



Inside Ed's Head

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March 2016

The Golden Retriever Takes Another Bite (Plus a Trick from Yours Truly)

Before I begin, I have to mention the losses that we magicians have suffered over the past several months. Paul Daniels, Jerry Mentzer, Tom Mullica and Barrie Richardson have all passed away.

Jerry Mentzer and Barrie Richardson were both friends of this column. Jerry generously offered sound advice and great material. Barrie was incredibly helpful to me. Upon seeing how I had used one of his principles, he called me up to talk about my work and encouraged me to share more of it with him.

I sent him the first draft of a book I'm working on. He told me the keynote trick was way too hard, and suggested ways I might make it easier to perform. His suggestion was right on the money, and I came up with a much easier way to do it. Most of the big names in magic have been very helpful to me, but Barrie stands at the top of the list. He'll be missed.

Early this year I received an email from Claudio Imperiale, one of my readers. I was extraordinarily delighted to find I have one!

Claudio is certainly an interesting guy; he was born in Venezuela, his father was Italian and his mother Belgian. And if you are not already lost, he's French. He lived in Paris until he was 30 and then settled in London working as a database administrator. He has practiced magic for about 35 years.

He is also a software developer: MemDeckPro is a free Android application to help memdeck practitioners learn a new stack or practice their current one. You can get it at:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.solutionsbuilder.memdeckpro>

(Imagine that! A database administrator that develops software for magicians—what a crazy combination!)

Some of his material has been published in Steven Beam's *Semi-Automatic Card Tricks, Vol. 7 & 8*.

During our correspondence he mentioned that he liked the "Golden Retriever" principle I published in the December 2013 issue.

He also said he seldom uses his own cards when doing magic, so he couldn't use the locator cards necessary to make use of the principle as I described it. Instead, he sights the two top cards, and carries on from there. He surmised, correctly, that this was what Roger Golde did in the trick from *Card Treks*, but Claudio goes beyond what Roger wrote up.

Here, in his own words (with minor formatting changes) is:

Labrador Retriever

Effect

From a shuffled deck in use, two spectators pick a card each. The performer reveals the first one while demonstrating a memory feat, and reveals the second one by reading the 2nd spectator's mind.

Method

I don't have Roger Golde's *Card Treks*, but I am pretty sure, from your [Ed Hass's] description, that I am using the concept as he originally devised it in "Spaced Out." It occurred to me that, in occasions where more than one spectator is available, it would be possible to make the effect even stronger.

If your memory is excellent, you would have to remember two cards, you can go straight into the trick; otherwise you would have to set up or cull two familiar cards to the top of the deck. I'll describe the trick with no cull or set-up.

Ask one of your spectators to shuffle the deck. Get it back and execute a riffle shuffle and remember the top two cards, say the AS and AH, the order is unimportant. Do a slip cut in the hands to position the top card among the top 20 cards and keep a little finger break above it. As in "Golden Retriever," ask the first spectator, Adam, to do a few Balducci^{*} [cut deeper and turn over] cuts. You demonstrate by doing a few cuts, making sure that the first cut is made at the break. Turn your back while Adam is following your instructions. When he is happy to stop, ask him to remember the top face-up card, say the QH.

Ask him to take all the face-up cards in hand, and place the remaining face-down cards onto the table. He is then to cut the face-up packet, so as to lose his choice in the middle of the packet he's holding, and keep the packet in hands. The cut positions the selection directly above one of your key cards.

Ask your second spectator, Betsy, to take the top card of the talon, sight unseen, and put in her pocket, if she has any, but out of sight in any case.

Face your audience and address Adam. Ask him to cut his packet a few more times. Get the packet back, table it and spread it face up. It should be easy to note and remember the card on the left of your key card (say the AH). In this instance the QH. Tell Adam that you are gifted with a photographic memory and that, while you turn your back, he's to take out his selection, leave it face down on the table, and shuffle the packet. Once he's done, you face him, take the packet in dealing position and quickly deal the cards face up. Once the dealing is over, pretend to think hard, or not, and reveal the selection.

You now address Betsy, for the tour de force of the effect. You recap how impossible it is for anybody to know which card she has in her pocket, or under her hands. You can either ask Betsy to look at her card and you pretend to read her mind, or you can go directly into the revelation. The selected card is of course your second key card.

