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Pat Page MRS Workshop

Degersheim, Saturday 25th October 2008
Notes and Annotations by Roberto Giobbi

On the 28th of October 2008, Sven Bolliger (aka Sven Spacey), President of the Magic Circle of Switzerland, booked Patrick Page for a full two-day seminar in Switzerland. It took place in Reto Breitenmoser's amazing Miracle Factory in Degersheim, a secluded village in the north-east part of the country, in the canton where the famous Appenzeller cheese is produced. It's a great event place, houses the library of the Magic Circle of Switzerland (MRS/CMS), as well as a museum of magic, so, if you're ever cast up in that corner of the world, it's worth a visit.

Due to professional commitments, I could only assist at one of the two days, but inviting Pat for dinner the night before near Zurich Airport compensated for this; we had a great session until late at night... I thought that you might be interested in the notes I took at the time. The more experienced among you will recognize some great Pat Page classics, but I'm more than confident, that some of them will be worthy rediscoveries and some of it new - as it was to me when I attended this remarkable and memorable event. Now that Pat Page sadly has passed away, my notes and annotations might not only bring to you some really useful professional tricks, techniques, and presentations, but hopefully a bit of his incomparable personality and insight he had into magic.

Glass from Jacket. A high glass, about half full of liquid, is placed in the right rear trousers pocket. Take off the jacket by getting out of the left sleeve first. When the jacket is brought from behind to the front, the right hand has excellent cover to grab the glass by the rim and lift it out of the pocket as the right arm is taken out and through the right sleeve, turning this sleeve inside out. The glass is produced from the sleeve.

Pat Page says, *"Go for the glass as soon as you start taking off the jacket."* There is, however, a tendency to take out the glass too early and that creates a dangerous angle from the performer's right which has to be protected by turning slightly to the right and saying something to the spectators on your extreme right. Don't turn too much, otherwise you'll flash the glass to those on your extreme left. The best cover is to go for the glass as Page

says, as soon as you start taking off the jacket, but *don't lift it out of the pocket before the jacket has fallen completely over the right arm*. An excellent description of the mechanics, along with a presentation, is described by Barry Richardson in his book *Theatre of the Mind*, p 5, "Ovation Position."

For a cocktail party situation where you are standing in front of the drinks buffet: Page showed how you don't even have to pre-load the glass in the pocket! Stand with your back to the edge of a table on which there is an appropriate glass. Go through the exact same actions of taking off the jacket but grab the glass from the table rather than from the pocket. I've tried this a few times and must say that I'm scared I'll knock the glass over, especially if it is filled with liquid, which really is the only effective way of doing this—there is not much effect in producing an empty glass.

To produce the glass *from a spectator's jacket*, which is a really fantastic idea I didn't know, have the glass tucked down your trousers at the front left, under your belly and just to the right of your left leg, with the rim protruding a few centimeters over the belt; this is effectively covered by your jacket. Take the jacket from the spectator, opening toward you. With your right hand, reach into the right arm of the jacket (the arm to your left if facing the opening of the jacket), and start turning the sleeve inside out. Automatically the jacket will completely cover the right arm and your body. The right hand reaches for the glass and pulls it out through the sleeve.

A very good effect, indeed, but also very fast. Before you know what's happening it's over. Wonder if it wouldn't gain by dramatizing it somehow. The surprise is certainly great, but the audience might think that the glass was somehow up your sleeve or otherwise somewhere in the jacket—and in a sense they would be right. This is why the production from the spectator's jacket is so good. Maybe that should be preceded by having the spectator examine his own jacket, to make sure he has nothing up his sleeve—could be quite funny. If produced from one's own jacket, attention should be drawn to the fact that there is nothing in the jacket. Maybe you could have a spectator search your pockets before doing the production.

Coin Routine. Page does a stand-up one-coin routine, repeatedly vanishing a coin and re-producing it. As a climax, a saucer is produced on which the other hand drops the previously vanished coin. Alternatively, a Jumbo coin could be produced.

