



A+

EFFECT: The standard ace assembly with a kicker ending.

SET-UP: You'll need to position the KS, QS, JS and 10S at the face of the deck with 10S 4th from the face.

PROCEDURE: Spread the cards toward yourself and upjog the aces in place as you come to them. Strip them out and add them to the face of the deck with the ace of spades 4th from the face. The order from the face will be: A, A, A, AS, RF, RF, RF, 10S where RF means a royal flush card.

Set it up something like this: *"Magicians have certain tricks that they like to perform for other magicians. A classic of this genre is what we call an 'Ace Assembly.' The reason for that name will become clear soon. The key word is 'assemble.' I'm going to show you my version of this classic magician's trick."* You're letting the spectators in on what magicians show each other. This is an excellent way to create interest.

Hold the deck face up in left hand dealing position. Obtain a break under the top seven cards i.e. *over* the 10S as you square up the spread. Lower the deck so that the spectators see the ace at the face. Lift the seven cards above the break in right hand Biddle Grip* as you say, *"For this classic, we'll need the four aces and twelve other random cards like these."* Be sure to angle the front edge of the right hand's packet down a bit so that the thickness is not noticed. Push the ten of spades to a sidejogged condition revealing another X card under it. You're about to switch out three of the aces for three royal flush cards and you want your spectators to remember the card at the face (10S).

Now, using the left thumb, pull the 10S flush with the deck as you obtain a left 4th finger break under it. Move the right hand's group of seven (as four) over the deck, picking up the



Fig. 1

10S under the right hand's cards as you pick up a right thumb break over the 10S (**Figure 1**). You are now in a position to perform Marlo's **ATFUS*** switch which, when done with face up cards, is called **FUFU** (Face Up Face Up).

The right hand has eight cards (as four) in Bid-
dle Grip* with a thumb break over the bottom
card (10S). This packet is being held just above
the deck. Using the left thumb, hold the top ace
in place as the right hand pulls all its other

cards to the right, and clear of the deck. Pick up a left 4th finger break under this ace as the
right hand's cards clear the deck. Be sure that this ace is held squarely with the deck so that
the identity of the card beneath the ace is not seen. This card is supposed to be the 10S.



Fig. 2

Bring the right hand's cards over the deck and
peel the second ace onto the first one, but
slightly jogged to the right. Repeat this process
a third time, again jogging this ace to the right.
Finally, place the right hand's cards (as one)
onto the 3rd ace as shown in **Figure 2**. Be sure to
keep the right hand's packet squared so that it
appears to be a single ace of spades.



Fig. 3

Immediately move the right hand to the left,
squaring all the cards against the left thumb
and then lift the four cards above the right
thumb break (AS, RF, RF, RF) in right hand
Biddle Grip*. The 10S shows at the face as it
should. Continue to hold the left 4th finger
break under the three aces. Place the right
hand's cards face down on the table. These are
thought to be the four aces. Since your left hand
is occupied, use your right hand to reposition
the top three cards (supposedly aces) into a
horizontal row from left to right. Finally, turn

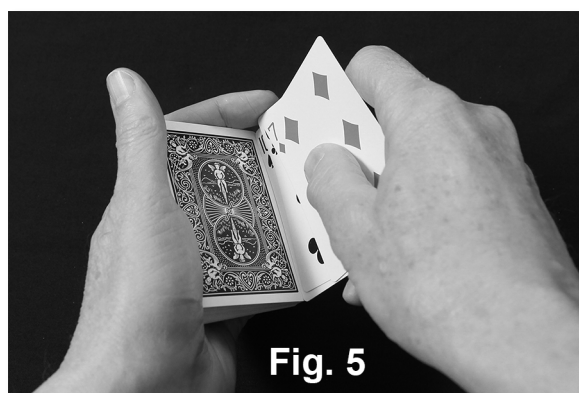
the Ace of Spades face up and place it at the base of the "T" as in **Figure 3**. During these ac-
tions say, *"This is what we call 'The Mystical T Formation.' Three aces in a row with the leader,
that's the spade, face up here. Now we need some random cards and we'll be ready for the magical
assembly!"*

STATUS CHECK: The horizontal row in Figure 3 consists of three face down Royal Flush
cards. The deck is, from the face: 10S, Ace, Ace, Ace. You are holding a left 4th finger break

under the 4th card from the face of the deck

Double Cut* the cards above the break to the rear and then flip the deck face down in left hand dealing position. Spread twelve cards in groups of two from the left hand to the right hand as you say, *“That’s two, four, six, eight, ten, twelve.”* You are now holding a spread of twelve cards in the right hand. Act as though you’re deciding whether or not to take more cards as you spread three more cards using the left thumb and then pull them square with the deck as you pick up a left 4th finger break under them. Say, *“No – twelve is correct. That’s three for each of the four aces.”* Square the right hand’s cards with the three above the left 4th finger break and lift all fifteen cards (supposedly twelve), finally flipping them face up on top of the deck as you grab a left 4th finger break under them. The idea here is to seemingly have taken twelve cards and flipped them face up on the deck. You’ll now be able to show each group of three cards before placing the cards onto the individual aces. This is a J.C. Wagner idea.

