Your wish is my command,' and he snapped his fingers and the Frenchman returned to France." Flip the double face down. Take the top card with the right hand, and openly slip it beneath the packet which represents France.

Take the packet and pinch it in Elmsley grip with the right fingers. The left thumb peels two cards off the top, leaving the last two aligned. Flip them over, exposing a second King.

"The American was next. He said, 'Fifteen years on this island is enough. I wish I was back home with my family.' So the Genie snapped his fingers and the American was magically whisked back home." Flip the double over. Take the top card with the right hand and slip it beneath the packet which represents America.

Pinch the remaining cards in the right hand in Elmsley grip. Peel the top card into the left hand. Flip the double over, exposing a third (?) King. Because of the time lapse, no one will notice that you show this King twice. Say, "The Russian was next. He said, 'I too wish I was back home—in America!' So the Genie snapped his fingers and the Russian was sent home."

Flip the double over. Take the top card with the right hand and slip it beneath the packet which represents Russia.

With the right hand grasp the two cards and snap them over. A fourth (?) King will show. Say, "Now came the Polish guy's turn. The Genie said, 'What wish would you like?' And the Polish guy said, 'Well... I'm awful lonely. I wish all my friends were back.'" Flip the two cards face down, and slip them beneath the packet which represents Poland. Pick up this packet and flip it face up. Say, "So the Genie snapped his fingers, and they all returned to the deserted island."

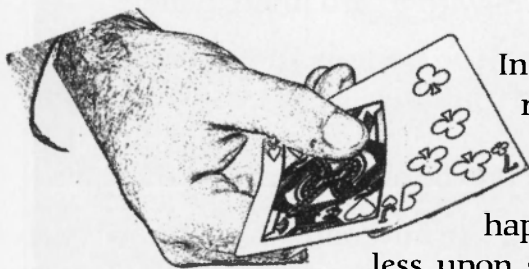
With your left thumb, reverse fan the four cards in the left hand, snapping the four Kings out in a neat display. Do not touch the three packets on the table — the spectators will be way ahead of you.

**FINAL NOTES:** Larry Jennings told me this was the best assembly trick he'd ever performed for laymen. I agree wholeheartedly. In order to remain "politically correct" the Polish guy is never referred to as being stupid. He simply utters a stupid line, which brings the story to a very funny conclusion, the punch line being the four Kings magically appearing in your hand.

The display sequence is Larry Jennings' modification of Daryl's Display sequence.

## DINGLE, RISER, THOMPSON, CERVON, MARLO

# Quick D-Way



In the early 1970's, Derek Dingle began performing a routine called Quick D-Way that quickly set the standard for small packet tricks. The trick was a mind-blower, with so many impossible things happening that laymen and magicians were left helpless upon seeing it. No wonder Quick D-Way soon found its way into hundreds of magician's acts.

I was one of those magicians, having learned the routine from Derek himself, who gave me some sage advice after I had practiced the trick to the necessary degree of perfection. "The trick is a bunch of crazy moves," Derek informed me. "If you don't use the patter, it doesn't make any sense whatsoever."

I began performing Quick D-Way and soon learned that the "crazy moves" Derek was referring to was actually one move that formed the nucleus of the trick: Marlo's quick three-way move which he published in *Ibidem* and which incorporates the Christ/Annemann Alignment Move. For those not familiar with the sleight, it is a herky-jerky move which let the performer show one card three times. It was the routine's one flaw, and had the trick not been so powerful, I would have discarded it.

Since Quick D-Way was first published, numerous versions have found their way into print. The following routine is my solution, and substitutes a procedure of my own for the Christ/Annemann Alignment Move.

**PREPARATION:** Secretly reverse the bottom card of the deck. This is easily accomplished between tricks, or simply by putting the deck beneath the table and reversing the bottom card with one hand. There's no point in making a move out of this, so don't.

**METHOD:** Ask a spectator to help you. For sake of example, let's call this spectator Mary. Tell Mary you want to show her an unusual trick. Riffle down the side of the deck with the left thumb and ask Mary to say stop. Have Mary stop you before you reach the center of the pack. Let's say she stops you at the King of Clubs.

With the right hand, remove all the cards above where Mary stopped you and drop



them onto your working surface. This will allow you sufficient cover to obtain a left pinky break beneath the top two cards of the packet in the left hand.

Perform a double turnover and ask Mary to memorize this card. Turn the double card face down and take it with your right hand. Drop the supposed selection onto the packet on the table. It should land so it protrudes from the front. Point at this card and say, "Mary, I'm going to make your card switch places with a card in my hand."

While pattering, obtain a left pinky break above the bottom three cards of the packet in the left hand. This can be accomplished by a triple buckle, or by spreading the cards casually between the hands, sighting the bottom three, and obtaining a left pinky break above them as you square. All attention will be on the cards on the table.

Perform a slip cut as follows. Place the left thumb firmly onto the top card (the selection) and draw out all cards below this card and above your pinky break. This is easily done, as a few trials will show.

Drop the cards in the right hand onto the packet on the table. It appears you have openly isolated the spectator's selection, when in fact the selection is the top card of the packet in your hand.

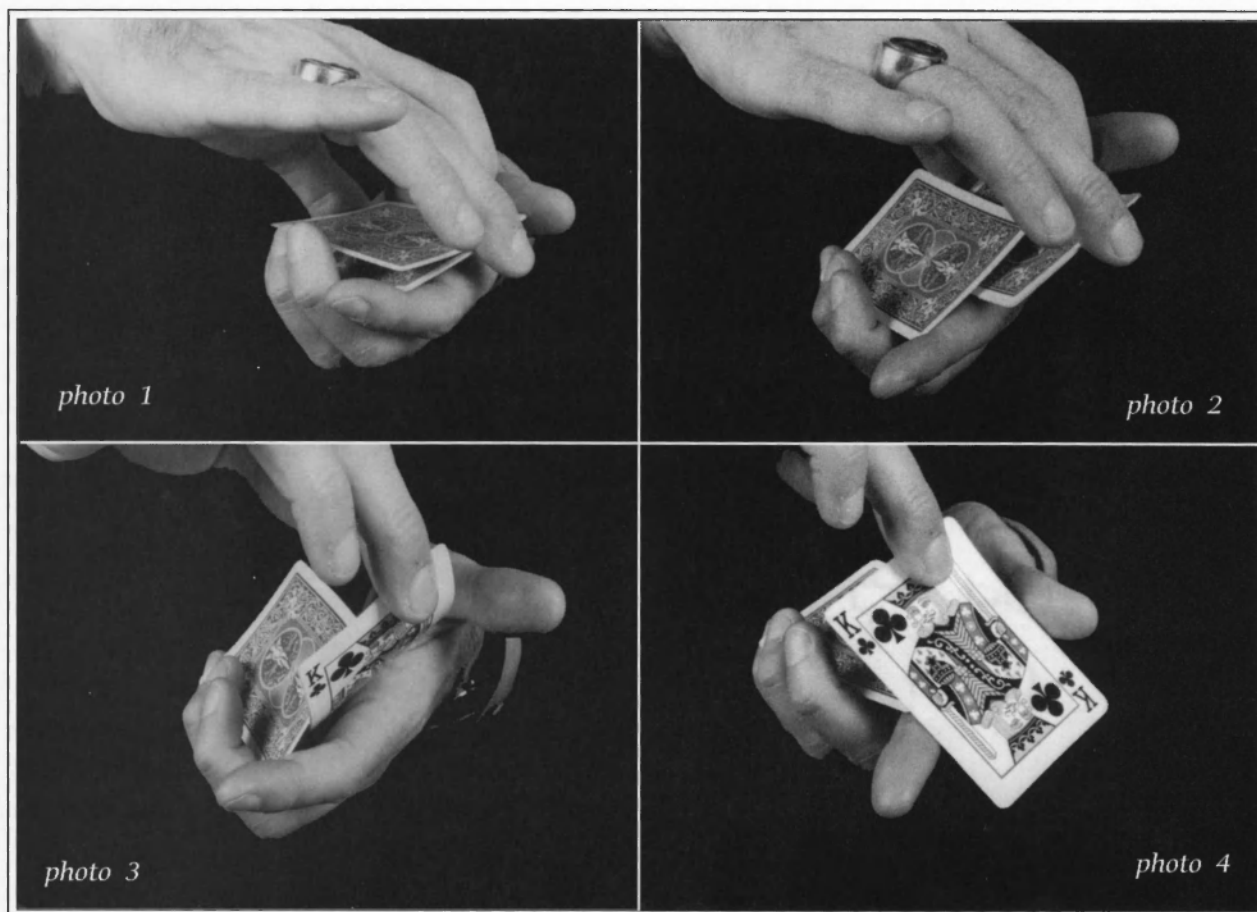
Spread out the packet in your hand, holding the last two cards as one. Say, "Are you ready? Watch!"

Casually take the top card of the spread (the selection) and place it to the bottom, then close the spread. Place the right hand onto the deck and place the right middle finger on the edge of the outjogged card (the supposed selection). Push the outjogged card flush into the deck, then snap your fingers for effect. Say, "Did you see it go?"

Whatever Mary's response, say, "Believe it or not, your card has jumped to my hand. Holding the packet in dealing position in your left hand, spread the top card to the right with your left thumb, do a buckle and spread a double card, then pull the bottom card to the left, forming a small fan of three cards. Say, "Mary, whichever one you'd like it to be, that will be your card."

Just as Mary begins to speak, whisper, "Say bottom." Raise your voice and say, "Whichever one you'd like, top, middle or bottom." As Mary tries to answer, whisper, "Say bottom."

If Mary is a kind soul, she'll say, "All right, bottom," or something to that effect. When she does, grasp the middle (double) card and top card with your right hand, freeing your left hand to grasp the bottom card and turn it over to display Mary's selection. Say, "And your card is the one on the bottom. Pretty neat, huh?"



Turn the selection face down and slip it beneath the right- hand cards. Square the packet and get a left pinky break beneath the top card, holding the packet from above in Biddle grip with the right hand. Your left fingers now grasp the top card in preparation to perform a one-card Pass (see Photo 1, exposed view). Grasp the top card firmly, otherwise the cards will fly out of your hands when you attempt the next move.

Say, "I know what you're thinking, Mary. You really didn't want the card on the bottom. You wanted the card on the top."

Your right hand will now appear to snap the top card face up. In fact, you are going to snap all the cards face up *except* the top card, which your left fingers pass to the bottom (see Photos 2, 3 & 4). I realize this sounds bold and incredibly risky, yet the move is invisible if the following steps are taken.

First, the three cards which are snapped face up shoot outward, and turn over so quickly that it is impossible to see where they come from. This large movement will

mask the top card being passed to the bottom.

Second, the pressure exerted by the right first and second fingers on the three cards is pronounced, and will keep these cards perfectly aligned. Your left fingers can also aid in keeping these cards squared, if necessary.

Third, as the three cards are snapped face up, they are brought in front of the card which remains in the left hand, and are placed outjogged on this card (see Photo 5). This greatly adds to the illusion, so don't pass it up.

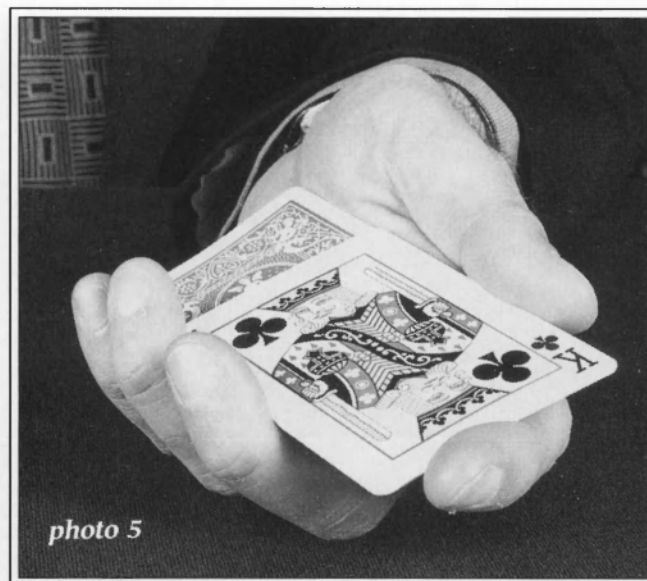


photo 5

Square the packet. Take the face-up selection with the right fingers. A back will show

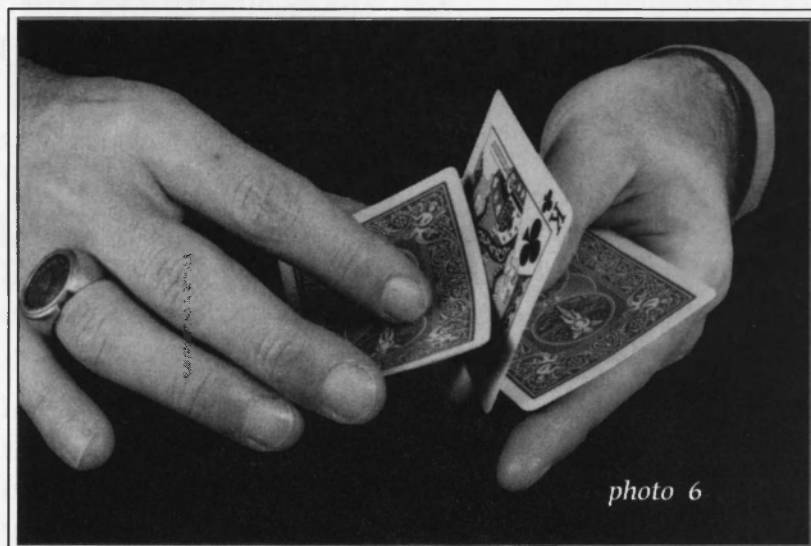


photo 6

beneath it. Snap the selection against the left thumb, showing its singularity. Say, "Mary, I know what you're thinking. You really didn't want the card on the bottom, or the top. You actually wanted the card in the center."

