

Shell Game

A Monthly Newsletter for the London Magic Community
May 2014
Volume 9, Issue 9

April's meeting

"On the road again ..." April's meeting was roadtrip to Kitchener to join about 30 people from the Kitchener and Hamilton magic clubs for a special joint lecture by the *MVP winner* at this year's *FFFF convention* – **Michael Durdant!**

To start things off, Michael showed us one of his competition routines, including his "*Anti-Gravity Ring*" – an amazing display of dexterity. He also produced a fork from a hanky and then bent it with his mind. He introduced his sponge-ball friends "*Dis and Dat*" for a sponge ball routine, and produced and used all sorts of items like an expanding fork, 3D glasses, bottles of whisky, and a huge ball bearing produced from his hat! Amazing stuff!

Then Michael changed to the lecture part of the night. First up was "*Forced Imagination*", where some unexpected mixed-up cards were placed in a box and the spectator thought of a card. Out of the box came the cards all facing the same way except the selection! The cards were placed in the box and the box became invisible! Another spectator was then asked to leave while a card was selected from the invisible cards. The spectator came back to the room and was shown the invisible cards, and announces one of them – the same card selected while he was outside the room!

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, May 14

Time: 7:30 PM

Topic: MOVIE / TV NIGHT!

**Beal Secondary School
525 Dundas Street, London
T-253**

Michael then handed out some rubber bands and showed us how to do "Ninja Bands" – where the rubber band links itself onto all your fingers in a flash!

Next was "TOXC Twenty" – A Canadian dollar bill is offered and a picture taken by a spectator's smartphone – then the bill was changed for a US bill! A second spectator multiplied 3 random numbers into a calculator and the result was the same as the serial number on the picture of the original Canadian bill! Finally the picture was sent to Michael's smartphone, where it appeared and he was able to slide it off the screen into his hand!

He showed us "Ring in Pen Cap", where a finger ring is found inside the cap of a pen. And he ended the night with "The Power of 3", where a deck of cards was divided amongst 4 spectators, who shuffled and shared cards between themselves, only to find the top card of each pile was a three – and all the other cards were Jokers!

It was terrific lecture, using Michael used familiar concepts in new and interesting ways. Well worth the drive to Kitchener!

Mark Hogan

May's Meeting

DATE: Wednesday, May 14
TIME: 7:30 PM
PLACE: Beal Secondary School
T-253

TOPIC: MOVIE / TV NIGHT!

Hooray for Hollywood! This month we'll use entertainment to do some entertainment! People love effects that feature TV shows, movies, celebrities, etc. If you have one, bring it in – we'd love to see it.

And if this doesn't cut it ... bring in any of your favorite magic DVD's you have (ones that teach effects, or perhaps some magic shows) – we'll have a laptop and play some of them.

Hope to see you on the red carpet (Is there a red carpet at Beal anywhere?)

We Want Your Reviews and Tricks!
Please send any original reviews, magic tricks or routines to:
magic_london@yahoo.ca

News Of Interest

Casinos tell King of Cards to pack up and leave

(Express.co.uk)

ACE magician **David Redfearn** is a master with a pack of cards - but he had not gambled on being banned from almost every casino in the world.

The entertainer, who has performed for royalty and rock stars, now finds himself blackballed at poker and roulette tables from London to Las Vegas. And he says it is all because gambling bosses fear he might use his spellbinding skills to go on a winning streak or spring an *Oceans Eleven*-style heist.

Redfearn says he is refused entry to all of London's 40 casinos, including the *Rendezvous* in Park Lane which sent him a letter saying: "I am sorry to inform you the membership committee has decided that your membership is to be withdrawn.

"This means, with immediate effect, you will no longer be able to use the facilities either as a member or as a guest of another member."

The 48-year-old, who is in the exclusive *Inner Magic Circle*, says he is getting used to such rejections. He was taken aside after performing a sell-out show at the Bellagio casino in Las Vegas and told to "forget it" if he fancied a flutter.

Redfearn said: "These days I can't get anywhere near a roulette table. My magic is so strong they are totally spooked by it.

"I was offered a place in a poker tournament and was beyond excited to be playing for £250,000. Then I received a call saying the sponsors had looked me up on the internet and were worried I would cheat, so I was thrown out.