Spread three of the face up cards showing their faces. Square them and flip them face down against the left thumb as shown in **Figure 4**. Now take them face down in right hand Biddle Grip* and place them onto the card at position A. Say, *“There are three cards for each ace.”* Repeat this twice more, placing groups of three cards onto the “aces” at B and C. You now have six cards face up. Spread two of them to the right revealing the faces of three X cards. Your left 4th finger is holding a break under the 6th card from the face. Using the right hand, with fingers below and thumb on top, begin to move the jogged cards to the left and finally flush with the deck. Allow your fingers to enter the space created by the 4th finger break as you finally flip all six cards face down (**Figure 5**). It should appear that you simply flipped



over the three visible face up cards. This puts the three aces on top of the deck. This very deceptive action is the Zarrow Block Addition*. Finally, spread the top three cards (aces) and place them, face down and jogged a bit to the right, onto the Ace of Spades at D. This leaves part of the face of the AS exposed. Say, *“Three cards for each of the four aces. This is the traditional starting point.”*

STATUS CHECK: There are three packets of four face down cards at positions A, B, C.



Each packet consists of three X cards followed by a royal flush card. The leader pile contains all four aces. The top card of the deck is the ten of spades. You're way ahead!

Place the deck above the pile at B creating a very symmetrical arrangement (**Figure 6**). You will now make the "aces" vanish from the packets at A, B and C as follows:

Pick up the four cards from position A and say, *"All it takes is a squiggle."* Suiting action to words, take the top two cards in the right hand with fingers below and thumb on top. Move them back and forth as you simultaneously do this with the two cards remaining in the left hand. This is the "squiggle." Place the right hand's cards *under* those in the left hand. This positions the Royal Flush card second from top in the face down packet of four. Say, *"The squiggle makes the ace disappear!"*

You need to show that the ace is no longer in the packet. However, in order not to foreshadow the Royal Flush ending, it's best that the spectators not see that each packet contains a Royal Flush card. There are a couple of ways to accomplish this:

Face up Elmsley Counts* will hide the Royal Flush cards and leave them on top after you return the packets to their original positions, face down. If you choose Elmsley Counts, you would perform the "squiggle," face down, and then Elmsley Count face up. Do this with each packet, showing that the aces have vanished. After the Elmsley Count, turn the packet face down and replace it in its original position.

I prefer using an Oram Subtlety* to show that the ace has disappeared. This Marlo concept will allow you to seemingly show the face of each of the four cards while hiding the face of the card second from top as follows:

Take the four cards, face down, in left hand dealing position. Take the top card, face down, between the right thumb on top and fingers below. Now, with the three cards squared in



the left hand, rotate the left hand palm downward, reaching the position of **Figure 7**. Note how the left hand's cards are gripped between the thumb and fingers in order to expose the face card of the packet.

Rotate the left hand palm upward again and immediately thumb off the top card of the left hand's packet as you say, *"One."* This is the Royal Flush card. Now rotate the right hand palm upward and then downward, flashing the face of

its card as you say, *"Two."* Drop the right hand's card face down onto the already tabled card. Finally, take the *bottom card* from the left hand's group, again with right thumb on top and fingers underneath. Use this card to flip the card remaining in the left hand face up on the left palm as you say, *"Three."* Finally, take the right hand's card between the left thumb on top and fingers below and snap it with the right 2nd finger as you say, *"And the ace."* This entire sequence takes only a few seconds. It's "squiggle," then *"One (slight pause), two (slight pause), three (slight pause), and the ace (slight pause)."* Using the right hand, take the card from the left hand, flash its face and drop it, face down onto the already tabled group of three cards. Square up the packet as you say, *"Gone."* The Royal Flush card is at the face of the packet.

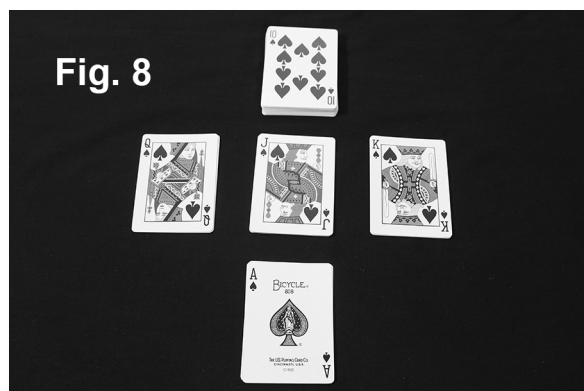
Repeat this sequence with piles B and C. You can change up the script a bit for variety if you like. I like to say, *"It's the squiggle that makes the ace disappear"* each time I begin the Oloram sequence. Apparently, the aces have disappeared. Square up each of the three packets in position.