Drop the face-up selection onto the packet and do a triple turnover. This can be accomplished two ways: either by a Block Pushoff, or

by buckling the bottom card and doing a triple turnover. Grasp the packet in Biddle Grip with your right hand. Place your left fingers beneath the packet and slide out the two bottom cards. Use the left thumb to lever the middle card face up, showing the middle card to be Mary's selection as well (see Photo 6).

Lever Mary's selection face down with your left thumb. Drop the double in the right hand onto the cards in the left, holding a left pinky break beneath the double as you do.

Say, "Let me explain how that's done. You see, all the cards are the same. It makes the trick a lot easier to do."

Reverse count the cards in your hands as follows: your right fingers grasp the two cards above the break, and quickly count the two remaining cards onto this double card. Three single (?) cards will show.

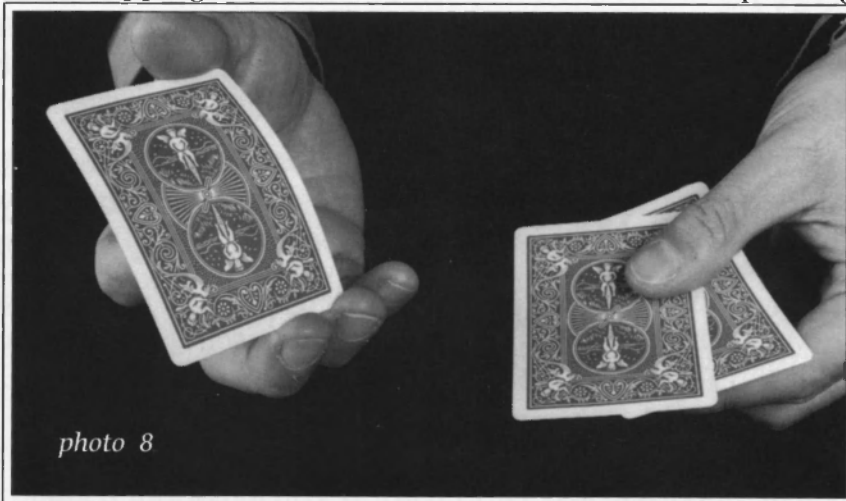
Hold the cards in the left hand in dealing position. With the left thumb spread the top two cards to the right so you're holding a fan of three (?). Grasp the top two cards of the fan with the right hand, thumb on top, fingers beneath. Say, "When I say the cards are all the same, I mean, they're all the same."

Use the two cards in the right hand to flip the double card in your left hand over, showing backs on both sides! Do this again. Then drop the right hand's cards onto the double, and obtain a left pinky break above the top card in preparation for the one-card Pass just described. Say, "Not only is the bottom card the same, but so is the top."



Perform the one-card pass, snapping over the other three cards and depositing them on top. It appears that you have snapped the top card over, and there is a back where the face should be. Grasp the triple card with the right hand and flip it over, showing another back.

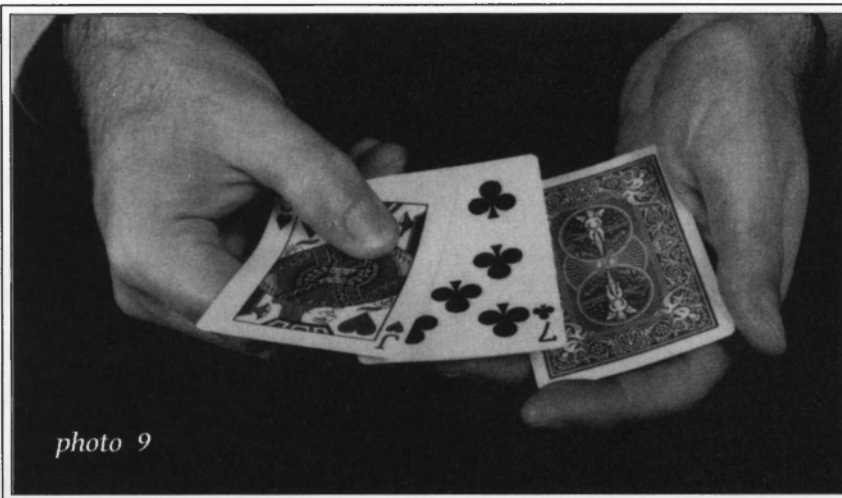
Say, "And, of course, the middle card has a back as well."





Grasp the packet in Biddle Grip with the right hand. Place the left thumb on top of the packet, the left fingers beneath, and apply light pressure. Move the left hand to the left, dragging the top and bottom cards with it (see Photo 7). A double card will remain in the right hand. Turn the right hand palm up to show another bottom (see Photo 8).

Drop this card(s) onto those in your left hand.



Click your right fingers for effect. Say, "Mary, what was the card I started with?"

Once Mary names her card, do the following to show that her selection has vanished. With the left thumb, push over the top card and grasp it with the palm-down right hand, the fingers above, the thumb below. Turn the left hand palm down, killing the reversed card now on top. Smartly turn the right hand palm up while also turning the left hand palm up. Two indifferent cards will show. Now buckle the bottom card with the left pinky. With the right hand, grasp all the cards except the bottom card (see Photo 9). Slide the bottom card out with the left fingers and snap it face up. Add it to the two cards in the right hand. Three indifferent cards will show — Mary's selection has vanished.

Drop the three cards onto the deck on the table. Pick up the deck and perform an invisible riffle pass. Ribbon spread the deck from right to left, revealing Mary's selection reversed in the center to conclude.

**FINAL NOTES:** No, this is not an easy routine to perform. But it is worth all the practice because the effect is so strong. More importantly, it can be performed on a moment's notice, a rarity for a trick with so many startling visual changes.

The original Quick 3-Way has been traced to many great card magicians, including Ed Marlo, Harry Riser and Johnny Thompson. It was Marlo who first put the trick into print in P.H. Lyon's *Ibidem*. The idea of showing all three cards to have backs has been credited to both Johnny Thompson and Bruce Cervon.

## RON FERRIS

# Royal Aces



This wonderful gambling routine comes from the brilliant mind of Ron Ferris and can be found in Alton Sharpe's *Expert Card Mysteries*. I have added a number of touches that hopefully will find favor with anyone already performing this classic piece of card chicanery.

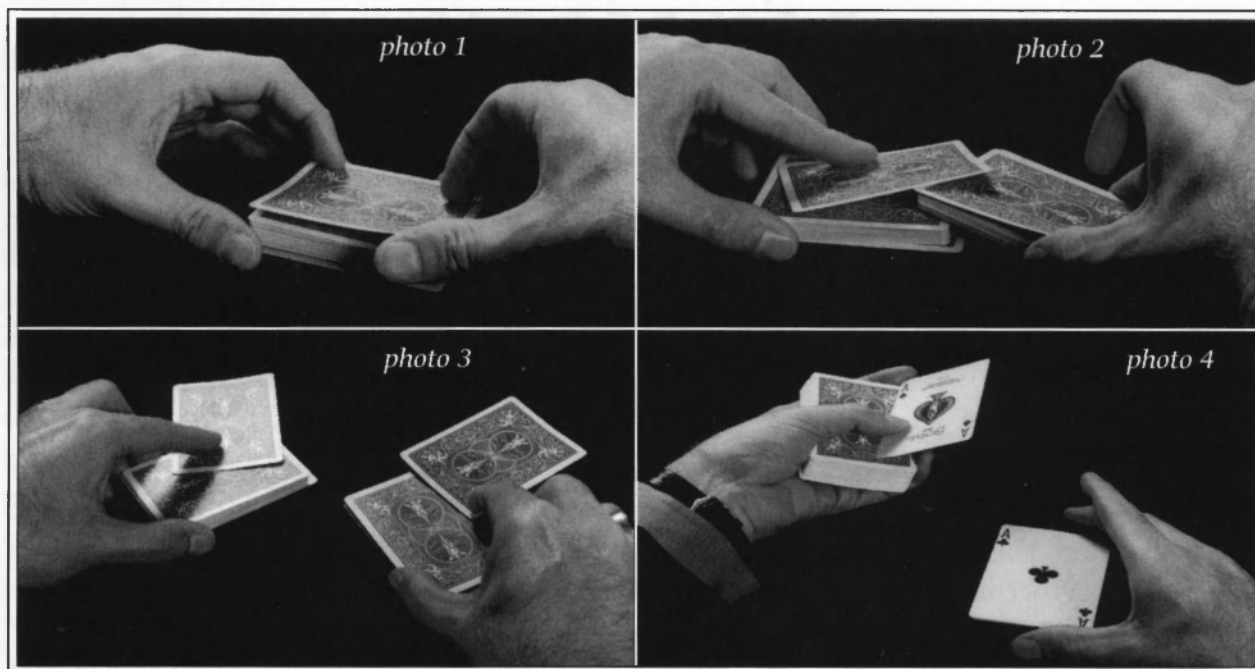
**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** The performer offers to demonstrate how hustlers cheat at poker. Four Aces are magically spun from the deck and then placed on top of the deck. Without shuffling or cutting the performer deals two hands of poker. The performer shows his hand to be the Aces; the spectator has been dealt a "sucker" hand consisting of the four Kings. The performer offers to play another round. The performer again places the Aces onto the deck and deals two hands. When the spectator checks his hand, it contains four Aces. The performer congratulates the spectator on his good fortune and turns over his own cards to reveal a Straight Flush.

**PREPARATION:** From the top down the pack must be previously arranged as follows: two red Aces, two black Aces, four Kings, two indifferent cards, Two of Hearts, Three of Hearts, Four of Hearts, Five of Hearts, indifferent card, Six of Hearts. Place the deck in its case and you are set.

**TO PERFORM:** Remove the deck from its case and perform a tabled false cut while offering to display your prowess at poker. You will now spin the red Aces out of the pack, one to the right, the other to the left, the cards coming to rest at nearly identical spots on the table. This move is a variation of the Benzais Cut and works as follows.

Table the deck in front of you as if for a riffle shuffle. The left end of the deck is gripped between the left second and third fingers at the outer corner and the thumb at the inner corner with the forefinger curled on top. The right side of the deck is gripped by the right hand in the same fashion. Ride your right thumb up the back of the deck and catch a break beneath the top two cards. This break should be as big as the pad of your thumb (see Photo 1, performer's view). The pressure being placed on the top card by the forefingers will hide this break from the front and sides.

Place the entire first joint of the left forefinger onto the top card of the deck near center. Two things will now happen independently of each other. The left hand swings



the bottom half of the deck to the left while the left forefinger drags off the top card (like a slip cut). See Photo 2. This should be done with enough force so that the outer right corner of the top card pivots off the right middle finger and the card spins off the deck. As this happens, the right hand swings its half of the deck to the right while loosening its grip on the cards. This will cause the remaining card above your thumb break to fly off to your right. See Photo 3. Timed correctly, both cards will spin out of the deck at the same time. Those who have performed the Benzais Cut have probably had this happen accidentally and wished they could do it again! Practice these mechanics and you will be doing it every time.

Back to the trick. Perform the Benzais Double twice, revealing the red Aces, then the black Aces. Pick up the tabled deck with the left hand. As the right hand scoops up the Aces, push over the top three cards of the deck with the left thumb, and obtain a left pinky break beneath them.

Drop the face-up Aces onto the deck. Immediately lift all seven cards above the break with the right hand in Biddle Grip. You are now set to perform a variation of the Braue Add-On Move.

Holding the seven-card packet in your right hand, pull an Ace onto the deck with your left thumb. Move your left hand forward, drawing attention to this Ace. With the left fingers, lever the Ace face down onto the deck (see Photo 4). This flourishy action draws attention to the Ace and away from the right hand's packet.

Perform these same actions to display the next two Aces, turning each Ace face down onto the deck. Drop the last Ace (and the three Kings beneath it) onto the deck.

Move the deck forward and allow the last Ace to slide off the pack. Use the left fingers to pivot this Ace face down. Remember to perform this display sequence at a smooth, fairly rapid pace.

You will now deal two hands of cards, one for the spectator, the other for yourself. The first card dealt will be a second deal. This may sound bold, but the following will cover it perfectly. Say, "One Ace for you, one Ace for me." Necktie the deck and do a strike second deal on the first card, then deal the next card normally to yourself. The second does not have to be perfect, just make it smooth and it will fly right by.

Say, "Another Ace for you, another Ace for me." This time deal the first card normally and a second to yourself. For the third round, deal two cards normally. For the fourth, a second and a top. For the last round, deal normally. Ron Ferris's formula for remembering when to deal seconds is as follows:

2nd - Top - Top;    2nd - Top - Top;    2nd - Top - Top;    Top

Turn over your hand, revealing the four Aces. Turn up spectator's hand, revealing the four Kings. Explain that this would be a good sucker hand, as most poker players would probably bet high with four Kings.