The load (saucer, glass, jumbo coin, etc.) is in the right rear trousers pocket. If the pocket is too deep, use a safety pin about halfway down to make it shallower. I think that you could also simply stuff a handkerchief in the lower portion of the pocket. To get to the final load phase, vanish the coin by apparently placing it in your left hand, then open the left hand to reveal the vanish—the coin is now palmed in your right hand. Turn slightly right, lift your right leg and as you do this, the right hand directly and immediately goes to the back pocket for the load, takes it out of the pocket and brings it behind your right thigh. The left hand reaches under the thigh from the front and catches the load that is dropped from the right hand under cover of the thigh. The load is now produced by the left hand apparently from behind your right knee. Drop coin from right hand on the plate to finish.

Continuous Coin Production With Climax. Coins are produced one by one from the left hand, by loading a coin palmed in the right hand as the right hand takes away a coin that has appeared in the left hand. Each time the coin is apparently placed in the right pocket. Eventually the routine is climaxed by producing a larger Chinese coin and then a crumpled-up bill. It is opened and seen to be a larger denomination bill.

Card Manipulations. Page explains that card manips can be done even when doing table to table magic by choosing tables that are next to a wall and then standing with the back to this wall. He showed some effective manips that culminated in the vanish of the deck.

This looked very good, unfortunately I'm missing the details of handling, especially the final deck vanish in two phases (you first ditch half the deck in your left jacket pocket, later the second half).

Complete Coin Vanish. Page attributes this to Malini. Place the coin apparently in your left hand, really retain it in your right hand (thumb palm or fingertip rest). The right hand pulls back the left sleeve, by seizing it near the elbow and pulling back. In this action the right hand comes over the top edge of the left jacket pocket and ditches the coin. It occurs to me that if you put a loosely bunched up handkerchief in the pocket, the edge of the pocket will remain slightly open and facilitate even a toss from a slight distance.

Ace and Jumbo Coin Production. Page says this is an ideal walkaround item. Prepare by having a large coin up your left sleeve. The following actions can be done without the coin falling from the sleeve until you need it. The Aces are on top of the deck. False shuffle and false cut, retaining them. Alternatively palm off the Aces, have a spectator shuffle the balance of the deck, take it back and add the Aces. Show that there is an indifferent card at the bottom of the deck, then Double Cut the top Ace to the bottom. Turn the deck face up lengthwise and show an Ace. Deal it on the spectator's outstretched hand. Repeat, producing the other three Aces. The spectator has now four face-up Aces on his hands. With your right hand give him the balance of the deck, as the left hand falls to your side and catches the coin falling from the sleeve. In case you forgot to load the coin in the sleeve, Page suggests simply reaching into your left jacket pocket to get the coin—this has probably happened to him more than once. As the spectator takes the balance of the deck, you take the Aces and place them fanned on your left hand to cover the coin. Pause a beat and then reveal the coin under the Aces. Maybe you could say, *"With such a good hand I could make a lot of money—and actually I do."*

If you are working without a jacket, get the coin from the left front trousers pocket, or from below belt—if you wear your shirt outside pants, this is well covered.

Ball Drop Vanish. This is a billiard ball manipulator's move and Page does it very well. He also uses it effectively for a coin vanish.

Coin Vanish from Handkerchief. The four corners of a hank are gathered and held by the left hand. A coin or any other small object is dropped into the folds. The object can clearly be seen to drop, its contours being seen and felt. Nonetheless the left hand drops three corners, the hank falls open, and the object is seen to have disappeared.

Page uses a silk made of heavier fabric, non-transparent, of course. Silks used as "pochette" silks to match ties and to put in breast pockets are good—I use this type of silk for practically all tricks requiring a handkerchief, such as "Card Through Hank," "Expansion of Texture," etc. The fold is explained in the source below (Fulves). Briefly: Hold a corner between left first and second fingers. Bring up the diagonally opposite corner and also clip it between these fingers. Then fold up the right and left corners which are held by left thumb and first finger. Pull up these latter two corners about two inches, thus forming a pocket at the bottom of fold. Anything dropped in the front or rear fold will remain inside hank, everything dropped in center (open) fold will fall to the pocket. By slightly adjusting the corners between thumb

and first finger, the object can be made to reach the edge of the pocket from where it can easily be stolen by the right hand that slightly taps against the bottom of the fold.