End phase 1 by picking up the three cards on top of the Ace of Spades and showing that they are the three missing aces. Scoop up the AS with the three face up cards. Square the aces (with AS at the face) and table the four cards, face up, in leader position.

Now for the kicker! Say, *"When people see all the aces in my pile they often say 'I wouldn't want to play cards with you. You'd get the four aces.' But if I were going to use magic to get a good hand, I'd go for an even better hand."*

It's time to reveal the Royal Flush cards. Turn the packets at A, B and C face up. Finally, turn the top card of the deck face (10S) face up, ending as in **Figure 8**. Mission accomplished! (NOTE: If you used Elmsley Counts to show that the aces disappeared, you'd turn over the top cards of the packets at A, B, and C.)

FINAL THOUGHTS: I think that this version of the classic Ace Assembly is very efficient and disarmingly open in that everything is done face up at the outset, creating a very free and open feel.



I should mention that instead of Double Cutting the aces to the rear as described above, you can get your fifteen-card stack with less moves as follows:

You will seem to quickly count off twelve cards from the face of the deck. Actually, you'll take the four cards above the break, as one, on the count of one as follows: Using the left thumb, push the block of four above the break just a bit to the right. This will allow you to pinch the



outer right corner of the packet against the base of the right 1st finger using the right thumb as shown in **Figure 9**. Move the right hand away from the deck until the packet clears the deck. Immediately return the right hand to peel the next card onto this packet, using the right thumb, on the count of two. *Keep things moving* so that the thickness of the “first card” won’t be noticed. Continue peeling cards until you reach the count of twelve. Since you took four cards

on the count of one, you actually have 15 cards. From the face there are 11 X cards, the 10S, and then the three aces. Count out loud as you peel the cards. Flip the deck face down in the left hand and place the right hand’s fifteen cards (as twelve) face up onto the deck as you grab a left 4th finger break under the packet. Now follow the original sequence described above.

CREDITS: In response to a post by Paul Wilson on The Magic Pebble, Tom Dobrowolski posted an assembly involving dealing poker hands. Tom ended by dealing himself a royal flush in a four handed game. I liked the royal flush ending but thought it better to avoid the dealing and get to the royal flush immediately.



PM PLUS



EFFECT: The magician turns his back and instructs two spectators each to cut the face down deck for a selection. The selections are absolutely free and, in fact, the spectators may change their minds and re-cut if they like. The cuts are replaced, burying the selections. The magician then turns around and begins dealing cards face down **without ever looking at the backs of any cards**. Suddenly, after “feeling a vibration,” the magician stops dealing and begins a second pile. Another “vibration” is felt and the magician again stops dealing. At no point does the magician ever look at a card. Now the magician asks each spectator to concentrate on her card. The magician names each of the selections and then instructs the spectators to turn over the top cards of their respective piles. These turn out to be the selections!!!

This truly “impossible” location is based on a mathematical principle and requires no skill. The level of impossibility is extremely high since the selections are completely free and **the magician never even looks at the cards!**

METHOD: Two “key” cards are used to achieve this extraordinary location. The key cards have tiny raised punches at their outer right corner that can be felt by the thumb as the cards are dealt face down. (See the introduction to this section for the details of creating the necessary key cards and for an alternate method involving pencil dots instead of punches.)

SETUP: You will need to make two punched cards. If you want to do the mind reading (which I highly recommend!) you will need to stack the deck in a known order. Those who do memorized deck work are all set. If you haven’t learned a memorized order yet, there is another way that will allow you to do the mind reading anyway. This will be explained at the end. For now, place the cards into your favorite order i.e. Aronson stack, Tamariz stack etc. Don’t use a stack in which the colors alternate because this will stand out like a sore thumb when the deck is scrutinized at the beginning. If you don’t have a favorite stack, just shuffle the deck and then **write down** the order from top down, numbering each card as you go.

Once the deck is in a known order, remove the 1st and 27th cards. In the Aronson stack this would be the jack of spades (1) and the five of diamonds (27). These are the cards that must have punches in their outer right and inner left corners (face down). Put the work in and reposition them at positions one and twenty-seven. You’re ready to rock! (**Note:** The first time through you might want to turn the punched cards **face up** in order to see how they will locate the two selections. Ultimately you will simply *feel* the punches to perform the location.)