Leave the Aces on the table. Gather up the other cards (including the X card from the Ace hand) and place them below the deck. Scoop up the Aces with the right hand while the left thumb pushes over the top two cards of the deck and obtains a left pinky break beneath them. Drop the face-up Aces onto the deck and perform the Braue Add-On Move as previously described.

Deal the top card normally to the spectator, flashing its face as you do. Say, "This time I really will deal an Ace to you." Deal the next card normally to yourself. For the next round, deal a second to the spectator and a top to yourself. For the next round, deal another top and then a second. Then deal normally. Ferris's formula will make this easy to remember:

Top - Top - 2nd;    Top - Top - 2nd;    Top - Top - Top ;    Top

Have the spectator turn over their hand — four Aces will show. Congratulate the spectator, then turn over your hand to reveal a Straight Flush to conclude.

**FINAL NOTES:** This is a wonderful routine with all the credit for its brilliance going to Ron Ferris. My additions are the double Benzais Spin Cut and the handling of the Braue Add-On move, which give the routine some necessary window dressing.



There are many excellent descriptions of the strike second deal in print; however, most leave out an important touch, one which gives the move the illusion of the top card being dealt. This technique, which is often referred to as crossing the thumbs, dates back to Walter Scott's *The Phantom at the Card Table*. Here is a brief description.

To deal the cards normally: Hold the deck in the Mechanics Grip, with the left forefinger shielding the front edge of the deck. The position of the left thumb is important. The pad of the thumb should be able to touch the pad of the left forefinger without difficulty. The right hand approaches the left, and the right thumb crosses over the left thumb. As this crossing action takes place, the left thumb moves downward, and the right thumb strikes the center of the top card (see Photo 5). The top card is taken by the right fingers and sailed across the table.

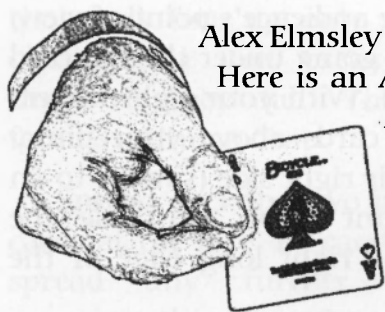
To perform the second deal: Hold the deck the same as before. As the right hand approaches the top card, the thumbs again cross. This time, the left thumb pushes the top card down and exposes the back of the second card. The right thumb hits the back of the second card in the same spot as if dealing a top. See Photo 6 & 7. The second card is spun off as the top card is pulled back into place by the left thumb.

Dealing seconds in this manner is not difficult, but requires a certain rhythm when dealing the cards. Practice bringing your hands together when you deal, the left hand meeting the right, then separating your hands as the card is dealt. This will allow you to develop the necessary smoothness to acquire an invisible second deal.



## ALEX ELMSLEY

# 1002nd Aces



Alex Elmsley's "1002nd Aces" is a trick that was certainly ahead of its time. Here is an Ace assembly where the spectator directs the action, yet the Aces vanish from the deck and end up in a packet chosen by the spectator. My changes to the routine are technical, including a convincing sucker bit which helps "sell" the location of the Aces after they have been placed in a row on the table. The rest of the routine belongs to Mr. Elmsley.

**PREPARATION:** None whatsoever.

**TO PERFORM:** Ribbon-spread the cards across your working surface and outjog the four Aces for approximately half their length. Turn the spread over and scoop it up, then strip out the outjogged Aces. This is a nice way to remove the Aces from the deck, and allows the audience to see what you are doing at all times.

Place the Aces face up on the table and ask a spectator to name their favorite. As the spectator is deciding, get a left pinky break beneath the top four cards of the deck. There are many ways to accomplish this, the easiest perhaps to place the deck beneath the table edge, push over four cards, visually sight them, then square up with one hand and obtain a pinky break.

Let's say the spectator names the Ace of Spades. With the Aces still on the table, openly position the Ace of Spades at the bottom of the face up packet. Flip the Aces face down, then pick them up with the right hand. Fan the Aces in the right hand. With the left fingers, remove the bottom card of the fan, and hold it side jogged against the deck. Use the fan in the right hand to flip this card face up onto the

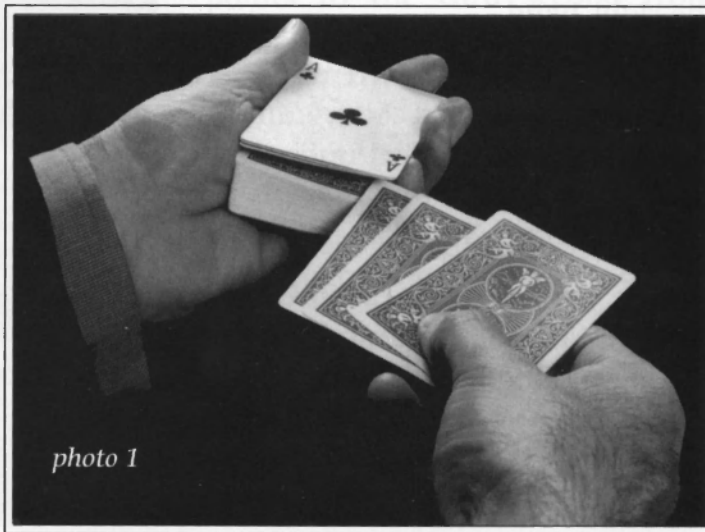




photo 2

deck. Let's say this card is the Ace of Clubs. Say, "You didn't want the Ace of Clubs."

Slide the outer left corner of the fan into the break being held by your left pinky. These cards enter from the rear and from the audience's point of view, appear to be going under the top card (see Photo 1). With your right fingers grip all the cards above your pinky break by their right side (similar to an Elmsley Count grip) and slide the packet to the right long edge of the

pack. See Photo 2.

Retain the Ace of Clubs in your right hand as your right fingers flip the other seven cards face up. As this packet

falls flush, obtain a left pinky break beneath it. Say, "Nor did you want (here you name the Ace at the face)." Thumb this Ace over and slide it beneath the Ace of Clubs in the right hand.

Say, "Nor did you want (here you name the third Ace)." Thumb this Ace over and slide it underneath the two Aces in the right hand, holding all three in a fan. See Photo 3.



photo 3

Say, "The card you wanted was the Ace of Spades." Drop the fan onto the Ace of Spades. With the left thumb push the block of cards above the pinky break to the right. Flip everything face down onto the deck. This is a brilliant move of Herb Zarrow.

Deal the top four cards to the table. Place these cards in a row on your working surface.

Say, "We also need three indifferent cards."

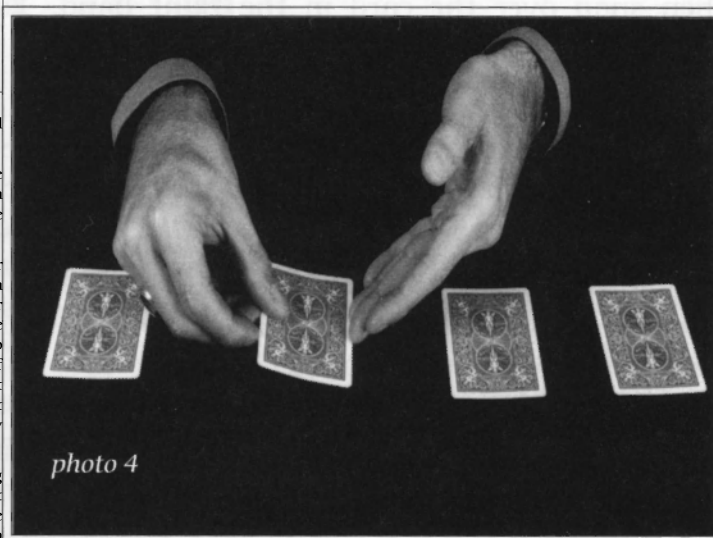
Spread over the top two cards of the deck. As you start to spread a third card, the left thumb pushes over a block. Make sure this block has more than three cards. Flip all the cards face up onto the deck, obtaining a heel break beneath them as they fall. This is the familiar Altman Trap.

Spread over the two indifferent cards at the face. Be careful not to spread any further, or risk exposing the Aces. Say, "We call them indifferent because they just don't care." Square the two indifferent cards, then flip everything above your heel break face down.

Thumb over the top three cards and take them in with the right fingers. Push the top card over slightly and obtain a left pinky break beneath it. Square the three cards in the right hand on top and remove all the cards above your left pinky break. Place the deck aside.

Ask your spectator to guess which card is the Ace of Spades. Say the spectator points to the card second from your left. Drop the packet in your right hand onto this Ace(?) Place the fingertips of both hands onto the sides of this packet, as if steadying it. With your right fingers grab the edge of the packet as if preparing to do an Elmsley Count.

Lift the packet while pressing the left edge of the cards against the table. See Photo 4. Allow all the cards beneath the top card to flip





face up onto the table. An indifferent card will show on the face of this packet. Pause, then snap over the card in the right hand. This card will be the Ace of Spades. Compliment the spectator on choosing their Ace!

Leave the Ace of Spades face up on the table. Pick up the deck with the left hand while the right hand picks up the packet. Flip the packet onto the deck and thumb off the top three cards. Slide these three cards beneath the Ace of Spades and have the spectator cover all with their hand. Pick up the other three face-down Aces(?) and insert them into different spots of the pack. Cleanly push the Aces flush and drop the deck onto your working surface. Make a magic gesture, then have the spectator look at the three cards beneath the Ace of Spades to conclude.

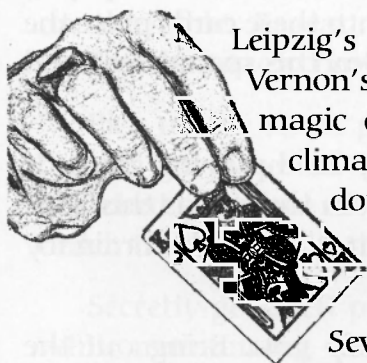
**FINAL NOTES:** In performing this routine, please do not leave out having the spectator name an Ace ahead of time, then having it appear in the spot which they choose. This will throw your audience off the scent, as many spectators will think that this is the trick you're trying to do.

The switch at the beginning of the routine is based upon two Brother Hamman ideas, the Bottom Double Drop and The Swivel Switch, both of which can be found in *The Secrets of Brother Hamman*. Steve Silverman published a similar switch, called the \$20 Switch, in the March, 1998 issue of *Magic Magazine*.



## NATE LEIPZIG / HERBERT MILTON

# Sympathetic Thirteen



Leipzig's handling of Herbert Milton's Sympathetic Thirteen (see Dai Vernon's *Tribute to Nate Leipzig*) is one of the greatest pieces of card magic ever invented. It has drama, mystery and thirteen separate climaxes! If Leipzig's classic trick has a drawback, it's the fact that double-faced cards are employed, not only taking it out of the impromptu category, but out of most performing situations as well.

Several years ago, Larry Jennings published an impromptu handling in *The Classic Magic of Larry Jennings*. The routine was great but loaded with difficult moves. Larry's real contribution was finding a method of performing Leipzig's routine without resorting to double-faced cards.

The effect of Sympathetic Thirteen is an unusual one. The performer removes the thirteen Spades from the pack and arranges them in order from Ace to King. The cards are placed into a goblet which remains in clear view. Next the thirteen Hearts are removed and given a haphazard shuffle. The spectator is then invited to reverse one of the Hearts. The Heart packet is placed into a second goblet, which is also placed on the table.

Removing cards simultaneously from both goblets, the performer shows that the Clubs have mysteriously rearranged themselves into the same order as the Hearts, including one reversed card!

With Larry's routine as my starting point, I developed the following, taking elements from Leipzig's original and Jennings' later modifications. I urge you to try it.

**PREPARATION:** You will need two red-backed decks of cards. I like to use Tally Ho's, as the Ace of Spades is quite pronounced and will show up well during the routine.

From these two decks construct a special deck as follows. First, remove all thirteen Spades from both decks. From one deck remove all thirteen Hearts and thirteen Clubs. Get rid of the rest of the cards.

Arrange your special deck as follows. Place the thirteen Clubs face up on the table. These cards should be in order, starting with the King at the face, followed by the Queen, and so on. Onto these cards place the thirteen Hearts, also in perfect order.

Pick up a run of Spades and place them onto these twenty-six cards in the following order from the face: Ace of Spades, Three of Spades, Two of Spades, Nine of Spades, Ten of Spades, Jack of Spades, Queen of Spades, Eight of Spades, reversed Seven of Spades, Six of Spades, Five of Spades, Four of Spades, King of Spades. Onto these cards place the other run of Spades in perfect order, with the King at the face. Box this special deck and put it in your pocket.

You will also need two drinking goblets which comfortably hold playing cards. If working in a restaurant, I will try to obtain a pair of snifters from the bar, as this adds a touch of elegance to the routine. If snifters or goblets are not available, ordinary tumblers will do.

TO PERFORM: Invite a spectator sitting on your left to help you. Bring out the goblets and explain that you'd like to perform an unusual experiment. Take out the special deck and remove it from its box. Place the box in your left jacket pocket.

Let's say the spectator's name is John. Turn to John and say, "I bought a brand-new deck of cards just for this trick. That's how good it is."