When subsequently showing the open hank back and front, the object can be dropped from the right finger palm either into the left outside pocket of the jacket or even the breast pocket.

Although this is an old ploy, it is relatively unknown and I've never seen anybody use this except Pat Page, who handled this beautifully. A description can be found in: *Self-Working Table Magic*, p.86, "The MacCarthy Hank Fold" (Karl Fulves, Dover 1981). The idea is attributed to E. Brian MacCarthy. J.W. Sarles describes an excellent application, where one out of four coins is signed. All coins are dropped into the hank, in reality the three coins go into the front fold, the signed in the middle fold. Now only the signed coin penetrates the hank while the other coins remain inside. Sarles suggests using various small objects, but the selected one penetrates the hank and falls into a spectator's hand. Very good idea.

Any card called for. Using a stacked deck, Page has a spectator call a card. He locates it, brings it to the bottom, then asks if the spectator wants it on top, bottom, or center. If center is called, simply do a false cut to show it apparently in the center (hold deck in dealing position, then simply cut packet from bottom in Hindu Shuffle grip and show bottom card). This effect is repeated up to five times.

In the lecture Page was very lucky as he brought the cards first to top and then to bottom and the right location was called each time (his immense experience must have helped). He immediately revealed the card; this timing is the most impressive for this type of effect. If you have to make adjustments, it's only half as good. In my opinion this effect shouldn't be done more than three times, otherwise the audience might suspect that you simply know the location of every card and are somehow able to "control" them. A good false shuffle certainly helps to conceal this obvious solution.

Three Selections Revelation. After false shuffling a stacked deck, ask a spectator to give it several complete cuts and to stop anytime he likes. He shall now place the top three cards one after another into different pockets. Point to each pocket before he inserts the respective card, so you know which card goes into which pocket. For the final pocket, point to his breast pocket or inner left breast pocket. If you're standing next to him there is a good chance that you can catch a glimpse of this last card. You can now divine this card and the other two by stack deduction. If you can't see his third card, you need to glimpse the bottom or top card of the balance.

In any case, this is a great effect that can be given a dramatic presentation. You reveal the card in each pocket, which might even be better than revealing a card merely thought of. The fact that the cards are in the pockets seems to prohibit the performer from having any knowledge of their identities; also, a pocket is a very personal, intimate thing. As a bonus, the spectator cannot play tricks on you since he is asked to take the card from the pocket and show it to everybody as soon as you have announced it. This is an old timer's trick, but very good and, in my opinion, so much better than many modern card tricks.

Calling the Cards. Effect: A spectator cuts off a packet from the top of the stacked deck, shuffles it, and fans the cards before his eyes. You call the cards one by one, the last card has been predicted on a piece of paper.

Method: When he cuts off the packet, glimpse the bottom card of the balance and write down the next card as the prediction. Start calling the cards *after* this one. When he has given you all but one, the remaining card is the one predicted.

Excellent effect. Very deceptive and hard to reconstruct due to the fact that the spectator shuffles the cut-off portion. You can later recall that “you shuffled the cards yourself.” This is linguistically correct; however, the shuffling “of the cards” will be taken to mean that the entire deck has been shuffled. Since you did shuffle, albeit using a false shuffle, the shuffle Gestalt is imbedded in their visual memory, and they have the tactile experience of having shuffled as well. Together with the verbal suggestion this is powerful deception. Recognize the principles and immediately apply them. You’ve learned more than just a good trick; you’ve improved your understanding of magic—that’s what teaching and learning are about.

Out of This World. Page says the original Curry method and handling is the best. He starts by openly separating the reds from the blacks. He gives the reds to a first spectator and the blacks to a second spectator and has them verify that there are 26 each. Then the cards are assembled and apparently shuffled. In reality perform a false shuffle to retain the order of the colors. Page uses a simple false shuffle, by extracting about half the cards from the center and then does a riffle shuffle which mixes just a few in the center. He explains the plot of the experiment by fanning the cards toward him, taking the “wrong” cards out, and placing the red and blacks separated on the table: *“Anybody can separate the colors by looking at the cards and putting them like this on the table. You will do it, but with the cards face down.”* Replace the cards in their respective color halves, maybe false shuffle once more, then proceed as per the classic Curry description. The way of correcting mistakes in a red-black deck is very useful in other tricks and should be remembered.

