



Inside Ed's Head

December 2013

This issue ends another year of “Inside Ed’s Head.” It’s given me the opportunity to burden you with the flotsam and jetsam that have been bumping around between my ears, and get a little more experience using Photoshop and Microsoft Word. It’s also allowed me to work on my writing. As you can tell, I need the practice.

Most importantly, it’s given me a reason to start corresponding with some of the best close-up magicians in the U.S. Since this column started, we’ve seen material donated by: Darryl, J. K. Hartman, Harry Lorayne, Jerry Mentzer, Darwin Ortiz, and Barrie Richardson.

We’ve also seen a number of rarely used sleights that I think are worth learning. If you haven’t looked at the Diagonal Palm Shift or the Bo-Top change, I think you’re missing out. Check out the March and June 2013 issues if you want your memory jogged.

This month, I’d like to go in a different direction from the heavy sleight-of-hand we’ve seen in the last few months. I’ve discovered a principle of Roger Golde’s, which coupled with an addition of my own, allows a spectator to take a shuffled deck in her hands, cut to any card she likes, and bury it. Yet, when you take back the deck, you can instantly cut the card to the bottom, without any sleight-of-hand!

Roger Golde is a Boston area magician who’s published two books: Card Treks, and Card Treks II. The former is available from Meir Yedid at <http://www.mymagic.com/books.htm>. The latter is available as a free PDF at http://www.ring122.com/uploads/1/0/6/7/10674855/card_treks_ii.pdf. (We can thank I.B.M. Ring 122 for publishing this PDF.) I don’t know much about Roger, but I suspect our minds run in similar veins. Most noticeably, we’re both Star Trek fans, and if you check out his first trick in Card Treks II, “Absolutely Out of Control - The Ultimate Technological Breakthrough in Take-A-Card,” you’ll see he exploits a one-way deck in a manner similar to the way I do in my trick “From Your Heart to My Mind.” (Inside Ed’s Head, July 2012, Page 3.)

I spoke with Roger, and he generously consented to let me use the following idea. In Card Treks, there is a trick called “Spaced Out” (p. 49). When you read the description, you’ll probably be amazed and amused at how he uses a well known move for something other than its intended purpose.

Roger doesn’t give a presentation for the trick, only a method for an “impossible” location. He says that once you ascertain the name of the card, you should “divine” it. In the discussion of my method for this location, I’ll touch upon presentational issues, but only in general terms.

In Roger’s method, the magician must look through the deck to find the selection. I’ve added one of my favorite gaffs to Roger’s method so that you can get the card to the bottom almost immediately after taking the deck back. I call this—

The Golden Retriever

Premise: A spectator shuffles a deck, and cuts to several face-up cards until she sees one she likes. She then buries the card in the center of the deck, and returns it to the magician. (Of course, the magician turns his back while the cards are being cut.) After the magician retrieves the deck, he can get the selection to the bottom—to be palmed, glimpsed, folded, or whatever he desires.

Setup: You'll need two gaffed cards that will cut to the **TOP** of the deck. Short cards or corner-shorts¹ are an obvious choice here. I suggest while you're learning this trick, you use two cards that are each corner-shortened on the index corner. Normally, two cards shorted at the same corner are relatively useless, but they work perfectly well together for this trick. Once you understand and are comfortable performing this item, you may want to consider using cards shorted at opposite corners, or one short card and a Will De Ceive² (quarter crimp) card. The bottom line: you want two cards that cut to the top. I'll assume you'll be using two corner-shorts. I also suggest you mark these cards so you can see that you've cut to them correctly.³ Have one about fifteen cards from the top and the other about fifteenth from the bottom at the start.

Method: Give the deck to the spectator for a brief shuffle. Ask her to give it “. . . a couple of riffle shuffles.” With a little bit of luck, after you get the deck back, a glance at its side will tell you that about fifteen to thirty cards separate the corner-shorts. If not, give the deck another shuffle or two until things look good. Now riffle up the side of the deck and cut one of the corner-shorts to the top. Give a moment or two of explanatory patter, and then cut to the other corner-short and flip all of the cards of the top section **face-up** on top of the bottom cards. (This looks like the first part of the Balducci “Cut Deeper” force. It will position both corner-shorts back-to-back in the middle of the deck.) Point out to the spectator that the face-up card on top of the deck is there randomly. Now do the second half of the Balducci sequence by cutting into the lower half, turning the whole top packet over, and placing it on top of the lower packet—exposing another face-up card. Do a few more “cut-deeper” cuts, making sure your spectator understands you'll want her to do the same. You can point out that you can turn the whole deck over before doing a cut; it randomizes things even more.

Give her the deck, and watch while she does one Balducci cut. Then turn your back and have her do a few more Balducci cuts. Once she stops, have her show the face card of the deck to the rest of the audience. Then ask her to spread all the face-up cards into her other hand, and then turn them face down onto the rest of the deck, burying her selection somewhere in the middle. Finally, ask her to return the deck to you.

(Normally, picking a card is not something you spend a lot of time on. It just wouldn't make any sense. This procedure, in particular, could be a snooze-fest for any audience member other than the one you're working with. Either you must find a spectator who you believe will learn this quickly, or create a presentation that includes an interesting reason for this unusual method, that you tie to your eventual revelation.)

At this stage in the process, one of the corner-shorts is on top of the deck, and the other is directly below the selection. All you need to do now is riffle up the left-rear corner of the deck to enable you to get a break under the card. You are now in position for a side-steal or a pass, a double cut to the bottom or a simple straight cut; there won't be any heat on you, as long as you don't make a “move” of riffling to the corner-short.

As I mentioned earlier, Roger ended his explanation after finding the identity of the selection. I'd like to give you a few thoughts on presentation before I end mine. In all "pick-a-card" tricks, you give a spectator the choice of any card in the deck. If the spectator doesn't believe her choice was a fair one, your effect is ruined at the outset. So why are you giving her such an odd way of picking a card?

I think that having her **see** several cards, and choosing to stop on one of them, makes that **particular** card more important in her mind than if she's just taken one from a fanned deck. In turn, I believe that this would make a prediction a logical complement to the method.

Here's how I would do a prediction. I'd tell the audience that the trick involves a prediction, which I have in my pocket. Every time she cuts the cards I'd let her know that she **might** be looking at the card I predicted, but she has the chance to turn the deck over, or do another cut. This would seem to be a good opportunity for some banter with her. After I've gotten the deck back, I'd cop, or bottom palm⁴ the selection, and produce it, **as the prediction**, from my pocket.

Another possibility is that since the spectator had a choice of so many different cards, you say you'll need several chances to **find** the card. Then go into your favorite trick of that genre. My favorite is "Foursome," from Harry Lorayne's Deck-Sterity, p. 23.

Please don't go into a Card-to-Wallet, or use a fancy cut to pop the selection out of the middle of the deck. Don't ignore the beginning of the trick just because the method gives you an easy ending.

So ends the year. I hope you had a Merry Christmas, and that the next year is a happy one for us all!

Footnotes:

1. I use a CARL Corner Rounding Punch. If you search Google or Amazon for "corner rounding," you should see many choices. Be sure you don't get the scrapbook kind that cuts a fancy design in the corner of the card.
2. Cardopolis <http://cardopolis.blogspot.com/2009/04/trick-that-can-be-explained.html>. p. 1.
3. Inside Ed's Head, June 2012, <http://www.edhassmagic.com/edshead/EH-2012-06.pdf> p. 2
4. Inside Ed's Head, Sept. 2013 <http://www.edhassmagic.com/edshead/EH-2013-09.pdf> p. 2

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