Spread through the first thirteen cards, displaying the thirteen Spades at the face (do not spread past the Ace of Spades). Say, "The cards always come from the factory in perfect order." Swing to your right so the spectators sitting on this side will see what you're talking about. Put the cards in their faces if you have to. Obtain a left pinky break beneath the Ace of Spades in preparation to perform a Classic Pass. Square the cards and turn to your left. Perform a pass, bringing the thirteen Spades to the bottom. Because of your arrangement, a King of Spades will show at the face after the pass is done. To your audience, nothing will have appeared to have happened.

With your right thumb, riffle up on the back of the cards until you hit the King of Hearts (fourteen cards down). Remove the thirteen Spades and put them in one of the goblets on the table, the King facing outward.

"We'll also use the Hearts." Spread the thirteen Hearts off the face of the deck, letting the audience see their perfect order. Drop the rest of the deck into your jacket pocket along with the box.

Tell John that you'd like him to help you conduct a little experiment in Astral Projection. Explain that he's going to be given the task of mixing the cards. By way of

explanation, pick up the Heart packet in your left hand and deal the King off the face into the right hand. Turn the King face down, and drop it to your working surface. Point at the next card, the Queen, and say, "Would you like me to deal the Queen, or switch it for the Jack?"

Let's say John says, "Switch it for the Jack." If so, push the Queen off the face and slip it beneath the Jack, then turn both cards face down and drop them onto the King on the table. Repeat this procedure, allowing John to switch cards to his heart's content, until you have exhausted the packet.

Pick up the Heart packet, turn it face up, and spread it between your hands. Point out all the places in the spread where the cards have been switched. Openly cull the switched cards out of the spread, and rearrange the cards so they are again in perfect order, this time with the Ace at the face.

Secretly get a left pinky break above the Seven of Hearts. Flip the packet face down while maintaining the break using the Marlo Book Break (see I Am In Debt). Riffle down the side of the packet with your left thumb and ask John to say Stop. Riffle force the Seven, show it to everyone, then reverse the card in the packet and square the cards.

You will now overhand shuffle the Heart packet as follows: pull off the top and bottom cards together, then run four more cards and toss the remainder on top. Repeat this procedure two more times, only the third time, run five cards instead of four. When finished, the order from the face will be Ace, Three, Two, Nine, Ten, Jack, Queen, Eight, reversed Seven, Six, Five, Four, King. Unbeknownst to the spectators, the cards are in the same order as the Spades packet in the snifter, only reversed.

Tell John that you'd like him to mix the cards again. Holding the packet face down in the left hand, deal the top card to the table. Begin to deal the next and say, "Would you like me to deal this card, or switch it for the next card?"

Let's say John replies "Switch it for the next card." Take the top card, slip it beneath the next card, and drop the two cards face down onto the card on the table. Although this appears identical to what you did before, you are doing nothing more than reversing the cards as you deal. This is Paul Curry's wonderful Swindle Switch.

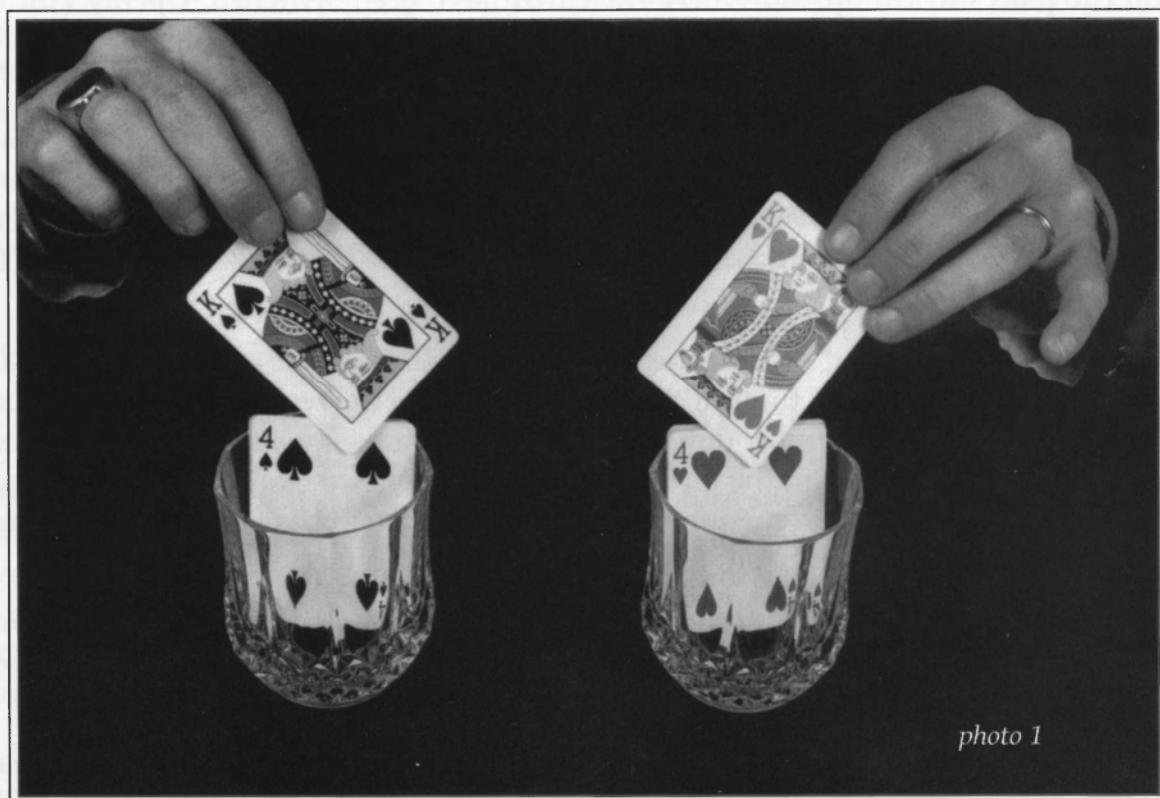
Continue to deal through the packet, allowing John to switch cards whenever he chooses. When you're done, pick up the packet and place it into the second snifter so it's back is facing the spectators.

Go over what you and John have done up to this point. Explain how the Hearts and



Spades are sympathetic to each other's condition. Spin the snifter on your left by the stem, exposing the King at the face. Dramatically remove the cards at the face of both packets, showing they match (see Photo). Continue to remove cards until you reach the reversed cards. Remove them and reveal they are both Sevens. Go through the packets until you have four left in each snifter. Remove these cards and fan them in each hand, showing all four matches to conclude.

**FINAL NOTES:** Paul Curry's Swindle Switch is one of the sneakier plays in all of card magic. Try it once and see if it doesn't bring a smile to your face.



## Poker Interchange Redux

# Gambling Routines

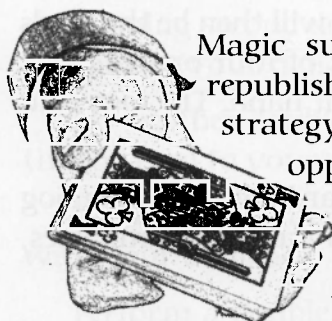


**SET-UP:** Minor set-up is required. Place a Royal Flush in Spades on the bottom of the deck. This can be done in between routines or better yet, placed on the bottom before your show. Surprisingly, even if you use the deck for several routines where shuffling is involved, the Royal Flush will usually remain intact somewhere in the pack. When you want to perform this routine it is a simple matter to glance through the pack, locate the Royal Flush and cut it to the bottom. This is an old Marlo idea and is very practical.

**TO PERFORM:** Offer to demonstrate how a card hustler cheats at poker. Casually overhand shuffle eight cards and throw the remainder of the deck on top. This will position your Royal Flush at the ninth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth positions from the bottom.

Turn the deck face up and openly spread the first eight cards and hold them with

## Poker Interchange Redux



Magic suffers from too many tricks being published and then later republished with either "new" or "improved" handlings. While this strategy tends to work well when selling detergent, it has done the opposite for the art, and filled volumes of books and videos with bastardized versions of classic routines.

Since "Poker Interchange" is already in print in several places, the following routine may at first blush appear to be another example of the aforementioned problem. I have chosen to include it in this volume for two reasons: every magician I've ever shown it to has been completely fooled by it, and, laymen love it. It is not easy to perform, but the reward you'll get from doing it is worth the investment it will take to master.

**EFFECT:** The magician offers to demonstrate how card hustlers cheat at poker. A shuffled deck is turned face up and the magician openly culls through the deck, letting everyone see there is no prior arrangement. Four of a kind are removed and put on top. The deck is given two legitimate shuffles. Four hands of poker are cleanly dealt. Each time the magician receives a card, he turns it face up, letting the audience see that he is receiving the four of a kind he had previously culled out. Upon concluding the deal, the magician explains that he has also dealt another player in the game a "sucker" hand. This hand is turned over to reveal the four of a kind the magician supposedly dealt to himself. The magician's hand is turned over to reveal a Royal Flush.

**SET-UP:** Minor set-up is required. Place a Royal Flush in Spades on the bottom of the deck. This can be done in between routines or, better yet, placed on the bottom before your show. Surprisingly, even if you use the deck for several routines where shuffling is involved, the Royal Flush will usually remain intact somewhere in the pack. When you want to perform this routine it is a simple matter to glance through the pack, locate the Royal Flush and cut it to the bottom. This is an old Marlo idea and is very practical.

**TO PERFORM:** Offer to demonstrate how a card hustler cheats at poker. Casually overhand shuffle eight cards and throw the remainder of the deck on top. This will position your Royal Flush at the ninth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth positions from the bottom.

Turn the deck face up and openly spread the first eight cards and hold them with

the right hand in a spread. Say, "The first thing the hustler does is glance through the deck and find himself a strong hand."

Glance at the eight cards staring you in the face. Quickly determine which spot value cards are missing (naturally, tens, jacks, queens, kings and aces cannot be used). Let's say you don't see any Sevens among these cards. The Sevens will then be the cards that you will use. Using the pad of the left thumb, push a block of four or five cards over and take them beneath the eight cards being held by the right hand. The idea is to push over the Royal Flush so it is not prematurely exposed.

Once you have pushed past the Royal Flush, start spreading cards singly and upjog each of the Sevens. Say, "You might think a hustler would use a hand like four Aces, but that's a little too obvious. Instead, he'd use the four Sevens."

Upjog the four Sevens and say, "This looks like an innocent hand, yet the odds of getting it in a game of poker are five thousand to one."

With the left hand, strip out the upjogged Sevens while secretly adding a single card behind the Sevens. This is very easy to do: buckle the rear card of the pack with the left pinky and move the left hand forward. The rear card will stay in your hand as you strip out the Sevens. This is Charlie Miller's handling of Vernon's Strip-Out Addition.

Your left hand now holds the four Sevens and one extra card. Drop the pack onto these five cards. Turn the deck face down. There is now an indifferent card on top followed by the four Sevens.

Explain how a hustler would then give the deck two honest shuffles. Cut the deck at the 26th card and give it an Out-Faro Shuffle (an Out-Faro is when the original top card remains on top after the shuffle's completion). Give the deck a second Out-Faro Shuffle. Before I finish the shuffle, I will often throw in Martin Nash's bit of spreading the telescoped cards across the table to let the audience see that all the cards are being mixed. This is a pretty flourish and a wonderful convincer for laymen.

Upon completion of the second shuffle, explain that you've set the cards for a four-handed game of straight Poker. You will now deal four hands of cards as follows. Deal three cards normally, then perform a double turnover, showing the fourth card to be a Seven. Perform another double-turnover and deal the top card to yourself. Look up into the audience's faces and say, "One down, three to go."

Without looking at your hands, perform a second deal. This move does not have to be performed quickly; just necktie the deck and keep talking. Deal the next two cards normally.



Perform another double turnover, showing a second Seven. Turn the double face down and deal the top card to yourself. Say, "In most games of poker, you could start betting with a pair of Sevens."

Perform another second deal and then deal two cards normally. Don't worry about performing second deals so openly. The audience's attention will riveted on the Sevens arriving in your hand.

Do another double turnover, showing a third Seven. Turn the double over and deal the top card to yourself. Say, "In certain circles, this is known as advantage play."

As before, perform a second deal, then deal normally twice. Maintain eye contact with your audience.

Perform a double turnover, showing a fourth Seven. Say, "I was able to deal normally because I shuffled crookedly." Turn the double over, cleanly deal the top card to yourself, then perform a second, then deal three more cards normally. Place deck aside.

Explain that the cheater's hand is only going to make him money if one of the other players gets a "sucker" hand. Point at the second hand on the table and say, "Sir, how would you like it if while I was dealing myself the Sevens, I dealt you a Royal Flush?"

Most spectators will say "Great!" Immediately respond with, "No, it wouldn't, because I'd lose. And I hate to lose. So, I dealt you the Sevens —" Pick up the spectator's hand, turn it over and fan the Sevens. — "and myself the Royal Flush."

Turn over your hand to reveal the Royal Flush to conclude.

**FINAL NOTES:** This routine is structured to hold your audience's attention throughout. By claiming that you'll demonstrate how gamblers' cheat, you create immediate interest. By dealing the four Sevens to yourself, you live up to your claims. And, by making the Sevens magically become a spectator's hand, then showing your own to be an even better hand, you create a miracle that your audiences will remember for a long time.

The line about advantage play belongs to my friend Paul Gertner, while the line about being able to "deal honestly because I shuffled crookedly" belongs to my friend Darwin Ortiz.

It should also be noted that the idea of applying the faro shuffle to Poker Interchange is also Darwin's, and can be found in his routine The Cross in *Cardshark*. For a complete description of "Poker Interchange" see *Don't Blink: The Magic of James Swain*.

