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My Routine With the Cups and Balls

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The first advantage of this routine is that the effect may come at any point in the program without requiring any action on the magician's part except to pick up the cups and the wand. Heretofore it was necessary for the magician to go to his pocket to get one or more balls to start the routine.

The magician brings the three nested cups forward to the table on which he is to work. He holds them in the left hand mouth down. With the wand, he shows each cup empty and puts the cups in line on the table. From the tip of the wand he produces a ball which he puts under the first cup (the one at his left.) From there the ball travels to the second cup and from there to the third cup. It is then placed on top of the first cup. The second ball is produced from the wand and placed on the second cup. The ball on the first cup is put under the cup. The ball on the second cup is pulled apart to make two balls. One is put on top of the second cup and one on top of the third. The ball on the second cup is put underneath that cup. The ball on the third cup is put underneath that cup. The magician then says that the idea is to remove the balls from the cups.

"It is very easy. All that I have to do is to lift up the cup and take the ball." As he is speaking his action follows his words. He then says, "But I don't mean that way", and replaces the ball under the cup. He then taps the cups with the wand. He begins with cup three, then two, then one. After he has tapped cup one he tips it over toward himself with the wand so that the mouth of the cup faces the audience and is seen to be empty. The same thing is done with the second cup which is also seen to be empty. When the third cup is tipped over all three balls are found underneath. That completes the first phase.

Second phase. The cups are set upright

and one ball is put on the top of each cup. The right hand tips the cup into the open left hand which closes around the ball. A tip with the wand and the ball is vanished. This is done with each of the other cups so that all the balls have vanished. The cups are then lifted to disclose a ball under each cup.

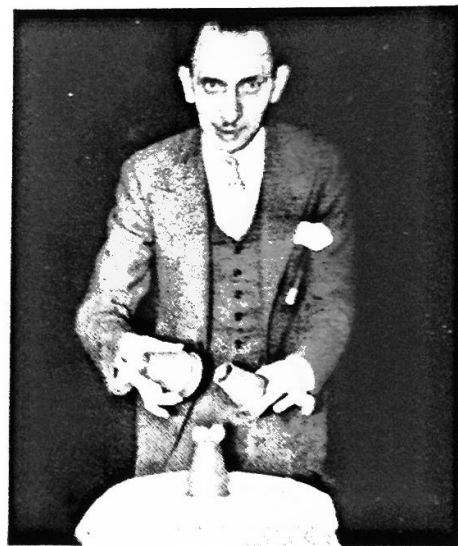
Third phase. The cups are then nested one on top of the other. The second ball is picked up, put in the left hand and it vanishes. The top cup is taken up and put on the table as is the next cup. The ball is discovered on top of the bottom cup. ball is vanished in the same way. Again the cups are nested and another ball is vanished in the same way. Again the top and middle cups are taken off one at a time and the second ball is disclosed along with the first on top of the lowest cup. For the third time the cups are nested. The magician then repeats the move of vanishing the ball and makes a sucker—fake move towards his pocket. Pretending to notice the suspicion of the audience, the magician shows the ball to be in the left hand as he claimed and lifting the top two cups shows that but two balls are on the bottom of the lowest cup. The cups are replaced, the ball vanished, and discovered with the others.

Fourth phase. The cups are again set in a row with one ball in front of each. The balls are then each put under the cup behind it. The wand then taps the cups and tips over the end ones first, from which the balls have vanished, and then the center one under which are found all the balls.

Fifth phase. The cups are then set upright as before. The three balls are put under the center cup. This is the reverse of the previous phase as two of the balls jump back to the end cups.

After this I repeat several of the above phases with variations which make them look quite different to the audience. I feel that it is not necessary to give these variations in detail as once a magician has learned the first five phases he will be in a position also to do the remainder and he would undoubtedly prefer to alter the complete routine to suit his individual tastes. I end the routine in the classic manner by having a potato, a lemon, and an orange appear under the cups instead of the balls.

The effect of the trick is given above. The details of the explanation will be



given in the same order as the description of the effect.

The before performance preparation is to put the three balls in an inverted cup and a second cup nested therein. The fourth ball is put in that cup and the third cup nested. That cup is empty. Turn the nest mouth down.

At the performance the cups are picked up with the left hand and the wand with the right. The magician walks to the table where he is to perform the trick. He rattles the wand in the mouth of the lowest cup—puts the wand under the left one and takes off the top cup in which are loaded the three balls. The set of cups is turned as this cup is taken off so the balls do not roll out. The cup is then placed on the table. Again the wand is taken and rattled in the cup and the wand is replaced under the arm. The top cup is taken with the right hand and the lower cup with the left. The cup in the left hand is set on the table first and doing this move the ball in the other cup is tipped into the right hand. That cup is then put in line with the others on the table.

The wand is then taken from under the arm and transferred to the left hand. The right then plucks the palmed ball from the end of the wand. The wand is replaced under the arm.

The ball is seemingly placed in the left hand and the right tips the first cup forward while the left seemingly puts the ball under the cup. The second cup is

lifted to show nothing under it and, in putting it back, the palmed ball secretly is introduced under it. The magician then announces he will cause the ball to go from the end cup to the center and shows that it has done so. The center cup is tilted with the left hand to show the ball has arrived and the ball is picked up with the right hand. The ball seemingly is returned as before but, this time, under the center cup. The wand is taken with the right hand to mask the palming and the center and third cups are tapped. The center cup is then shown empty and replaced. With the wand still in the right hand, that hand tilts the third cup forward and with the left hand, palm uppermost and with the back of the hand on the table, reaches for the ball under the cup. Of course there are three balls under the cup unknown to the spectators and but one is taken. The ball should be grasped with the tips of the second and third fingers.