CUTTING PROCEDURE: The two selections are completely free but there is a restriction. The first person must cut *less* than 26 cards and the second person must cut past the original 27th card. Below you will find a presentation for the effect that creates these conditions in a very natural way. For now,

let's see how the PM Principle works. Be sure the punched cards are at position 1 and 27 in the face down deck. Now, with your right hand, cut less than half the cards (about a third) and look at the *face card* of the cut section. We'll call this **packet A**. Hold packet A for the moment. With your left hand, cut about half the remaining cards and again look at the face card of the cut section. Call this **packet B**. (You may want to write down the identities of the selections for this experiment. Let's say you cut the 7 of Diamonds in packet A and the Queen of Spades in packet B.) You must now replace the packets as follows: Place packet A (the one in your right hand) onto the portion remaining on the table. Finally place packet B (left hand) onto the tabled deck. This *reverses* the order of the packets since packet A was the former top section of the deck. Think about what happened. It appears that the two selections are completely lost. Actually, the second selection is on top of one of the punched cards and is easy to locate. It's the first selection that seems impossible to locate. That's where the PM Principle comes into play. Follow the directions below and you will locate **both** selections:

Hold the deck face down in the left hand in readiness to deal the cards. Begin to deal cards into a face down pile, **counting backwards from 25** as you deal. (Thus as the first card is dealt you mentally think "25", on the 2nd card you think "24" etc.) Watch for the face up key card (or feel for the punch if it's face down). Let's say that the first key card **falls at number 15**. Remember this number (15). You are going to begin a second count (assuming you want to read their minds). In order not to forget the first number viz. 15, I'd recommend counting like this: 15 one, 15 two, 15 three etc. You will burn the first key number (15) into your memory and will be able to easily remember the second number as well. Continue dealing cards face down (and counting) until you see (or feel) the second key card.

Let's say that your count at this point was 15 - twelve. In other words you had dealt twelve cards past your first key (which occurred at number 15). *This second key card must be dealt into a new pile* to the right of the first pile. (Note: After you switch to pile two, the top card of pile one will be the *second* selection.) Continue dealing cards onto this second pile, counting cards now. Count up to your first "magic number" and stop dealing. In the above example the magic number is 15. You will count **15 cards past the keycard and stop**. The 15th card past the second key card is the *first* selection!!!

The top card of the pile on the left is now the 2nd selection. The top card of the pile on the right is the 1st selection! This by itself would be a mind-bender. However, your counting will now allow you to **name both of the selections without ever looking at the back or front of any card!** This is POWERFUL stuff!

In the example, you have **two key numbers** viz. 15 and 12. Remember - You counted backwards from 25 and happened to be at fifteen when you felt the first punch. You then counted forwards from one until you felt the next punch. Here's what happened: 25, 24, 23, ... 17, 16, 15 (felt punch), 15-1, 15-2, 15-3, ... 15-11, 15-12 (felt 2nd punch and put the punched card on a new pile). You then dealt 15 cards (same as first key number) onto this punched card. At this point the top cards of the piles are the two selections. Be sure this is true. The two key numbers viz. 15 and 12 will now allow you to **name the selections** as follows:

NAMING THE FIRST SELECTION: The top card of the right hand packet is **ONE HIGHER** than your first key number (which is fifteen). Thus its stack number is 16. In the Aronson stack this would be the 8C. Tell the spectator on your right i.e. the one who made the first selection, to concentrate on her card. Be sure that you don't look at the backs of the cards. This negates the marked deck explanation. Do a bit of acting and then name the card. (Remember, it's one higher than your first key number.) Finally, have the spectator on your right turn over the top card of the packet closest to her. It will be the correct card!

NAMING THE SECOND SELECTION: You'll have to do a simple addition to determine its stack number. Recall your second key number. In this case it was 12. **Add this to 26** getting 38. This is the stack number of the second selection. In Aronson stack this would be the 10H. Repeat the theatrics used with the first spectator, naming the card and then having her turn over the top card of the packet closest to her. You will have read her mind and also found her card without ever looking at anything. **A blind magician can do this trick!** You can start a religion with this! It looks like the real deal.

NON-MEMORIZED DECK PROCEDURE: For those who don't do memorized deck work, I recommend the following: Write the numbers from 1 to 52 in two columns (1-26, then 26-52) on the left hand page in a *small* spiral notebook. Next to each number, write the card at that position in your stacked deck. When you reach the point of predicting the selections, take out the notebook and explain that you will **draw your impression** of the selections. Open the booklet so you can see the numbers. Hopefully you still remember what number you used as your "magic number" above. **The 1st spectator's selection is the card one higher in number than your first magic number.** In the description above, the magic number was 15. That means that the first spectator's card is number 16. If you do memorized deck work, you'll know that that is the 8C in the Aronson stack. If you are using the notebook, you'll know what card to draw by looking at your "cheat sheet." Now tear out your drawing, fold it and hand it to spectator one. Use the same technique to demonstrate mind reading with the second spectator as detailed above. The index written in the notebook eliminates the need for memorization.

NON-STACKED METHODS: You can position your punched or marked cards at 1 and 27 in an otherwise random deck and perform the location phase only. This is still extremely powerful since you never look at the cards! Also, if you use a random deck, you don't have to perform the second count. That is only needed if you want to do the mind reading.