## Dealing Centers/The Muck



This routine has been in my repertoire for many years. Several magicians have told me it is one of the best things I do. It's not easy, but the moves are well hidden. The presentation is key, so I will give it exactly as I perform it.

**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** The magician explains how gamblers are very secretive about cheating, and it was not until a few years ago that their secret moves became known to the public. The performer offers to demonstrate two of these secret moves — The Center Deal, and The Muck.

The Center Deal is explained first. The four Aces are removed and reversed in the center of the deck. Four hands are dealt and the spectators see the Aces materialize out of the deck during the deal. The performer deals slowly and fairly, but the audience does not catch him.

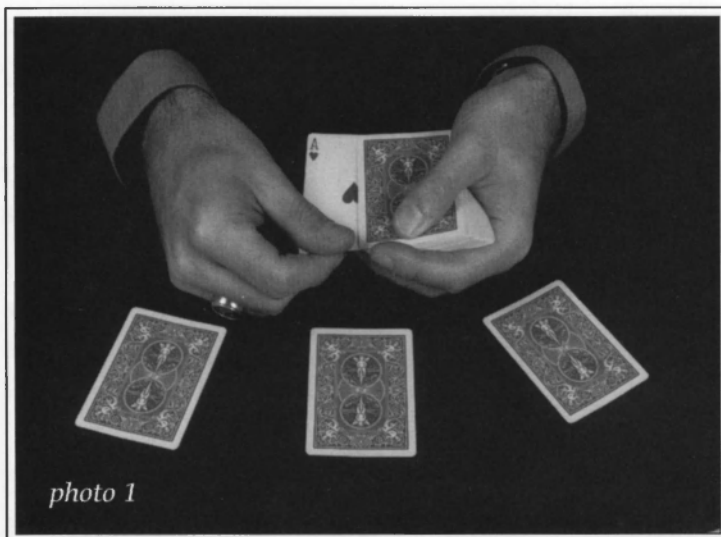
The performer then offers to demonstrate The Muck, and places his hand over the face-up Aces. When his hand is lifted and the Aces spread, they are now a Royal Flush. There are no suspicious moves, nor is any lapping involved.

**PREPARATION:** Cull out the four Aces along with the Ten of Hearts, Jack of Hearts, Queen of Hearts and King of Hearts. Arrange the cards from the top down as follows: Ten of Hearts, Jack of Hearts, Queen of Hearts, King of Hearts, Ace of Diamonds, any black Ace, any black Ace, Ace of Hearts. Place this stack face down on top of the deck.

**TO PERFORM:** "Gamblers are notoriously secretive about their methods," you say, spreading over the top four cards and holding them in a face-down fan in the right hand. "But, several years ago, a gambler got on television and exposed two of the fraternity's best-kept secrets, the Center Deal, and the Muck. I'd like to give you a brief demonstration this evening of these two famous moves."

While patterning, get a left pinky break under four cards. This can be done by pinky counting, thumb counting, or pushing four cards over with the left thumb. Whichever method you chose, the above patter should offer plenty of misdirection.

Drop the four cards in the right hand onto the deck and immediately flip over all eight cards above your break. Let these cards fall flush onto the deck. Fan over the top



three, showing the four Aces. Say, "First, the fabled Center Deal. So you can see what I'm doing, I'll leave the Aces face up, the rest of the deck face down." Grab the deck in Biddle Grip with the right hand, and dribble cards so twenty or more face down cards fall off your thumb. Then drop the remaining right hand cards into your left hand. The point is to make sure the audience clearly understands that you are about to put the face-up Aces into the face-down deck. If

this is not firmly established, the trick loses much of its impact.

"Now," you say, "the gambler shuffles the cards several times, letting the other players think everything's on the square."

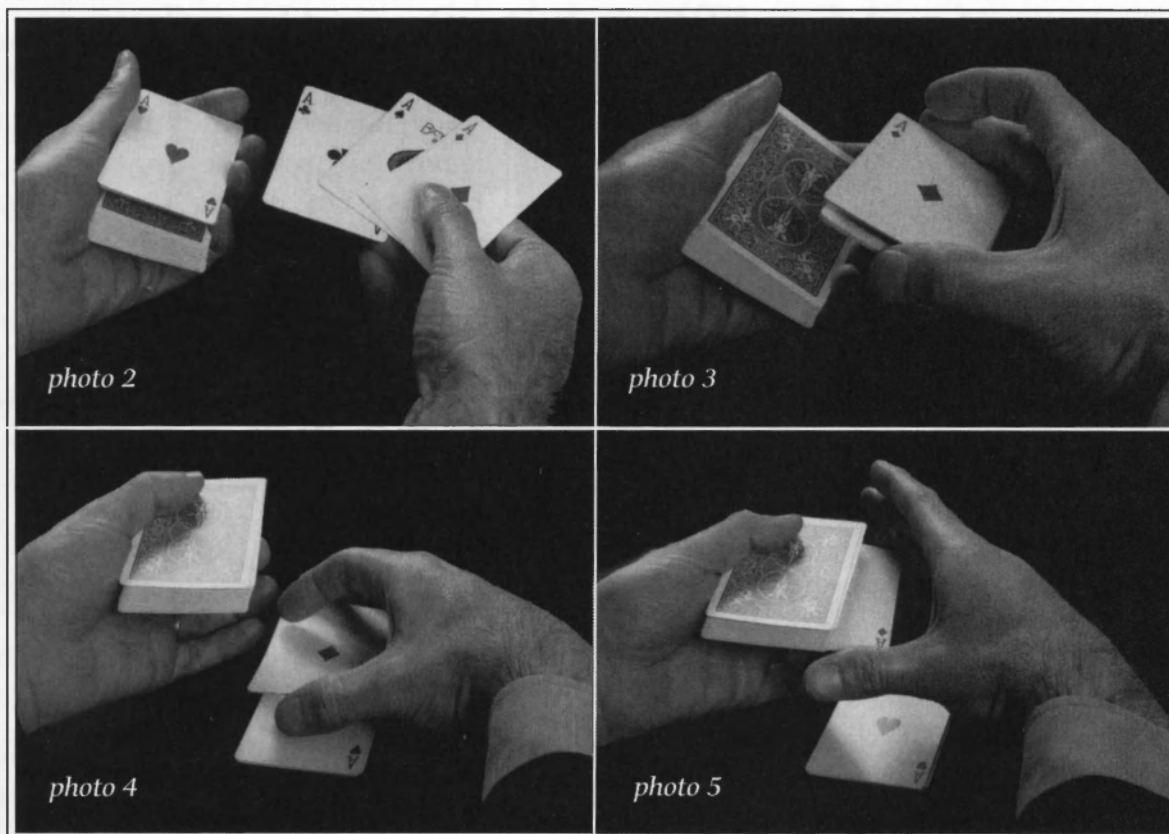
Here you perform Alex Elmsley's "Just Lucky" shuffle, which will stack the Aces for a four-handed game of poker with the Aces coming to the dealer. For those not familiar with this amazing stack, here's a brief description.

With the deck in front of you, cut the top half to your right and start to riffle shuffle the halves together. Riffle the left half slightly faster than the right, and with the left thumb hold back four cards. Let the right hand catch up, and hold back three cards with your right thumb. Now, perform these simple actions. First, your left thumb drops three cards. Then your right thumb drops its cards, and finally the left thumb drops its remaining card.

By performing this shuffle two more times, the deck will be stacked for a four handed game with the original top four cards falling to you, the dealer. As you shuffle, be sure that you do not shuffle any indifferent cards into the Heart flush.

What makes this sequence so fantastic is that each time you shuffle, you are burying the top card. This allows you to slowly square the cards after each shuffle and perfectly mimics normal card table etiquette.

To finish, reverse double undercut the bottom card to the top. Say, "To the naked eye, the Aces appear to be lost. But in fact, they are right in the center." Riffle up the back of the cards with the right thumb and when the Royal Flush starts to appear, slow down. Stop at the Ace of Diamonds and lift all the cards above it with the right hand,



letting the audience see the Ace. Since you are “explaining” the move, they have no choice but to accept your claim that all the Aces are there. Drop the cards in the right hand onto the Ace of Diamonds.

Check: the cards should be stacked as follows, from the top down: four indifferent cards, face-up Ace of Hearts, three indifferent cards, face-up black Ace, three indifferent cards, face-up black Ace, three indifferent cards, face-up Ace of Diamonds, face-up King of Hearts, face-up Queen of Hearts, face-up Jack of Hearts, face-up Ten of Hearts, rest of deck.

Back to the trick. Deal the first round, dealing a second when you come to your hand (either a strike or push-off). The Ace of Hearts will appear to materialize out of the center of the deck. See Photo 1. Deal two more rounds, dealing a second to yourself each time. On the fourth round, necktie the deck as the Ace of Diamonds is dealt, being careful not to expose the Royal Flush hiding beneath the top card.

Second check: on the table sit the four Aces, with the Ace of Diamonds at the face, followed by the two black Aces, and the Ace of Hearts on the bottom. The left hand



holds the remainder of the deck. On top there is a face-down card, followed by the face-up King, Queen, Jack and Ten of Hearts.

Say, "Now let me show you The Muck. Mucking, which is a gambling expression, is the ability to invisibly switch cards in and out of play. Believe it or not, you can't even see it on a hidden camera."

While pattering, your hands push the face-down cards scattered on the table and shove them aside to your left. In the act of doing this, your left hand turns palm down, and deals the top card of the deck face down onto the scattered cards. This is an easy way to get the top card out of play and will go unnoticed.

With the right hand, turn the Aces face down and leave them on the table. Now drop the cards in the left hand onto the Aces. Pick up all the cards, turn them face up, and drop them into the left hand. The Aces are face up on top, followed by the King - Ten of Hearts, also face up.

With the right thumb, gently lift up on the natural break beneath the top eight cards and obtain a left pinky break below these cards. See Photo 2.

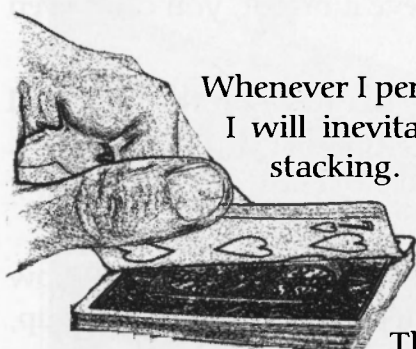
Spread the top three cards, exposing the Aces. Close the spread and keep a break above the top three Aces with the right thumb. Holding the cards in deep Biddle Grip, lift all eight cards off the deck. See Photo 3. Pretend to place the Aces on the table, but in reality only drop those cards below your right thumb break. See Photo 4, exposed view. Your body is turned slightly sideways as this move is performed, the back of the right hand facing the audience. As the cards are dropped, immediately bring the right hand up and deposit the three cards it holds onto the bottom of the deck. See Photo 5. The left hand does not move throughout this action. This move, which I call The Drop Switch, is based upon several ideas of Ed Marlo. Performed casually, nothing seems to happen (don't worry — no one will notice that the Ace of Diamonds has changed to the Ace of Hearts).

Toss the cards in the left hand onto the discards, being careful not to expose the reversed Aces.

The rest is pure build up. Tell the audience you'll now demonstrate The Muck. Pull back your right sleeve and show your hand empty. Drop your hand onto the Aces(?) and press firmly on the cards. Dramatically lift your hand, showing the palm empty. Spread the cards to reveal the Royal Flush to finish.

**FINAL NOTES:** The pseudo-center dealing idea is the brainchild of Milt Kort. You may want to check out Darwin Ortiz's excellent handling of Kort's idea in *Cardshark*.

## Just Lucky Eight Card Stack



Whenever I perform for an audience which is knowledgeable about cards, I will inevitably perform a routine which requires the use of riffle-stacking. The reason is twofold: first, most audiences have never seen someone perform a riffle-stack, and won't believe that it can be done; second, once they actually see it done, they still won't believe it can be done!

