



Inside Ed's Head

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April 2015

LORD OF THE KINGS (How to Be a Master Magician)

This is the first trick of mine that was published in *The Linking Ring*. (Hocus Pocus Parade, October 2012.) I enjoy doing it as an opener because it starts with a chuckle, ends with a magical transformation, and leaves four aces on the table—ready for my next routine. I also enjoy it when magicians tell me they were completely fooled by it.

Effect:

The Magician notes how all master magicians can do four ace tricks. He then admits he is NOT a master magician, and is only good enough to do a trick with four kings. He shows four kings, and puts the two black kings face down on the table. He then waves the face-down red kings over the black ones. With a snap of the fingers, the red kings are turned up; they are now the black kings. Turning the tabled black kings face-up, they turn out to be the red—ACES. Now the black kings are turned face-up once again. They are now the black ACES. Perhaps the magician is a master magician after all!

Set-up:

From the FACE of the deck, have:

The King of Hearts, a black king, the two red aces, the other black king, the two black aces and either:

The H.A.S.S. gaff with the “nickel end” at the rear of the deck (explained later), followed by the rest of the deck **OR**,

The rest of the deck, with a heavy bridge put in one end, made by bending the sides of the deck sharply downwards at the rear corners. This will make the end of the deck look like an upside-down “U.”

All should be in the card case.

You will need to be working on a close-up mat, or similar surface.

Procedure:

The following description assumes the magician is standing at a table, and the spectators are either sitting at the table, or sitting in a close-up show situation.

As you patter about master magicians, remove the deck from the case, and hold it face-up, towards yourself, so the audience can only see the back of the deck (the bridged end, or the working portion of the H.A.S.S. gaff, should be at the bottom of the deck.). Spread off four face cards, one by

one, as you continue pattering about four ace tricks. As you push off the fourth card, the fifth should follow a little behind it. Your left middle and ring fingers should contact the back of the fifth card, separating it a bit from those cards to its left.

You should hold this position for a beat, then square the cards back in your left hand, picking up the fifth card as you do so. Turn your left hand palm down, and place the deck face-down, centered on your working surface, about two and a half deck lengths from the end of the table. The cards in your right hand are held squared in Biddle grip, with the fingers and thumb to the left side of the card, obscuring most of the face; still not visible to the spectators.



As soon as you deposit the deck on the table, your right hand should begin lowering, as your left moves up to join it - preparing to show the cards as four kings using a Veaser count. (I use a Veaser count instead of an Elmsley count because I believe it's more visible to seated spectators. (See: *Inside Ed's Head*, May 2014.) As the left hand touches the right hand's cards, your left middle and ring fingers, in conjunction with a leftward movement of the right hand, right-jogs the back card of the face-up packet.

As this is happening, the left thumb pulls the top card of the packet into the left hand, as in a normal Biddle count. Your left hand now moves to take the next card, and as it does so, the right hand takes the left hand's card under the side-jogged card, as the left hand takes the two left-most cards. (These cards are taken between the thumb, and the side of the left forefinger.)



You then count the next two cards from the right hand, in normal Biddle fashion. You mention that you will be “. . . doing a trick with four kings,” as you begin this counting action. The whole purpose of using a Veaser count here, rather than an Elmsley count, is to avoid bringing undue attention to the cards. As the cards come off the deck in Biddle grip, there is no adjustment needed to start the Veaser count. An Elmsley count would necessitate some shifting of your grip that might give more attention to showing the Kings than you’d like. Also note that you are not counting the cards, you are just displaying them as you mention that you are doing a trick with four kings.

As soon as the four kings are all in your left hand, flip them face down. You should now be something in the order of “Even though this trick doesn’t use aces, it’s a really good trick with kings.”

Do a quadruple lift here to display a black king (very easy . . . use either a block push off, or a single buckle to facilitate the turnover.) Turn the card(s) back face-down, and deal the top card of the packet (an ace) to the table, forward, and to the right of the deck.

Now do a double lift to show the other black king. I suggest doing Bro. Hamman’s no get-ready double lift from Richard Kaufman’s Secrets of Brother Jon Hamman, p 13. Push off the top three cards of the packet with your left thumb. Contact the bottom card of these three with your left middle finger, holding it back, while you continue the push-off with your left thumb. You should now have the top two cards squared up, and easily flipped face-up, as a single card. (See: *Inside Ed’s Head*, February 2014, for a more complete description.)