Another option is to **peek** the cards at positions 1 and 27. This is easy for faro shufflers. You can then locate the selections by turning the cards **face up** as you deal. Just follow the same procedure outlined above. **NOTE** that the second count is unnecessary if you're skipping the mind reading phase. Simply count backwards from 25 as detailed above. There's no need to maintain a second count.

FINE POINTS: (1) When you instruct the spectators, you must be sure that they understand the restrictions. And yet, you don't want them to feel that there are any restrictions. I generally say, *"I am going to have two people choose cards by cutting the deck at random spots. Mary, Joe is going to need a chunk of cards, so please don't cut too many. Just cut less than half the cards so Joe has a large pack to pick from. Cut about a third. Joe, cut about half the remaining cards."* I also demonstrate for Mary by cutting about a third of the cards and looking at the face card of the cut packet. *Make sure that Mary knows to look at the **face card** of the cut packet and not the top card of the tabled portion.* Don't forget that it's your job to make the procedure clear to the spectators. If they mess up, it's your fault!

(2) Ask the spectator if she likes her card. If not, instruct her to replace the packet and cut again. Emphasize the freedom of the choices.

(3) Before you begin dealing to find the selections, tell the spectators that you will be able to find their selections because they will give off a "vibration." Mentalists call this "psychometry." You may want to set the tone by explaining that some people believe that one's possessions have an aura that identify them with their owner etc. You want the effect to go beyond the "pick a card - find the card" effect even though that, ultimately, is what happens.

(4) After the two spectators cut and replace the packets. I tell one of them to even up the deck and to put the card case on top so that I get no information when I turn around. This negates the thought that you are getting information from marks on the backs of the cards. Be sure that you make it clear that you NEVER look at the faces or backs of ANY card.

DANGER SPOTS: If the first spectator cuts past the 27th card, the effect will fail. If the second spectator fails to cut past the original 27th card (second key card), the effect will fail. Since you are going to turn your back as the spectators cut, you must be certain that they understand what to do. The trick is to get them to perform the correct procedure without making it seem that the trick would fail if they didn't follow directions.

INSURANCE: Because you are way out on a limb after all the buildup, you need a backup system in case one of the spectators fails to execute the directions properly. I always carry an "Invisible Deck" just in case. This way you can bail out and get something strong if things go haywire.

PUSHING THE PLOT: You can add one final dimension to the PM Principle viz. a prediction. There are a couple of ways to handle this. (1) You can set up two Brainwave decks in sequence to match your stack. Thus you would only have to count to the same position as the memorized location numbers. Apparently you predicted the selections before they were made!

(2) I have also used a prediction deck set up in the same order as the stacked deck with an odd colored card on the bottom. The odd card has a piece of double stick tape on its face. It's a simple matter to count to the spectator's selection and then run it under the spread to the bottom. If you then square up, cut the deck and spread, the double stick tape will cause the odd backed card to adhere to the selection and make it seem to have an odd back. This method should be used with a single selection rather than two.

FINAL THOUGHTS: It's important to sell the freedom of the selection and also the normality of the deck. I always use the \$100 challenge described above to "prove" that the deck is "normal." This ploy creates a lot of interest. The spectators might beat the magician out of \$100! It also proves beyond any doubt that the deck is full and seems to be unprepared. (It's a good idea to put a \$100 bill next to the deck to show that you really mean it. Just be sure you check your deck before the show or you may loose the \$100!)

CREDITS: I originally put out the PM Principle as a manuscript with a "bonus sheet" in 1990. It was a three phase mental routine involving a single selection. The bonus sheet detailed many variations, including the double selection. The mathematics involved was explained and there was also a method given for undoing the cut and positioning the selection at a known location. The manuscript is still available. Alex Elmsley's work in this area can be found in "The Collected Works" (1991). Simon Aronson has recently published some interesting work in "Try the Impossible" (2001).

The Card Whisperers

I recently participated in an on-line video conference initiated by Rudy Tinoco, the moderator of www.themagiciansforum.com. Rudy led off the discussion by performing Paul Gordon's "Tears and Screams" from Paul's book, *Quidnunc*. The routine is a variation of John Bannon's "Cries and Whispers" from *Impossibilia* which in turn is a variation of Jerry Sadowitz's "The Whisperers" from *Alternative Card Magic* by Sadowitz and Duffie. All three of these items are object lessons in how blatant discrepancies can "fly by" lay spectators. I am reminded of Richard Wiseman's "The Color Changing Card Trick." If you're unfamiliar with the Wiseman video, you should check out <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3iPrBrGSJM>.