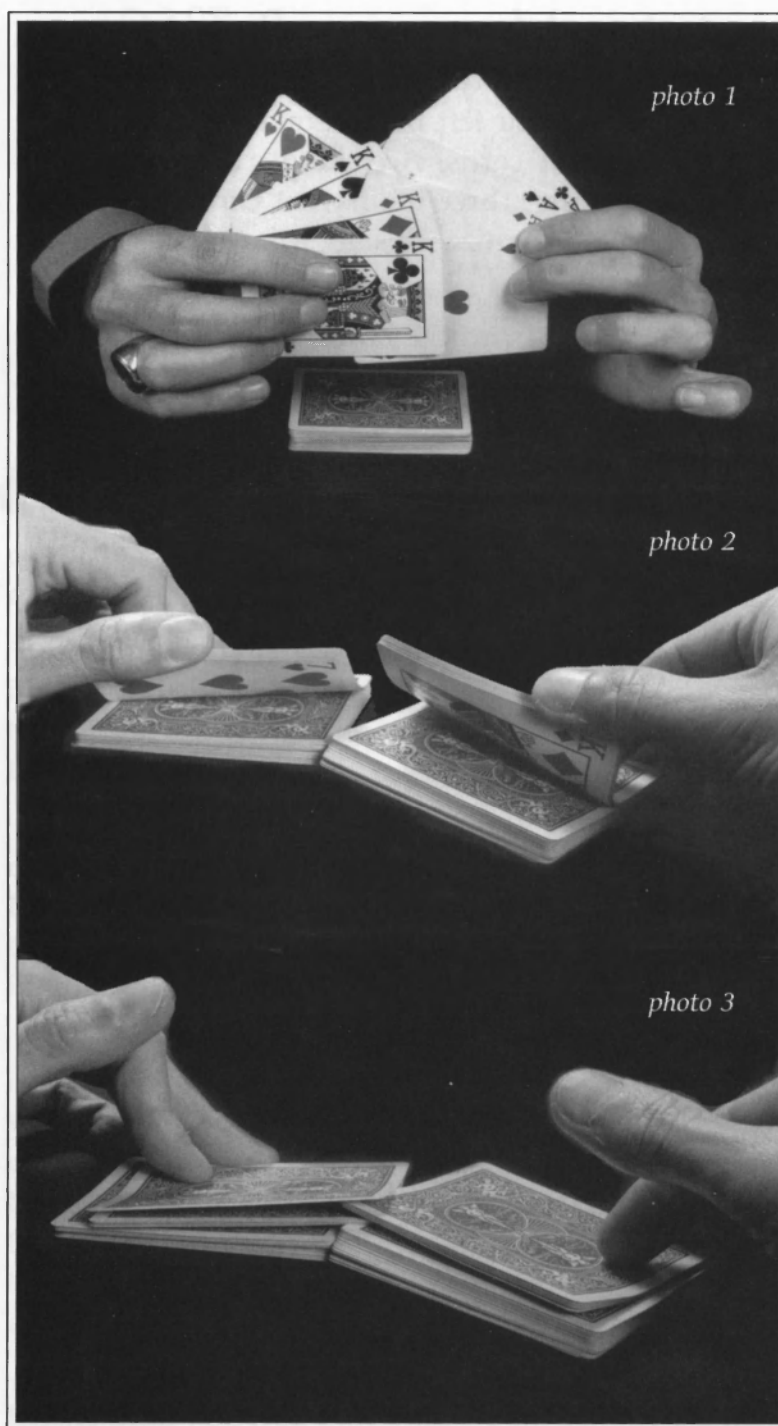
The ability to riffle-stack should be in every serious card performer's arsenal. The following routine is well within the reach of anyone who wishes to spend a few weeks practicing. The reward will more than compensate for the small amount of time which needs to be invested.

**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** The four Kings and four Aces are removed from a deck. The performer explains that he will demonstrate how a professional card hustler would stack the deck for a five-handed game of poker. A spectator is asked to assist the performer and play the part of the "mark". The "mark" is given a choice of which hand he'd like to receive — first, second, third or fourth, with the fifth hand being the performer's. The "mark" picks a hand. The Kings and Aces are dropped onto the deck and the cards are given three quick riffle shuffles. The hands are dealt. The "mark's" hand is found to contain the Kings, the performer's the Aces.

**TO PERFORM:** This routine requires no prior preparation. A deck that is broken in for riffle-shuffles is preferable, although the stack can be done with borrowed cards of poor quality without the performer encountering serious problems.

Openly cull through your deck and remove the four Kings and the four Aces. Drop them in two piles on your working surface. Place the deck in front of you, and pick up the piles, the Kings in the right hand, Aces in the left. Give each packet a small fan and display their faces to your audience. Casually glance down at the fan of Kings in your right hand and memorize the suits, starting second from the face. For example, let's say you see the King of Diamonds, King of Spades and King of Hearts. Simply say to yourself, "Diamonds, Spades, Hearts."

Openly interlace the Kings with the Aces so that a King becomes the bottommost card of the packet. See Photo 1. Square the cards and drop them onto the deck. Ask a spectator if they'll assist you in playing the role of the "mark". This is very important, as you are



view. You will be holding five cards in your right hand. Drop three cards from the left, all the cards in your right, and finally, the single card in your left hand. Square the cards.

telling the spectator ahead of time that they're going to lose. Ask the spectator to choose a hand. Let's say the spectator picks the third hand.

Cut the top half of the deck to your right in preparation for a riffle-shuffle. Begin shuffling at normal speed, then speed up slightly with the left hand until you are holding four cards with your left thumb. This is not a difficult talent to acquire, as a few trials will show. Begin to slow the right hand's shuffle and watch the indexes at the extreme right of the right hand's cards. These indexes are the lower indexes of the cards. Stop when you see the Diamond index of the King (the first memorized suit). See Photo 2. You will be holding six cards in your right hand. Drop three cards from the left hand, then drop all the cards in the right hand. Finally, drop the single card in your left hand. See Photo 3. Square the cards.

For the next shuffle, speed up with the left thumb, and again hold back four cards. Slow the right hand's shuffle and stop when the index of the King of Spades comes into

For the last shuffle, hold back four cards with the left thumb. Stop the right hand's cards when the King of Hearts comes into view. Drop three cards from the left, all the cards in your right (four) and the single card in your left hand. Square the cards. The deck is now stacked as follows: three indifferent cards, Ace, King, three indifferent cards, Ace, King, three indifferent cards, Ace, King, three indifferent cards, Ace, King. Those familiar with riffle shuffle work will recognize this as a variation of Alex Elmsley's "Just Lucky" shuffle.

It is now necessary to double-undercut a card from the bottom of the deck to the top. I prefer to get a break beneath the bottom card during the third shuffle, then double-undercut it to the top.

You will now deal the cards as follows. Deal the first round of five hands normally. The fifth card, an Ace, will go to you. The next card on the deck is a King. Since the "mark" chose the third hand, you will second deal the King to this hand, then deal the rest of the round normally.

Begin the third round by dealing two seconds, the next three normally. Repeat for the fourth and fifth round.

Reveal the other players' hands first, making appropriate comments about the strength of weaknesses of each. Then reveal the "mark's" hand (first climax). Slowly turn over your hand and spread it across the table to reveal the four Aces to conclude.

**FINAL COMMENTS:** If you would like to eliminate the double-undercut at the shuffle's conclusion, hold back five cards in the left hand during the final shuffle. Now drop three from the left hand, four from the right, and two from the left. The cards are now ready to be dealt. The idea of combining a riffle-stack with a second deal is not new, and has been cleverly exploited by such performers as Martin Nash, Jack Carpenter and Darwin Ortiz.

Readers familiar with my previous work will recognize this stack as yet another method to set-up for Poker Interchange (*Don't Blink: The Magic of James Swain*). For another method to perform Poker Interchange that does not employ riffle-stacking, check out Poker Interchange Redux in this book. If you are interested in a method which employs a riffle-stack with four cards — and some high-class patter — check out Poker Interchange on my video, *Miracles With Cards*, Volume 2.

I also cannot claim originality for the idea of doing the Just Lucky shuffle with eight cards. Alex Elmsley has an excellent unpublished method, as does my good friend Paul Cummins.



## 21<sup>ST</sup> Century Magician vs. Gambler

*An updated version of a classic plot.*



**WHAT THE AUDIENCE SEES:** The magician talks about meeting a gambler, and how the gambler offered to show him a thing or two with the pasteboards. The gambler takes out a deck and shows it to be in random order. The cards are shuffled and cut. Four face up poker hands are dealt. The gambler receives the four Kings!

The magician offers to show his skill, and boasts that he will deal himself the Aces. The cards are shuffled and four face up poker hands are dealt. The magician's hand contains no Aces. Undaunted, the magician waves his hand magically over his cards. The cards turn into the four Aces!

**PREPARATION:** There is a minor set-up, although the trick can also be performed impromptu (see FINAL NOTES). Remove the four Aces and four Kings and put them on top of the deck with the Kings on top followed by the Aces. Now give the deck an in faro shuffle. Case the deck.

**TO PERFORM:** Remove the cards from the box. If you want, you can perform a quick routine that does not disturb your stack. When you are ready to do the trick, turn the deck face up and give it a wide ribbon spread across your working surface. Even the most observant spectator will not see the stack at the top owing to the indifferent cards which mask the stack's presence.

Tell your audience how you once met a gambler, and how the gambler offered to demonstrate his ability to cheat at poker. Point at the deck and say, "He took my deck, which was shuffled, and shuffled it some more." Scoop up the cards, turn them face down, and give the cards an in faro shuffle. The faro does not need to be perfect, just the top sixteen cards. Give the deck a false cut, then deal four rounds of poker, dealing the cards face up. Deal slowly, allowing the audience to see the gambler's hand build to four Kings. This is very dramatic, and should not be rushed, as you are setting up your audience for what is about to happen next.

Say, "The gambler handed me the deck and said, 'Let's see you top that.' I didn't like his attitude, so I told him I'd try and deal myself the four Aces." Push the face up Kings off to one side of your working surface. Scoop up the other three hands, turn them face down, and put them on the bottom of the deck. You must now shuffle the cards without disturbing your stack on top. Since the stack only contains sixteen cards, I

prefer to undercut half the deck and do a brisk overhand shuffle, injogging the first card and shuffling off. Square the deck and obtain a left pinky break below the injogged card. Cut small packets of cards off the top until you reach your pinky break, then drop the remaining cards in your left hand onto those on the table. Your sixteen card stack is back on top.

Deal the first round, turning each card face up and placing it on the table. On the fourth card, perform a double turnover and expose an indifferent card. Show the face of the double for a second, then flip it face down. Deal the top card to yourself, leaving it face down. Say, "I turned over my first card and it wasn't an Ace. Luckily, we weren't playing for money."

Start the next round by dealing a second and turning the card face up. Drop this card onto the first hand. Deal another second, turn the card face up, and drop it onto the second hand. Deal the next card normally, turning it face up and dropping it on the third hand. Although this card was shown a few moments ago, the time delay will mask the fact that this card is seen twice. As added misdirection, look at the deck in your left hand as this card is dealt. Remember, the emphasis is on the cards which are coming to you, and not to the other three hands.

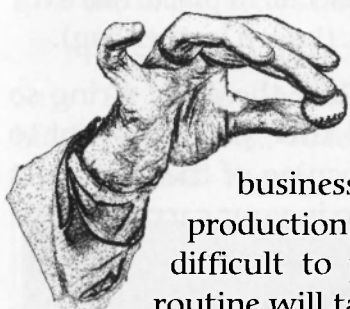
Perform another double turnover and expose an indifferent card. Say, "No Ace," and quickly flip the double face down. Deal the top card face down to yourself. Repeat the dealing sequence just described, dealing two face up seconds and then one card normally. Perform another double turnover and expose a third indifferent card. Act perplexed and flip the double card face down. Repeat the dealing sequence, dealing two face up seconds and then one face up card normally. Perform another double turnover and expose an indifferent card. Turn the double face down and deal the top card to yourself.

Place the deck off to one side. Say, "The gambler thought he had me beat, so I asked him if he wanted to make a wager. He started to reach for his wallet, then thought better of it." Smile, then turn over your hand, revealing the four Aces to conclude.

**FINAL NOTES:** At first glance, the idea of showing *three* cards *twice* during the same trick might seem rather bold, yet it flies right by laymen and magicians. The values of cards are only significant if they are prominent cards (such as Aces or Kings) or if the card is selected and memorized. This is the principle upon which The Koran Deck is based, and is totally practical. If you wish to perform this routine impromptu, start by taking a shuffled deck and remove the four Kings while secretly bringing the four Aces to the top. Patter about meeting a gambler, then drop the Kings on top and give the deck two in faro shuffles. The deck is now set for the routine.

This trick is based upon Ed Marlo's Gambling Routine from *Marlo In Spades*.

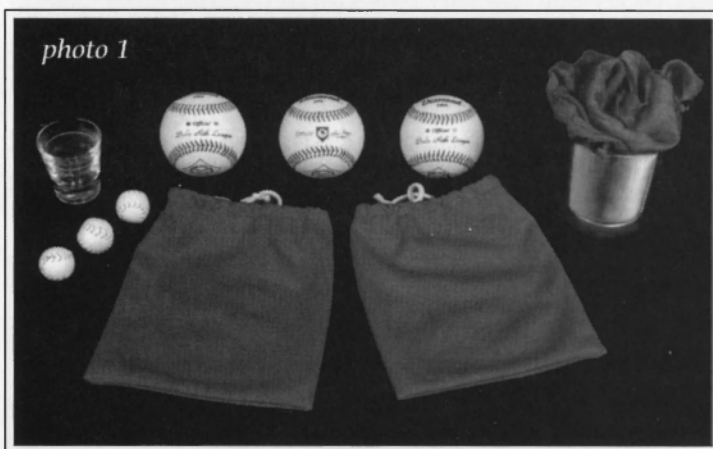
## Larry Jennings' Famous Chop Cup Routine



Larry Jennings' Famous Chop Cup routine has been the cornerstone of my formal close-up act for over twenty-five years. The routine lasts approximately four and a half minutes, is filled with many baffling and entertaining bits of business, and builds to an absolutely unbelievable climax with the production of three baseballs. Sleight of hand wise, it is not terribly difficult to perform, as the cup does most of the work. However, the routine will take a lot of rehearsal to master.

**PROPS NEEDED:** Three baseballs (hardball variety). One large Chop Cup. These can be purchased from most magic dealers. The diameter of the cup should be large enough to easily hold a baseball. Three one-inch baseballs, two of which are magnetic. These are presently sold by Mike Rogers. One red silk handkerchief about sixteen inches square. Also needed is a shot glass of such size that when the magnetic baseball is placed on the

center of the silk handkerchief which is stretched over the shot glass, the magnet inside the Chop Cup will pick it up. Also needed are two identical drawstring bags. The dimensions of the bags I use are 6 1/2" wide by 7 1/2" long. I would also suggest that the bags be red, although this is not altogether necessary. (It just makes the routine look better). See Photo 1.