Flip the double face down, and deal the top card (the other ace) forward and to the left of the deck.



You have a packet of three cards face down in your left hand, the red king at the face, and the two black kings. You might casually flash the red King at the bottom of the packet to help sell the idea that the black Kings are on the table, and the red ones are in your hand.

Use your right hand to take the top card from the packet, being sure to keep the double aligned in your left hand with an Elmsley style push-off.

Tell your spectators that all you have to do is to wave the red kings over the black ones to effect your miracle.

Hold your hands over the face-down cards on the table. Be sure to keep the ends of the cards tilted downward, so the double in the left hand won't be flashed.



Spectator's View

Replace the right hand's card UNDERNEATH the left's in dealing position, and snap your right fingers over the packet.

Take the three-card packet by the right edge, thumb on top, index finger underneath. Move the entire packet SOMEWHAT TO THE RIGHT. As you do this, use your thumb to pull the top card to the right about a half inch as you move the whole packet over to the first joint of your left hand.



Flip over the double under the top card with your right index and middle fingers.



As the double lands face up in your left hand, it will be “caged” by the left hand so it can’t separate.



Simultaneously, your right hand flips its card over longitudinally by snapping your right middle finger up into your palm, then using it to put downward pressure on the back of the card, causing it to snap off your right thumb, ending face-up, held between your index and middle fingers. You’ll only hold this position for as long as it takes to say, “The black kings are now over here.”



Place the cards together, turn them face down, and take them in right hand Biddle grip, in preparation for the tabled Jinx switch coming up. (See: “Hop off the Bottom,” from Jack Merlin’s ... and a Pack of Cards, p. 52.)

“That must mean that over here we have the. . .” As you say this, lean forward as your left hand reaches across the table to flip over the card to your right. Your right hand should end up hovering slightly over the deck. As the card is flipped over, continue with some well acted surprise, “. . . red ace!” As this is happening, you proceed to place the cards in your right hand squarely on the deck, and by means of the bridge in the cards, or the H.A.S.S. gaff, lift all the cards except the two black aces. A slight sideways movement as you lift the deck will leave the aces in an unsquared condition, adding to the deceptiveness of the switch.

Now turn over the other red ace on the left, as you stand up straight, and place the deck in left hand dealing position, or put it on the table, out of the focus area of the trick.

You can now finish by saying, “Wow, it looks like I’m half-way to becoming a master magician. Turn over the face-down cards, showing the other two aces, and finish, “Or, maybe I’ve been a master magician all along.”

You can now remove the gaff from the deck under the pretext of getting rid of the Jokers, or you could continue with “Travelers’ Aid,” from J. K. Hartman’s Card Craft, p. 222, a baffling signed cards-to-pocket routine which could also make use of the H.A.S.S gaff

The H.A.S.S (Highly Advantageous Simple Switcher) gaff.

As mentioned previously, the “Hop Off the Bottom” can be done with a bridged deck, but there are some problems with this approach. Since the deck is in the case at the start, the bridge can flatten to the point of uselessness. More importantly, even with a bridge, picking up all but two cards is not always a sure thing. Although you’ll need some touch and practice to use the H.A.S.S. gaff, it is much more reliable than using a bridge. Since it’s so easy to dispose of the gaff after using it, I don’t see why you wouldn’t use it.

Making the gaff:

First, place a joker face down on the table. Cover it with a thin layer of rubber cement or place double stick tape around the border of the card. Next, place a nickel in the middle of one of the short ends, about the width of the white border in from the end. Cover the nickel with cement or tape as well. (Photo, top of next page.)



Very carefully put another card on top of this, offset about a millimeter beyond the “nickel” end. (In the photo above, the top card will extend a millimeter to the **right** of the bottom card.) Press firmly, and you’ll have a gaff that will last for quite a while. (To assure the “nickel end” of the card doesn’t open up, you might also use some regular transparent tape around the upper sides to keep things secure.)



If you place this at the bottom of a deck, with a few cards beneath it, you’ll see how easy it is to do the switch.

Inside Ed’s Head, April 2015
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