Rudy was seeking help for a move needed at the end of the routine. He turned over a face up triple onto two face down cards, ending with five face down cards. He now needed to immediately pick up a double, as one, and deal it to the table. Making this flow in a natural way wasn't easy. Various members of the session posed ideas. I thought that sharing the various options posed would make an interesting column for the Card Corner. Paul Gordon graciously gave me permission to explain his routine, giving context to the various solutions. So here we go:

EFFECT: Three selections are tabled face down. Each, in turn, is placed face down among four face up jacks. The selections are removed and tabled as the jacks then "whisper" the selection's identity to the magician who announces it to the spectators. The jacks correctly identify all three selections. At the end, the jacks are handed to the spectator as the magician picks up the three selections. The magician snaps his fingers, causing the two packets to change places. The magician now has the jacks and the spectator finds that she is holding the selections!

SET-UP: You need to know the identities of the top three cards of the face down deck. Bannon suggests using the first three cards of a memorized deck. For Stebbins order you could use AC, 4H, 7S. It's best if you can simply remember three random cards. Then there's no set up. See FINAL THOUGHTS for an idea that will simplify this.

PROCEDURE: Openly spread the cards and remove the four jacks, placing them face down on the table in alternating color order. Contrive to position the JC and JD on top of the face down group. Your three memorized cards are at the rear of the face up deck. Let's assume you're using AC, 4H, 7S. Table the deck face down. Now say, "These are the 'whispering jacks' they're going to tell me what cards you select." Pick up the jacks and show their faces. Turn the packet face down in the left hand. Perform a Double Turnover*, flipping the top two cards (JD and JC) face up. Table the squared packet. Time misdirection will cause the spectators to forget that there are face down cards in the

packet! Try it. It works. See FINAL THOUGHTS for a non-discrepant alternative from Allan Ackerman.

Take the deck face down in the left hand and give it an in-the-hands cut as you grab a left 4th finger break over your three-card stack. Riffle Force* to the break as you say, *"Just say 'stop' anywhere. Here? Great. We need three random cards."* Cut the deck at the stop point and deal three cards in a face down row from left to right – AC, 4H, 7S. Pick up the jacks, keeping them squared so the face down cards at positions three and four don't show.

The back to back cards at positions two and three make obtaining a break under the top two (face up) cards easy. Pick up the left-most card of the three selections (AC) and flash its face to the spectators. Insert the card into the break and push it flush. Now Elmsley Count* the packet. On the count of "two" a face down card shows. Pause for a moment and then take the face down card, assumed to be the AC, outjogged onto the packet of three. Say, *"Here's the first selection. The jacks now know its identity."* Place the last jack face up on top. Rotate the face down card from the packet and table it to your right, face down. The card is thought to be the AC but is actually a jack. Bring the jack packet to your ear, being careful not to flash the bottom, reversed card. Say, *"The jacks tell me that your card was the ace of clubs. Right?"* The spectators will confirm that, indeed, the card was the AC.

Repeat this entire sequence using the second selection, the 4H. Table the outjogged card face down on top of the previously tabled card.

STATUS CHECK: One selection remains face down on the table (7S). There are two face down cards thought to be the AC and 4H. However, these two cards are both jacks. You're getting way ahead.

Paul handles the third selection differently, but I thought that a consistent handling i.e. another Elmsley Count would be better. Subsequently, in checking out Allan Ackerman's variation, *"Almost Consistent Cries and Whispers"* from *Las Vegas Kardma*, I found that I had reinvented Allan's idea in this regard. Allan places the last selection (7S) to the *bottom* of the jacks packet and then performs a third Elmsley Count. This time the outjogged, face-down, card is the selection – the 7S. Rotate the 7S from the spread and hold it face down in your right hand as you again raise the jacks packet to your ear. Say, *"Once again they've determined the identity of the selection. This time it's the 7S. Yes?"* The spectators will confirm that the jacks were again correct. Place the 7S face up on top of the jacks.

STATUS CHECK: The packet is now from the top – face up 7S, two face up jacks, two face down jacks.

Here comes another major discrepancy. Buy some time misdirection by saying, *"The jacks are very good at determining the identities of secret selections. But they have another 'super power.' Let me demonstrate."* Flip over the top three face up cards as one. The spectators will assume that you're turning the 7S face down. They will have forgotten about the face up jacks. Try it. It works.

Here's where Rudy's challenge comes: You want to appear to immediately deal the top card to the table. However, you must take the top two cards (jacks), as one, and place the double onto the two already tabled jacks. Rudy's challenge was for us to come up with workable ways of accomplishing this. A deceptive double push-off and double deal is difficult. Several alternative solutions emerged. They were detailed in a post on the forum by Gareth Bell who carefully went through the video record of the session.

The first solution was from Jim Krenz. He suggested using a triple buckle to isolate the top two cards which could then be lifted as one and tabled. This works, but the buckling action seemed to draw attention to itself at a critical moment. With practice this could be a good solution.

I suggested pushing the face up triple forward and then taking it at its outer short edge with right thumb on top and fingers below and then turning it end for end. If the right thumb pulls the 7S inward just as the cards reach the position of **Figure 1**, the 7S ends up slightly injogged so it's an easy matter to push down on the injog with your right thumb and immediately pick up the two jacks, as one, in Biddle Grip, tabling them as a single card.