After initially false shuffling the deck once or twice, the deck can be handed to a spectator for shuffling. If he uses an Overhand Shuffle, he will only mix a few cards. These can be adjusted with the stratagem described above of openly placing the cards on the table to demonstrate. See also Stephen Minch’s *Paul Curry’s Worlds Beyond* for excellent variations in handling, as well as *Best of all Worlds*, edited by Brent Geris.

Stand-up Coins Through Table. Four coins are produced from a “Scottish Purse” (purse frame). Once it is established that four and only four coins are used, throw them into the left hand, but retain one palmed in your right hand. Go beneath table with right hand, click the coin against tabletop on the underside, then come forth showing the coin on the right palm. Turn the hand over and apparently slap it on the table. Really palm the coin—thumb palm is quickest—and Han Ping Chien one from the left hand. The left hand now has two coins, the right hand one coin palmed, and one coin is on table. The right hand takes the tabled coin and goes under table. Simulate a second penetration. Come up, show two coins, slap one on the table and palm the other. The one slapped from right hand joins one Han Ping Chien-ed from left hand. Page points out that the coins should ideally overlap, thus implicitly proving that they both come from the right hand. Proceed in the same way with the third and fourth coins.

The Han Ping Chien is performed with the left hand in the air, not on the table, the coin being released from the left hand as it moves to the left and the right hand has already started slapping the coins on the table. The coin secretly released by the left hand will be caught in mid-air by the right hand.

The weakness of this method is that the same sleight is repeated four times. If you miss or hesitate just once, they will reconstruct the whole trick.

Repeat Stand-up Coins Through Table. Page repeated the effect at a faster pace. Really place the four coins in the left hand and go under the table with the empty right hand. Knock on the tabletop, then come up with right hand and slap it on the table, Han Ping Chien re-

leasing a coin from the left hand as you do so - it looks as if the right hand had slapped the coin down which has just penetrated the table. Repeat twice. For the last coin the right hand goes under the table with three coins. Pause. Show that there is still one coin your left hand. Then slap two coins from right hand on table, palming one coin, as the one coin from the left is secretly released (Han Ping Chien). Take the three visible coins along with the palmed coin under the table and let the fourth coin penetrate.

Change of Four Silver Coins to Four Copper Coins in Glass. Four copper coins are finger palmed in right hand. Pick up the four silver coins and apparently throw them into an opaque glass. In reality thumb palm the silver coins and release the copper coins. Shake coins in glass, and then spill on table, showing transformation.

Four Coin Vanish. Page threw four coins one after the other into his left hand. As he pretended to throw the last coin, the other three coins were imperceptibly thrown back into the right hand. He then showed his left hand empty - the coins had apparently gone. This looked very convincing.

To do it, the coins are held in a stack in the right hand which then turns *back up*. The coins are now slid forward with the right thumb one by one and gently thrown into the left hand at a steady rhythm. Both hands are moved down as the coin is thrown and caught, and then lightly and naturally move upward as the right thumb pushes off the next coin to be thrown. The fourth coin is actually not thrown, but the same movement Gestalt is perceived. What really happens is that the three coins already thrown, are thrown back to join the fourth coin in the right hand. The movement, however, looks exactly the same, and the sound of the three coins hitting the last coin sounds exactly the same as if the fourth coin had been thrown and hit the three coins already in the left hand. The rhythm and the sound are what make the thing work—and a bit of practice ...

Look up as you throw the last coin, asking an obscuring question: “*How many coins?*” This is very convincing if done with a “soft” touch and with the hands not too far apart; the distance doesn’t matter, just the conviction that the coins all go into your left hand.

Cards of Coincidence. This is a classic in Pat Page’s repertoire and an excellent impromptu card trick that can be performed stand-up before a larger group but is also very good for more intimate settings.