* In this instance, it might be easier to ask the spectator to spread the cards in his hands and cut/turn a packet face up, instead of repetitive cuts. I have been using this procedure for years without any problem.

Adopting that handling will allow you to streamline the effect: once the spectator has shuffled and returned the deck to you, go straight into demonstrating two Balducci cuts. The first time you cut and flip a packet face up, spread the cards and remember the last face-up card, which will be your first key card. Spread a few face-down cards and flip the packet. Spread the face-up cards and remember the last one, which is your second key.

This is the end of Claudio's text. All the rest is me.

Due to my poor eyesight, glimpsing two cards on the fly is pretty unlikely—I'd prefer to start off with two easy to remember cards on top of the deck.

Here are some of my ideas for alternative approaches to the revelations of Adam's card.

As I regularly use a memorized deck, I'd prefer not to tell the spectator about my ability to memorize cards. Instead, I'd turn my back and have the spectator call out the names of the cards as they're dealt from the face of the pack. I'd tell them that I'm correlating their mental and vocal vibrations. Right after they name one of the key cards, I can stop them dramatically as they begin to name the next card.

Another approach would be to spread the cards face up on the table, and have Adam hold my wrist as I move my extended forefinger back and forth over the cards, letting it settle on the selection.

Since I intend to get two known cards to the top of the deck before I begin this trick, I might handle Betsy differently as well. (Although the direct divination Claudio uses might hide the method a little better.) I'd have two odd-backed cards in my pocket—duplicates of the cards I'll get to the top of the deck. In performance, after ascertaining which card is in Betsy's pocket, I'd explain that I had found an odd card next to my bed when I awoke, and brought it with me. I'd table this card face down. I'd then ask Betsy to place her card face down next to mine. We'd then turn the cards over simultaneously to thunderous applause.

Since I have some space left in this column, here's something of mine that's always been a fun revelation.

Double Speller Plus

Effect

After losing a selection in the deck, the magician claims he'll find the card by simply looking for it in the face up deck. Unfortunately, this doesn't seem to work, so the magician mentions that sometimes he can find a random card by spelling its name. He spells the name of a "random" card by dealing one card for each letter. When the last card is tuned over, it is the card named!

The magician gives the deck to the spectator and asks him to spell the name of his selection. He does this and when the last card is dealt, his selection is on top of the deck—face up!

Method

This is a very old effect. I don't remember where I learned the original; I do know I've been doing it for about sixty years. After learning the "Braue Reversal," I added the face-up revelation. I'm

sure I'm not the first person to have discovered this. If Marlo or Vernon doesn't have this in their oeuvre someplace, I'd be totally gobsmacked.

After a card has been selected and noted, control it to the top of the deck. Explain you'll look through the face-up cards to find it. Use a "Braue Reversal" to reverse the top card as you turn the deck face up. Use an all-around square to glimpse it.

Start spreading the face-up cards, spelling the name of the card you just glimpsed—one card per letter. After you spell the last letter, note the name of the *next* card. **Remember the name of this card.** Start spelling the name of that card as you spread it, and stop on the last letter.

Break the spread at this point, and indicate that you're having trouble. Place the left-hand cards on top of the right, and turn the cards face down. Give the deck a jog shuffle, being sure to start with the cards below the reversed card.

Mention that you can sometimes find a card by spelling its name. "For instance if I spell 'Ten of Clubs,' it will show up when I spell the last card." Demonstrate this, dealing face down and spelling the name of the card you are remembering. Turn over the last card to show you've found the named card. Another jog shuffle here is a good idea.

Give the deck to the spectator and ask him to spell the name of his card. When he deals the last letter, he'll see his card staring him in the face!

A notable feature of this method, where the selection is face-up, is that if you run into a spectator who refuses to name his card (we've all run into them, right?), you don't have any presentational problem. Shuffle or cut the deck so that the reversed selection ends up near the center, table the deck and snap your fingers over it. Spread the deck, and the selection will be seen reversed in the deck. You've created a miracle with no help from the recalcitrant spectator—a double win!

Inside Ed's Head, March 2016
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