Robin Dawes suggested a Biddle style turnover during which the thumb at inner edge and 2nd finger at outer edge slide along the short edges allowing you to riffle off the bottom card (7S) and come away with the double.

Andru Luvisi, keying off of Robin's idea, began playing with a way to turn the triple over while causing the bottom card to jog to the side. This would separate the two top cards, allowing for a pick up into Biddle Grip or a two card push off.

I re-entered the fray again with a novel idea: Why not just flip the triple face down and immediately deal the top card to the table. This solves the problem but creates a new problem. You must now secretly get the new top card (the 4th jack) onto the tabled group of three. The Vernon Transfer Move immediately came to mind. I later found that

this is what Sadowitz originally used! Later I thought of two other alternatives: 1) A Gambler's Cop and 2) A Harry Riser move from *The Feints and Temps of Harry Riser* called the "Gambler's Top Cop." It's described on pp. 14-15. The Riser move takes the top card directly into a Gambler's flat palm in the right hand. The card is invisible from all angles and can easily be added on top of a tabled group.

Craig Alan, keying off of Andru's idea, began playing with a different way to turn over the triple while getting the bottom card to jog, separating out the double.

Jim mentioned spreading a bit so you could re-square and catch a break under the top two cards. Andru pointed out that you could openly spread all the cards since you're supposed to have five cards. So spreading and re-squaring was an option. But that still slows the process. The ideal is to flip the triple and immediately deal.

At the end of the day, I felt that the best solution was to deal the single card. This would leave you with three jacks on the table while you held a packet of four cards consisting of a jack followed by the three selection, all face down. You'd now reverse the order and table the cards face up. A jack would show at the face. This makes it feel that the trick is over while also reinforcing the locations of the two packets – jacks on the left face up; selections on the right, face down. You're set for a Vernon Transfer or Gambler's Cop. For the Riser move, you wouldn't reverse the order. The jack would stay on top.

That night I woke up at 3 A.M. with these ideas swirling around in my head. Then a new thought popped up. What about not transferring at all? Just bluff your way to the big ending as follows:

BLUFF SOLUTION: Begin with the jacks in alternating color order, say DCHS face down from the top. After performing the Double Turnover, the packet would be, from the top, JC, JD face up followed by JH, JS face down. After the Elmsley Count, the outjogged card that's tabled would be the JS. The JH will end up on top of it after the second Elmsley Count. After the third Elmsley Count, the outjogged card will be the 7S since it begins on the bottom of the packet. After the three-card turnover, you'll be tabling the JD on top of the other two jacks. So, if the packet is flipped face up, it will be JS, JH, JD. If these three are Elmsley Counted as four (Ellis Stanyon Count), they will appear to be the four jacks! So, the big ending would be this:

Flip the triple face down and deal a single card (JD) to the table. Now reverse count the four cards you're holding. This puts the single JC at the face. Table these face up and recap by saying, *"The jacks are good at determining the identities of the selections and whispering to me. But they have an even cooler 'super power.' Watch this."* Pick up the four-card packet and flip it face down. Reverse count the cards and then make your magical gesture. Flip the packet face up. A selection shows at the face. Now spread the four

cards as three by holding the last two cards as one. The four jacks have suddenly become the three selections! Square the packet and table it face up.

Pick up the three face down jacks and flip the packet face up. Elmsley Count the three jacks as four to verify that the selections have become the jacks. Finally, slide the three jacks under the tabled selection packet as you pick up all seven cards in a group. You can spread them cleanly for a final display.

FINAL THOUGHTS: I hope you have followed along with cards in hand and that you found the description of the brainstorming session educational. Clearly there are many ways to structure the routine and the ending. Right now, I'm partial to the BLUFF SOLUTION, but you may find one of the alternatives to be more to your liking.

Allan Ackerman's "Almost Consistent Cries and Whispers" is an attempt to eradicate the many discrepancies in the original routine. Allan uses Marlo's Switchless Switch at the beginning to avoid the discrepancy of turning two jacks face up and hoping the spectators won't remember that there should be two face down jacks below them.

Eliminating the need to stack known cards on top would make the routine flow better. Ackerman says, *"Secretly memorize the top three cards of the deck."* That's risky for some of us. In the heat of the moment we may forget. Here's an idea in that regard:

Always use the same memorable card as the first card of the three. Then you'll only have to remember two random cards. I do this by noting my "memorable card" which is the KH as I'm removing the jacks. When I spot it, I cut the deck bringing it to 3rd from the bottom. Now, when I'm ready to force three cards, I hold the deck with faces toward me and run three cards into my left hand in an overhand shuffle. I note the first two cards and then look away. At the end of the shuffle, when the deck has been turned face down, the order is first card noted, second card noted, KH. After the Riffle Force I thumb off the cards in a horizontal row from left to right. All I have to remember are the names of the two noted cards. The third card is my KH, the card I always use.