Have several pairs of cards on top of deck, e.g., 7H/7D, QS/QC, etc. Hand a spectator the bottom half of the deck, and then you both shuffle your packets. You false shuffle your packet, retaining the top stock. Hand the spectator the top card of your packet and take the top card of his packet, placing each card on top of your respective packets. Then both turn the top card face up to reveal a matching pair (you do a Double Lift, of course). Place the cards on the bottom and repeat a few times. Page then palms a few cards from the top of his packet and offers to exchange packets. Repeat again once or twice.

As a right-handed person holding the cards in your left hand, turn your right side toward the audience asking your assisting spectator to stand on your left. In order to better protect the break, you need to hold under the top two cards, keep the packet slanted at about 45 degrees toward the floor. This will also better display the face of the card when you turn over the double card. *Make sure everybody can see the cards, especially those sitting on the sides, by briefly bringing the cards held in dealing position into a vertical position and turning the body from left to right!* Page sometimes neglected to do that and the break occasionally flashed. I thought this was an important lesson: regardless of how experienced we get, and

how often we have done a trick, we should respect the trick as if it's the first time we're doing it. Try to never become negligent and always remain attentive. Nonchalance and self-confidence are important characteristics of a performer and only come after many years of intelligent practice and conscientious analysis, but this doesn't relieve us from paying special attention to our technique at all times.

As you can certainly recognize, there is so much more one can learn from a really good lecturer than just tricks, techniques, and a few gags. Unfortunately, too many modern-day lecturers need to work at far too low fees, something which forces them to do tricks where they can sell afterward. However, what is really important in magic cannot be sold or bought; it has to be acquired through thinking and practice.

Sucker Card Routine. This is a very nice stand-up routine and should catch the attention of any performing magician. It can be done in almost any situation with a borrowed deck and I know many not familiar with it will immediately add this to their repertoire.

Have a card selected and control it to the top. Say that you are going to find it. Look through deck, glimpsing top card and take a card that is the same suit and close in value. If the spectator has taken for instance, a Jack of Hearts, take the Ten of Hearts (or Nine of Hearts).

Hold deck in left hand with selection on top, and hold the Ten of Hearts in right hand, but don't show it to him until the very end. State: "*Your card was a red card.*" Make this a statement, not a question. When he acknowledges this, show the card to all *except the spectator* and say: "*And this is a red card.*" State: "*Your card was not a diamond card.*" When he acknowledges, show again to all others saying: "*And this is **not** a diamond card.*" Continue like this a few times, making statements that apply to his selection as well as to the wrong card you're showing. *Everybody will think that you've got his card.* Before asking the last question, Top Change the Ten of Hearts for the Jack of Hearts on top of the deck. Then ask for the name of the card. When the spectator unexpectedly says "Jack of Hearts," show it to really be the Jack of Hearts, to the surprise of everyone.

Tamariz showed this to me many years ago and has numerous touches. I think that at the end, when the spectator has named the Jack of Hearts and everybody except the spectator knows you've got the wrong card, that card should first be shown to the spectator who will then (we hope) react because you've located and divined his card correctly. The audience will wonder why he's reacting to the wrong card. Pause and look into the audience. Then show it to all, saying something like, "*and of course this is the Jack of Hearts.*" Now you'll have a reaction from the audience, and the spectator will sense that there is something he didn't get as the audience's reaction is so strong and spontaneous. This is a multiple effect and it takes place on a visual as well as a psychological level, something which gives this trick a very solid structure. Excellent!

Bottom Change. Page demonstrated a Bottom Change he does impeccably, with great timing. As a parlor and stage technique it is invisible (I wasn't close enough to judge it close-up). In a short transposition routine he stuck the card back outward to his forehead, bringing the trick to a vertical plane and making it visible for larger groups. Before sticking the card to the forehead, lick the card imperceptibly, otherwise it might not stick.

This is practically the same as the "De Kolta Change" from the Vernon section in Hugar and Braue's *Expert Card Technique* (third edition 1950). In the Hugar description there are great subtleties of handling. One thing that doesn't come out there, though, and that Page mentioned, is to shift the left first finger from the outer end of the deck to the side near the outer right corner, so all four fingers of the left hand are next to each other. Now proceed as

described. That's a great sleight and I had the good fortune of seeing Dai Vernon in person demonstrate this in Munich in 1981 to a room full of magicians and nobody had a clue what he was doing. It's hard to believe when you merely read the description.