The produced ball is then put on top of the first cup. As before a ball (the palmed one) is plucked from the wand, and placed in the second cup. The first ball is then apparently placed under the first cup. The ball on the second cup is picked up with the left hand and seemingly broken in half—actually then showing the palmed ball. One ball is put on top of the second and one on top of the third cup. The ball in the second cup is actually put under the second cup but simulating the motions of those times when it was pretended that a ball was put under a cup. The ball on the third cup is also actually put under the third cup in the same manner. The magician states, "The idea is to remove the balls from under the cups and the simple way to do it is merely to lift a cup and take the ball. That is one way of doing it but I don't like that method." As this is said, the ball is taken out and seemingly returned though actually held in the left hand. The wand is again taken and the cups tapped. He then says, "I mean like this." He then tips the cups over in the order 1-2-3 and all the balls are discovered under the third cup.

Second phase. The cups are replaced and a ball put on top of each and the wand put back under the arm. The fourth ball is still palmed.

The right hand then tips the first cup towards the opened left hand which is held to catch the ball on top of the cup. As the cup is tilted back into place the palmed ball is allowed to roll under the cup. The ball is then tossed back and forth to the right hand. On the back toss it is palmed in the right. The wand is again taken with the right hand and a tap is given to the closed left to make the ball disappear. The wand is replaced under the arm and the same moves are repeated with the second and third cups. The effect is that each ball has been



Left Picture: The method of taking one ball from under the cup, while having the other two hidden.

Right Picture: The way of holding the cups at the start of nesting them. The right hand holds the finger-palmed ball.

caused to vanish while actually each cup has been loaded. The wand is again taken, masking the palmed ball, and with the wand the cups are tipped towards the performer, in the order 1-2-3, disclosing a ball under each.

Third phase. The cups are again stood up and the wand is put back under the arm. Cup number one is taken with the left hand and cup number three with the right and the two cups are nested on the center cup. The cup number three in the right hand is put on first and as it comes down over the middle cup the palmed ball is shot into the cup.

The middle ball is then picked up with the right hand—apparently put in the left—then wand taken and the ball vanishes. The top cup is then taken off the nest with the right hand—the second with the left—disclosing the ball. Again the cups are nested and as before the ball palmed in the right hand is loaded. The same vanish as before is followed with another ball and the cups are taken from the nest to disclose two balls together. Again the cups are nested but this time the cup in the left hand is put down first and the cup (and ball) in the right is put at the top of the nest. Now comes a little subtle by-play. The magician apparently does as before in putting the ball in the left hand though this time he does so and then with the empty right hand goes towards his pocket. Noticing attention of the audience to this move he shows that the ball is still in his left hand and puts it back on the table. Then he shows that there are but two balls in the nest of cups by lifting both top cups together—puts them on the table and shows his hands empty. He then picks up the two cups with the right hand—tilts them so that the ball between runs into the top cup and with the left hand takes out the lower cup. The cup (and ball) in the right hand is put on the lower cup and the cup in the left completes the nest. The exposed ball is then vanished as before. The top cup is taken with the right hand and placed to the

right—the left hand takes the second cup and places it to the left. The three balls are seen to be on the bottom cup.

Fourth phase. The three balls are then tilted into the left (with the move described above) as the palmed ball is loaded under the cup. One ball is then put out in front of each cup; and the hands casually shown empty. The ball in front of cup three is apparently put under that cup. The ball in front of the center cup is then picked up and tossed into the left hand—but with the palmed ball—and both balls are put under the center cup. This move is done so as to look exactly like the move done previously. (There are now three balls under the middle cup). The remaining ball is then apparently put under the first cup. The wand is taken—the cups are tapped and then tipped over with the wand. The end cups are tipped first and shown empty. The middle cup discloses the three balls.

Fifth phase. The cups are again set upright. This is done by taking the two end cups at one time—one in each hand. As the cup in the right hand is turned over the palmed ball is loaded. Then the center cup is set upright. The three balls are now immediately before the center cup.

The first ball is picked up with the right hand, transferred to the left—exactly as has been done before to simulate putting the ball under the cup, but this time it actually is put under. The second ball seemingly follows the procedure but this time the ball is palmed. Now there is a new move. The third ball is actually put in the left hand but when the cup is tilted forward as before and the ball seemingly put under the cup with the rest it is actually retained with the left hand and held with the little finger. (At this point there is a ball palmed in each hand and one under both the second and third cups.) The magician then lifts the two end cups one in each hand. The right hand is raised a fraction more rapidly than the left. This disguises the fact that the ball palmed in the left is dropped behind that cup. The center cup is then lifted to disclose but one ball instead of three.

(Editor's Note. This routine with the Cups and Balls is not only very mystifying and entertaining but because of its subtlety quite easy to do. The success of this trick, as is the case with so many of Sam Horowitz's tricks, depends upon the clever routine rather than difficult manipulation. It is not easy to read these directions for the routine is complicated but the magician who takes the pains to study and to memorize this routine will find that he has a really marvelous trick. Houdini, it will be remembered, said that the test of a magician was how well he did the Cups and Balls. Horowitz really makes a major illusion out of this trick and with his directions other magicians should be able to do the same.)