STRAWNOMENON



As a former physics teacher I am well aware of a number of physics demonstrations that look like magic. Newton's Nightmare (the "trick" where a magnet falls slowly through a copper tube), for example, is the standard demonstration of Lenz's Law. And everyone has used a charged comb to pick up bits of paper. Former physics students will have experienced a lab in which the principles of static electricity are discovered. You may recall that a statically charged object (often a rubber or glass rod) will exert a force on a conductor. This is generally demonstrated by charging a plastic rod by rubbing it with an animal fur or equivalent and then holding the rod near a small styrofoam sphere that is coated with a conducting material. The sphere will be attracted to the rod. Once it touches the rod, it will pick up charge from the rod and then be repelled and jump away, to the great amusement of the class. This principle is exploited here to create an impromptu bit of magic that is a lot of fun to perform.

EFFECT: The magician removes a straw from its wrapper and balances it on top of a saltshaker (or capped beer bottle). Just by moving his hands near the straw, the magician causes the straw to move around in mysterious ways.

NEEDED: You'll need a plastic straw still inside its paper wrapper and a salt shaker or beer bottle with a metal cap. (Other items can be substituted for the shaker e.g. a catsup bottle with a metal cap will also work.)

PROCEDURE: This mysterious effect is accomplished without magnets or threads. The principle has been alluded to above viz. *static electricity*. As mentioned above, a charged object (in this case a drinking straw) will be attracted to a conductor of electricity (your finger). All you need to do is create a static charge on the plastic drinking straw and have a surface on which it can rotate freely with low friction.

Charging is easily accomplished. First, tear off one end of the paper, exposing the end of the straw for about half an inch. Now grip the straw between the right thumb and first finger while pinching the paper against the straw using the left thumb and fingers. You must pinch the paper near the exposed section of straw. Apply pressure with your left fingers causing the straw to flatten a bit. Now pull the straw from the paper using your right hand. You want maximum friction so that the charge will be as large as possible.

Now position the straw so that it is held between the right and left first fingertips. Try not to touch the surface of the straw very much since this will remove some of the charge.

Place the center of the straw onto the saltshaker's lid so that the straw is parallel to the tabletop and pull your hands away, leaving the straw balanced on the lid of the shaker. Your hands should move away along the axis of the straw. Otherwise you may attract the straw prematurely and cause it to

POWER PLAYS

rotate and possibly fall off of the shaker. The charge on the straw will cause it to adhere to the metallic lid of the shaker. (see **figure 1**)

Now bring a finger near the side of the straw close to the end. The charged straw will be attracted to your finger and will begin to rotate toward it. Try not to let your finger touch the straw or you will lose part of the charge. Any conductor will also create the attraction e.g. a spoon, knife, a ring etc.

Try positioning a finger from each hand on opposite sides at positions A and B in **figure 2** (top view). This will provide a strong force that will cause a rapid counterclockwise rotation. If you remove your hands quickly, the straw will continue to rotate.

The spectators will suspect that you are blowing on the straw so you should turn your head aside to show that this is not the case.

An interesting way to end the effect is to run the straw through your hands to discharge it and then place it onto the shaker again. This time you do use your breath to make it rotate. Apparently you are still able to cause the movement by “magic.” Now, you can walk away and the spectators will be unable to cause the movement since you have discharged the straw. (N.B. You will have to use a shaker or bottle that has a fairly flat top if you wish to perform this bit with the discharged straw. Otherwise it is likely to fall off since there will not be an attraction between the metal lid and the straw in this case.)

FINAL THOUGHTS: This is a fun impromptu stunt. Give it a try. You might also try charging other plastic objects like swizzle sticks using a small piece of wool, cloth or animal fur. Another fun bit is to use a flat finger ring that can roll on a flat surface. Position the ring on a table or counter top and bring the charged straw near it. The force will cause the ring to begin to roll.

Try not applying friction to the straw until it is half way out of the wrapper. Now you’ll have a straw that’s charged on one end but not the other. This makes for some interesting demonstrations.

CREDITS: There’s an item in Tarbell 7 called “The Electro-Static Cigarette” that uses this principle. Here you charge a swizzle stick by pinching it between the folds of some fabric (your pants etc.) and then pull it through. The charged plastic is capable of causing a cigarette to roll on a flat surface. I believe that Mike Weber used this idea to cause a cigarette that is balanced on the filter end, to fall over due to the attractive force.



Fig. 1

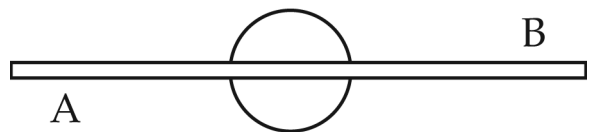


Fig. 2