### DISTRIBUTION OF THE PROPS:

Fold the silk handkerchief into a neat square and place it into your left jacket pocket. Place one of the large baseballs on top of it.

Wedge one of the 1" magnetic baseballs into the shot glass and place the shot glass into your right jacket pocket. Take the non-magnetic 1" baseball and put it into your right jacket pocket so that it rests at the base of the shot glass. By placing your hand

into your pocket, you should be able to instantly know which 1" baseball is which.

Take the third 1" magnetic baseball and drop it in the bottom of one of the bags. Place the Chop Cup into the same bag so the mouth of the cup faces the opening. Close the draw string, then push the mouth of the bag into the mouth of the Chop Cup. Find the 1" magnetic baseball and position it into a corner of the bag. Now take one of the large baseballs and drop it into the mouth of the Chop Cup. Turn the bag over. You can now handle the bag normally, so long as your pinky keeps the large baseball in place. Place the bag into a carrying case or whatever you use to carry your props. (I use a leather bag).

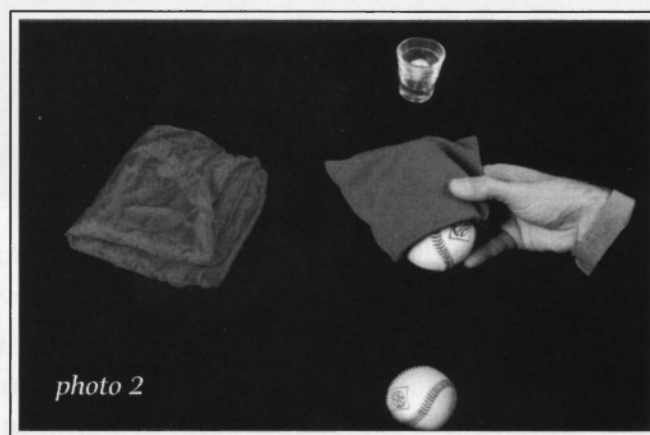
Take the second red bag and drop a large baseball into it. Close the draw string so the mouth of the bag is open 3"-4". When you produce this ball later, you will want to squeeze it out of the bag, so you may have to play with the opening of the bag to get this right. Place this bag on top of the red bag with the Chop Cup in your carrying case. You are now set to begin.

Note: this preparation is designed to perform Larry Jennings' Famous Chop Cup routine at any time during your show. I normally use this as an opener, but this is a matter of personal preference. Since the routine is long, I've broken it into phases.

**PHASE ONE/INTRODUCING THE PROPS/LOADING THE LARGE BASEBALLS IN YOUR LAP:** It will be necessary to be seated at a table to perform this routine. Your carrying case is sitting to the left of your chair. Reach down with your left hand, and remove both red bags from your carrying case. Leave the red bag with the large baseball on top of your carrying case. Place the red bag with the Chop Cup, mouth down, on your working surface. Say, "I'd like to show you a little swindle."

Place both hands into your jacket pockets. The left hand grasps the large baseball and the red silk. The right hand grasps the shot glass along with the 1" magnetic baseball wedged inside. Bring the right hand out of its pocket first, and place the shot glass to the right of the bag on the table. The left hand comes out of its pocket a second later, drops the baseball in your lap, then places the red silk to the left of the bag on the table.

"For the routine, I'm going to use a little ball —" Pick up the shot glass and shake out the 1" magnetic baseball. "— and a red silk hanky." Your left hand picks up the silk and shakes it out. As it does, the right hand grabs the Chop

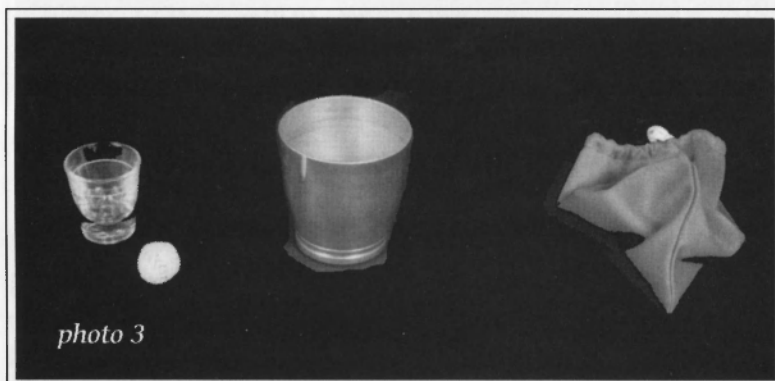




Cup through the bag and draws the cup backwards. Allow the large baseball hidden in the bag to fall into your lap. See Photo 2.

"I'll also use a miniature cocktail shaker." Turn the bag mouth upwards, pull open the drawstring, and remove the Chop Cup. Grab the bag by its corners, holding the 1" magnetic ball through the bag. Shake the bag out nonchalantly, then place it off to the left. Do not lay the bag down flat. You are going to switch this bag later, so it is wise to give the bag a little shape as you lay it down. See Photo 3.

**PHASE TWO/THE SWINDLE:** Hand the Chop Cup to the spectator on your right. Say, "Sir, please examine the cup, making sure there are no mirrors, trap doors or hidden elephants." After the spectator is satisfied, take the Chop Cup back and hold it in the left hand, mouth upward. Pick up the 1" magnetic baseball with the right hand.



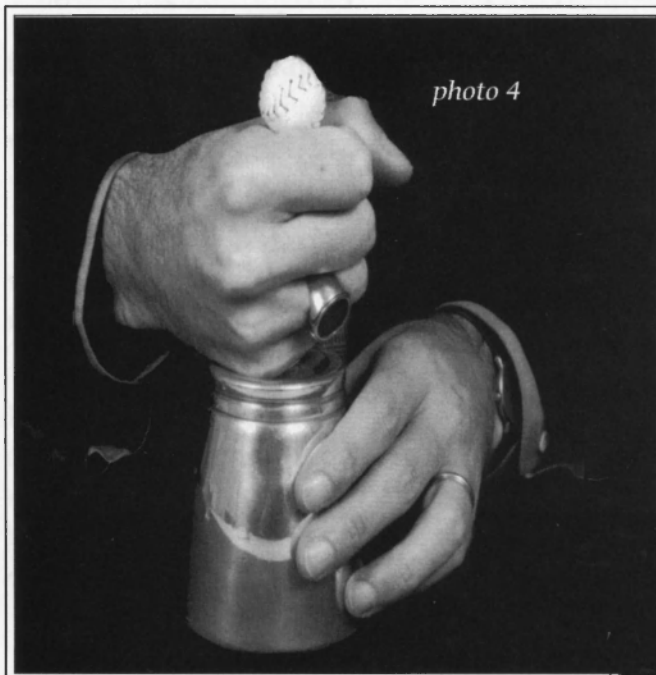
Say, "Now, here's the swindle. I'm going to take this ball and drop it into the cup." Drop the ball into the Chop Cup. "Then I'm going to put it into my pocket."

Turn the Chop Cup upside down and pretend to take the ball in the right hand. Place the right hand into your jacket pocket. With the left hand, place the Chop Cup lightly on the table. Bring the empty right hand out of the pocket. Say, "Now, you have to guess whether the ball is under the cup — " Lift the Chop Cup, showing nothing there, and place it down, dislodging the ball. " — or in my pocket." Here the right hand taps the right jacket pocket. "Everyone understand?" Without waiting for an answer, lift the Chop Cup off the table, revealing the 1" baseball underneath. "Good, let's begin."

**PHASE THREE/EXPLAINING THE SWINDLE:** "Let me do that again." Hold the Chop Cup mouth upward with the left hand. Pick up the 1" magnetic ball with the right hand and drop it into the Chop Cup. Pretend to remove the 1" ball with the right hand and place it into your jacket pocket. Lightly place the Chop Cup on the table. Say, "You seem like a nice group of people, so I'll explain how this works. You see, if I ask you where the ball is, and you say it's under the cup — " Here you lift the Chop Cup with the left hand, showing nothing underneath. Place the cup on the table and dislodge the ball. " — I'll show you that it's in my pocket." Here the right hand goes into the pocket and removes the 1" non-magnetic ball resting there. Show this ball to

the spectators, then pretend to put it back in the pocket but really finger palm it. Say, "And, if you say the ball is in my pocket, I'll show you that it's really underneath the cup." Lift the Chop Cup with the left hand, showing the ball underneath. Pick up the ball with the right hand, and drop it into the Chop Cup. As you do, drop the finger-palmed ball as well.

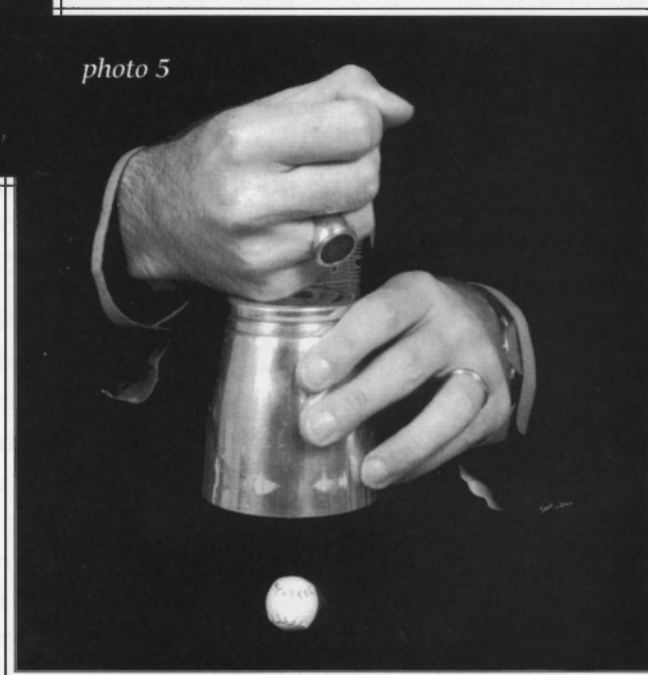
**PHASE FOUR/DAVID ROTH'S SEQUENCE:** Say, "I bet you'd really like to know how that's done." Turn the Chop Cup over with the left hand, and allow the 1" non-magnetic ball to fall into the right hand. Lightly place the Chop Cup mouth downwards on the table. Point at the bottom of the cup and say, "The truth is, the cup has a hole in it. Let me show you."



You are now going to execute a variation of the Charlie Miller move. Pick up the 1" non-magnetic ball with the right hand. Make a fist with the hand, rolling the ball to the top of the fist. Place the right fist on top of the Chop Cup. The left hand now takes hold of the Chop Cup. See Photo 4. The Chop Cup and fist are lifted together a few

inches, then brought down sharply against the table, then immediately lifted again. As the hands are brought down, the ball is allowed to fall into the right fist and is immediately finger palmed. Strike the table hard enough so the magnetic ball inside the Chop Cup is dislodged. It will appear that the ball has penetrated the bottom of the cup. See Photo 5.

"I'll do it again." With the left hand,



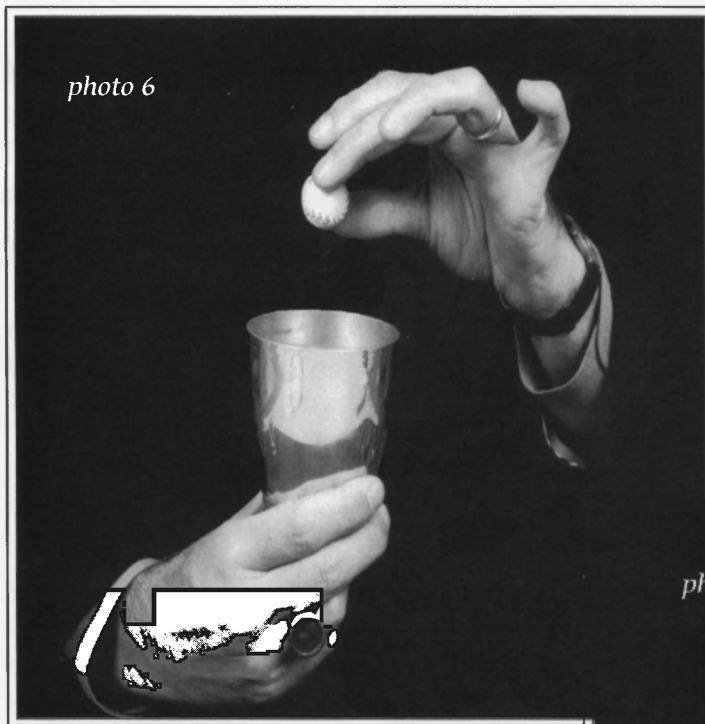


photo 6

revolve the Chop Cup mouth upward. Place the Chop Cup into the right hand, so the finger-palmed ball is held directly against the bottom of the cup. With the left hand, pick up the ball on the table, and openly drop it into the Chop Cup. See Photo 6. As soon as the ball hits the bottom, allow the finger-palmed ball to drop to the table. See Photo 7.