Robert Harbin Card in Balloon. Force a card, e.g., the King of Hearts, and have it signed down the side on its face. Control it to the top. Go near the balloon and gently riffle the deck, whereupon the balloon bursts and a signed King of Hearts appears. This is of course a duplicate with a bogus signature down the side. Immediately take it and as you go to the spectator who originally chose and signed the card, Top Change it for the real King of Hearts. Hand it to spectator for confirmation and souvenir.

Excellent, especially the underlying principle which can be used in many ways. The duplicate card can really appear anywhere and then be switched. See a clever application of this principles by Guy Hollingworth in his book (much later than Harbin).

Old Moore's Diary. This was a commercial item Page sold and is still available. The spectator thinks of his birthday. He deals cards from the deck to the table corresponding to the month and day of his birthday. He looks up his birthday and it is the same card as the last card dealt.

There are many variations of this plot. I can confirm from my personal experience that this is a strong and memorable trick. For years now I've been using the Ted Danson method from Peter Warlock's *New Pentagram* magazine that uses just one normal shuffled deck and one agenda. Nothing can beat this for practicality and normal professional use, although there are some superior versions around which are good for a special occasion but, in my opinion, not for everyday use, since they use several set-up and/or special decks and/or several diaries.

Thimble Manipulations. Page showed several manipulations with one and several thimbles, all very well done and deceptive.

To vanish one thimble that is apparently placed from the right first finger into the left hand, finger is taken out of left hand with thimble still on finger, but at an angle so thimble cannot be seen—there is a retention of vision quality to this. The thimble is thumb palmed *a little later*, when right first finger is out of the hand (rather than palming it on the way to the left hand or behind the cover of the closing left fingers, as is usually done). This is very good and eliminates unnecessary finger movement in a crucial moment.

He then vanished four thimbles, which he had on each finger of the right hand, by placing one after the other in his left hand. It looked very good, but I forget the details. I'm sure it is in one of his publications or tapes.

Most vanishes can also be done by apparently placing the thimbles in a handkerchief held by the left hand. That looked good, too.

Continuous Coin Production. Page demonstrated and explained the Jack Chanin silk and coin production. The simplest version is with two coins that are continuously placed in the pocket, palmed out, and reproduced.

Alternatively, have two coins in each hand, put hank over one hand, push up coin, take with other hand through the material and reverse hands to reveal first coin. Continue like this producing all four coins.

Page mentioned that this reminded him of something and he would be showing it the next

day. As I couldn't attend, I don't know what he did, but think that it might have been the Al Koran routine "Hanky Panky" from Lewis Ganson's *Routined Manipulation Finale*, also see Bruce Cervon's take in his book *Ultra Cervon* (p.97). Even though cigarettes and lighters might become unfashionable soon, these props can easily be replaced by others that make sense.

Silk to Purse. A silk vanishes from the hand (thumbtip) and reappears in the purse held by the spectator. At the beginning all the props including the gimmick are in the purse. This is a very practical and good effect, especially for table and walk-around magic.

Some Publications by Patrick Page:

Pat Page's family have continued his magic business and are reprinting his older booklets, lecture notes etc.

Books & Notes:

Pages from Patrick's Notebook, Martin Breese International, London 1990.

The Big Book of Magic, London, for the public, available on second-hand platforms (e.g., bookfinder.com)

The Page Boy Speaks Again, a compilation of his columns "The Page Boy Speaks" from the British magazine *PABULAR*.

Page by Page, edited by Matthew Field - visit patrickpagemagic.co.uk on the Internet for more details.

Audios/CDs:

Patrick Page Audio Archive. Recommended!

From the End of my Cigar. Interview with Dai Vernon Part 1 & Part 2 (2 CDs) on the occasion of the Ramsay reunion in 1971, Birmingham.

Videos/DVDs:

Trick-a-Tape series, now on DVD and obtainable through L&L Publishing.