"One more time." The left hand



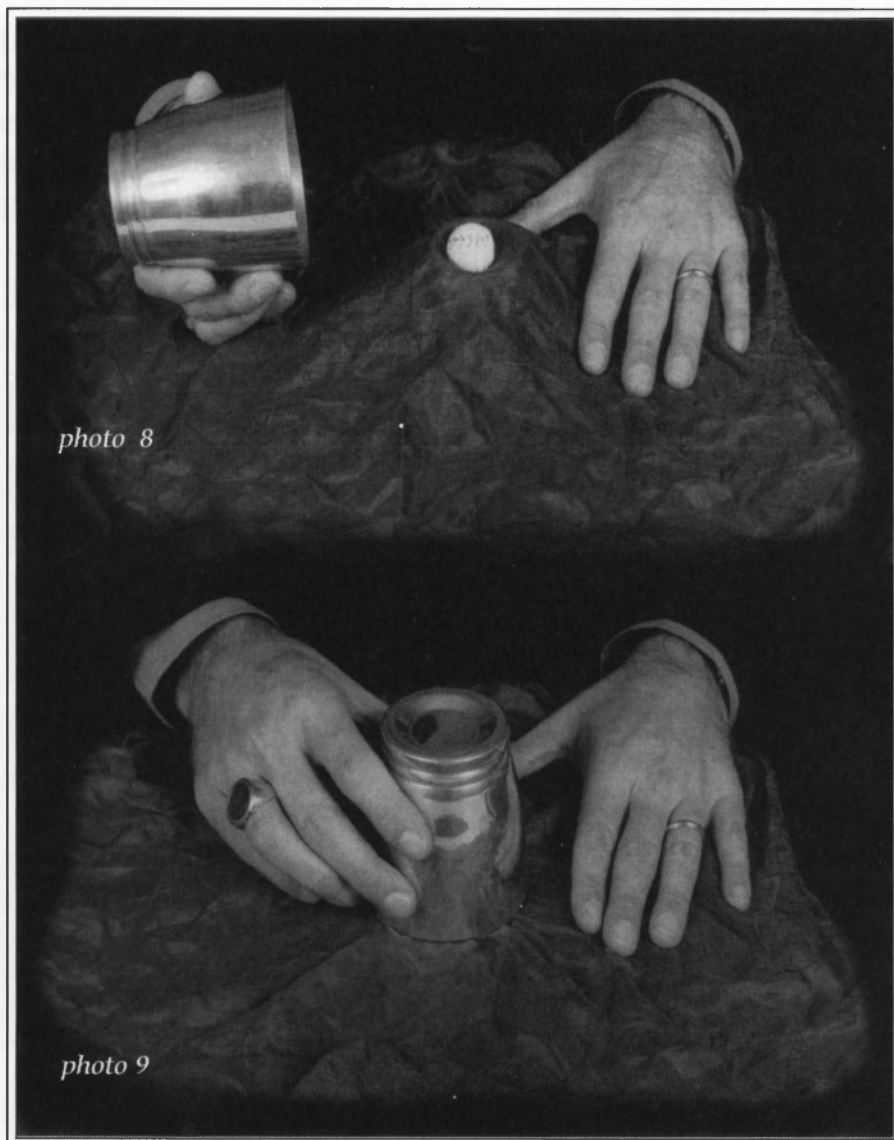
photo 7

picks up the Chop Cup and places it on the table, dislodging the magnetic ball within. The right hand picks up the tabled ball and pretends to place it into the left hand. Show the ball has vanished, then lift the Chop Cup with the left hand to show the ball underneath.

**PHASE FIVE/THE SHOT GLASS AND SILK ARE BROUGHT INTO**

**PLAY:** "For this part of the trick, I need a handkerchief." Place both hands into your jacket pockets in search of the handkerchief. Drop the finger-palmed ball in right hand. Pretend to notice the silk on the table and remove your hands. Move the Chop Cup off to one side and place the shot glass in the center of your working surface. Cover the shot glass with the silk. Pick up the 1" magnetic ball on the table and place it on top of the silk. Say, "Believe it or not, the ball will now penetrate the folds of the hanky, and drop into the glass."

Using both hands, grab the outer corners of the silk and lift them, exposing the empty shot glass sitting beneath. Drop the corners of the silk, then pick up the Chop



Cup, and place it mouth down over everything. See Photos 8 & 9.

Make a magical gesture and lift the Chop Cup showing the empty silk beneath. Place the Chop Cup lightly on the table. Whisk the silk away and feign surprise at the sight of the empty shot glass. Examine the silk as if looking for the 1" ball, then look under the Chop Cup. Shrug your shoulders and say, "This happened the other night. The ball got stage fright and went back to the bag."

Pick up the bag with both hands by the corners and shake out the 1" baseball inside. Try to cause the ball to

bounce on the table and roll forward. This is a real surprise and gets a huge laugh. It is also provides a momentary break in the action. You will use this break to switch the bags as follows.

With the right hand, reach forward to retrieve the 1" ball. Allow the left hand to drop beneath the table with the bag. Drop the bag and pick up the bag and baseball sitting on your carrying case. The right hand picks up the 1" ball and tosses it in the air. Bring the left hand up and deposit the bag and baseball in a heap to the left of the Chop Cup.

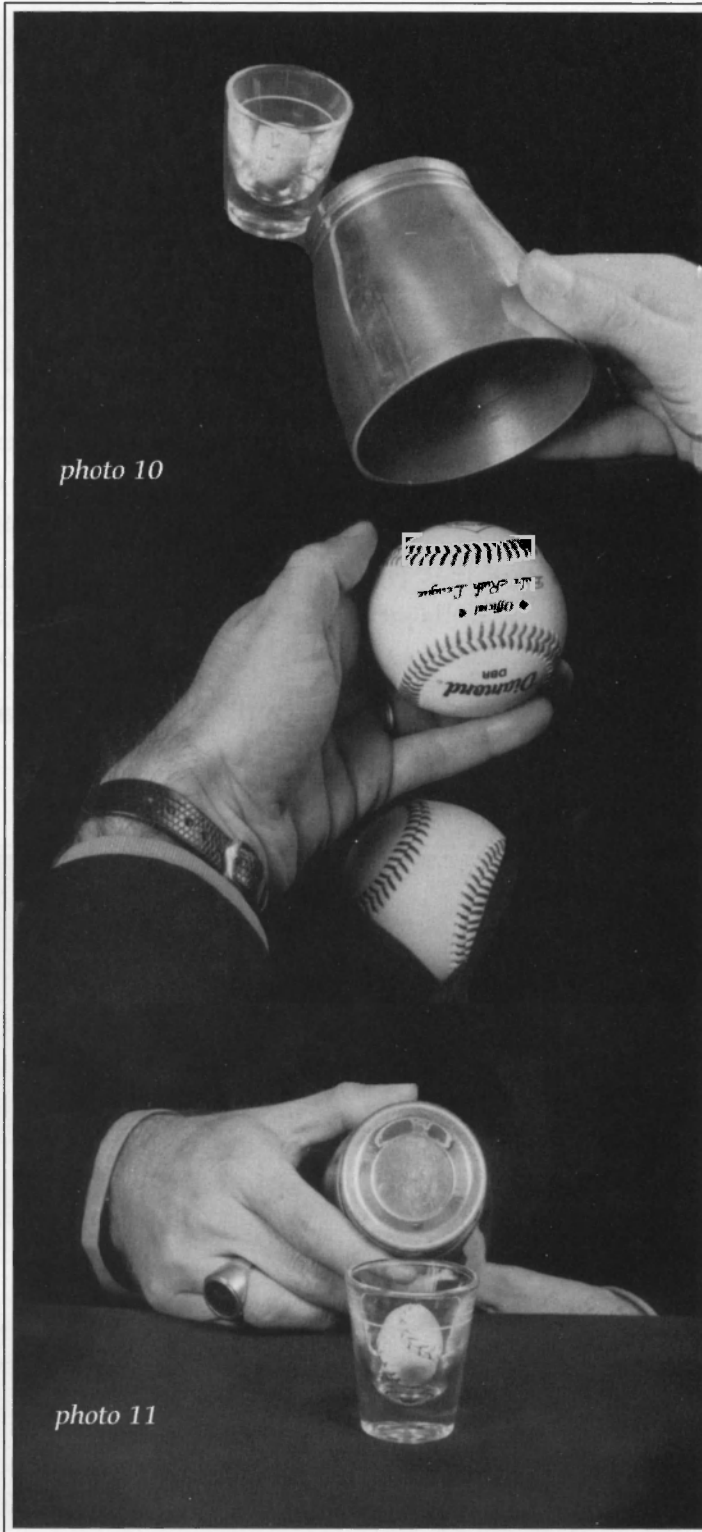


**PHASE SIX/PRODUCING THE BASEBALLS:** Toss the 1" ball from the right hand into the left. Pick up the Chop Cup with the right hand and cover the shot glass, dislodging the ball hidden inside.

Say, "I'll make the ball fly from my pocket into the little glass. Watch."

Place the 1" ball into your left jacket pocket. Bring the left hand out of the pocket and pick up one of the baseballs in your lap. Click your right fingers, then pick up the Chop Cup. Your audience will see the 1" baseball inside the shot glass. Slide the Chop Cup back to the table edge and load the baseball with the left hand. See Photo 10, performer's view, and Photo 11, audience's view. Place the Chop Cup on the table. Then pick up the shot glass and dump the 1" ball onto the table. Put the shot glass into your right jacket pocket.

"I'll do it one last time." Place the 1" ball into your left jacket pocket. Pick up the Chop Cup with the right hand, the pinky holding the baseball in place. "Not yet." Place the Chop Cup onto the table and click the right fingers. Drop the left hand into your lap and retrieve the second baseball. Pick up the Chop Cup with the right hand to reveal the first baseball. Use this misdirection to slide the Chop Cup



back to the table's edge, and load the second baseball. Pick up the baseball on the table, toss it in the air, and let it bounce on your working surface. Click your fingers again, and reveal the second baseball.

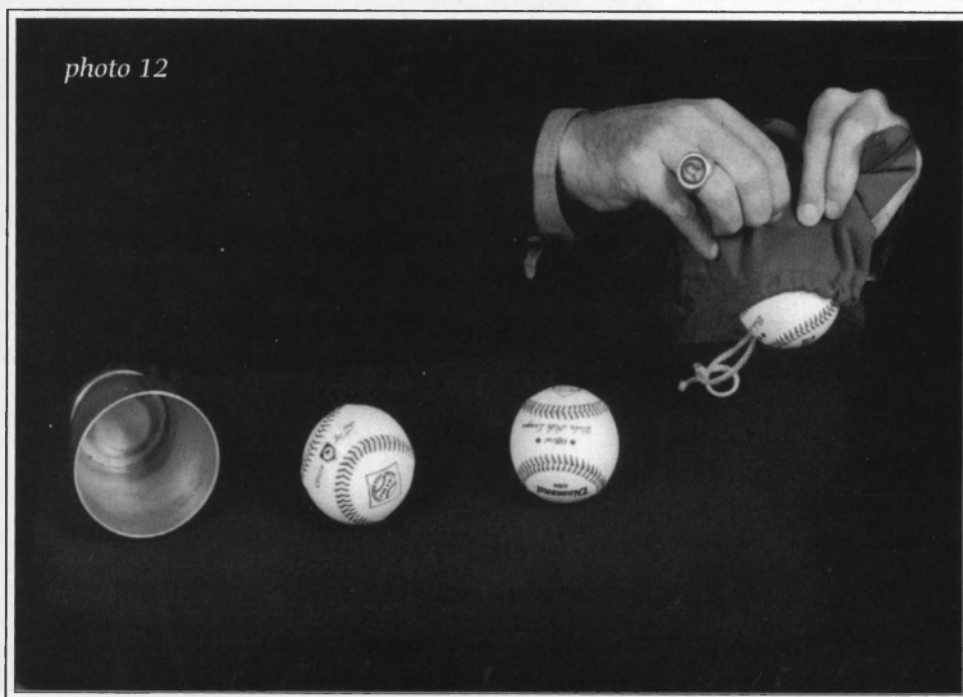
For a finale, turn to a spectator sitting to your right and slide the Chop Cup in front of them. Ask the spectator to click their fingers. Lift up the cup and act surprised. Say, "I know what happened. The last ball got stage fright and went back to the bag."

Pick up the bag and squeeze out the last baseball (see Photo 12). Take your bow.

**FINAL NOTES:** The sequence with the 1" ball getting "stage fright" and returning to the bag is the brainchild of Larry Jennings and one of the finest pieces of close-up magic ever invented. It is so strong that your audiences will give up trying to figure out how the trick is done, and lean back in their chairs and start enjoying themselves. As a result, the loading of the three baseballs is much easier to accomplish.

I always use this routine as an opener, and leave the three baseballs on the table, with two of the balls sitting in the Chop Cup. This serves to remind your audience how impossible the trick really was. This clever idea comes from the mind of Don Alan.

Larry Jennings' Famous Chop Cup Routine was originally published in *Magiana* in *Genii* Magazine, March, 1965.



James Swain was born in Huntington, in 1956. He became interested in magic at age 12, and has published dozens of routines in magic periodicals over the past twenty-years. Along with publishing two books on magic (*Don't Blink*, *The Magic of James Swain & Miracles With Cards*), he is also a published novelist (*The Man Who Walks Through Walls*/St. Martin's Press) and runs a successful advertising business in Tampa, Florida.

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and

*"...if these tricks don't turn you on, then you ain't got no switches."*

—Jamy Ian Swiss  
in January, 1997 *Genii*