"Presumably I should also be banned from every newsagent in the land in case I pick the winning Lottery numbers every Saturday." Framed photographs of Redfearn with royals such as *Prince Harry*, *Princess Anne* and *Prince Philip*, and stars including *Michael Jackson*, *Eric Clapton*, *Sting* and *Raquel Welch*, hang on casino walls across the world.

But Redfearn, a former fireman who has been a professional magician for 25 years, complains he can not even get a bite to eat in gambling venues.

He said: "I was having a meal with a friend in a Park Lane casino recently when a man walked up to our table and asked us to leave.

"I wasn't even gambling, so I asked the manager if he would recoup my friend's

losses.

"He wanted me out the door so badly he reached into his pocket, pulled out £50 and told us to leave. We were escorted from the premises.

"I suppose I should take it as a compliment to my skills as a magician, but everywhere I go I'm a marked man."



Worst thing that ever happened to me in a show

(by Steve Seguin)

Last night I emceed a variety show. I decided to open with a variation of Shoe Business without the audio track. If you don't know the routine, you borrow someone's shoe and explain how to do the "water in the shoe" gag. You show everyone that you've got a clear cup that you slip into the shoe when no one is looking, and then pour a bunch of water into the cup inside the shoe. As you demonstrate this, you realize you "forgot" to put the cup in the shoe. After some comic by-play, you put the empty cup inside the shoe and immediately pull it out filled with water – a great little magic effect.

The trick is done with a cup with an insert. You put the cup in the shoe and then take out the insert which has a hole in the bottom. The audience thinks it is the cup. You pour the liquid into the cup that is still in the shoe. To reveal it, you put the insert into the shoe, slipping it onto the glass of water, and pull it out, filled.

So back to last night...

I get a kid in the audience to give me his Dad's shoe. I go through the business of showing them how to sneak the cup into the shoe, then take the insert out and put it on the table. I pour the liquid into the hidden cup in the shoe and set the glass down on the table. As per the gag, I realize I "forgot" to leave the cup in the shoe, and I pick it up to emphasize the gag.

At that point I realized that the cup I'm holding has a bottom.

I look down into the shoe and see a cup with no bottom and a whole lot of water with red food colouring sloshing around inside this guy's shoe.

I'll pause here for a second, because words cannot adequately describe what it looks like under stage lights to see a whole lot of water sloshing around inside of someone else's shoe.

At this point the routine calls for acting like everything went wrong. This was particularly easy.

Now I'm thinking frantically. I decide that rather than ruin the effect for the entire audience, I'll just pretend this is what was supposed to happen and then ruin the effect for the one guy later.

So I put the cup back into the shoe to reload the insert, take it back out empty, and then pour the water out of the shoe into the cup. A couple more jokes, and then I introduce the first act (Tim Drake) and walk off stage with the guy's shoe.

Now I'm off-stage with a wet shoe. The corner of backstage I'm in is just bare space with no exits, and no way for me to get across to the other side (there is no backdrop or anything). I've got 30 minutes while Tim is on to figure out what to do.

I've only got the clothes that I am wearing and a silk small enough to fit in a thumb tip. No other material to work with.

The only thing going in my favour is that it wasn't actually a shoe it was a thinsulated snow boot. The inside was wet, but it didn't seem to have absorbed into the interior of the boot. Also, it didn't seem discoloured from the dye.

I used my socks and the little silk to sponge the water out.

Thirty minutes of pushing my socks into the boot and then ringing them out.

Also blowing occasionally into the boot, as if I could somehow dry it with my mouth.

I got it as dry as I could and then put it on to test it out. It felt like a typical winter boot that you've worn outside in the snow – vaguely damp and sweaty. Of course my sock was soaking wet so I wasn't the best judge.

Now I needed to figure out how to make it look like my exiting with the shoe was planned.

When Tim finished his set, I walked back on wearing one of my shoes and this guy's boot. I brought the guy's kid back on stage and did the rocket balloon pitch. See, the organizer of the show sells rocket balloons at intermission and the emcee has to demonstrate one in a humorous fashion in order to make sure they sell. I do some gags with the kid and then blow up the rocket balloon.

Side note to the story: As I try to blow up the rocket balloon, I realize there is a hole in the end, and the air is just coming out.

You know how when you are performing there are moments where time stops and you think through all the possibilities about what to do all in a split second? Since I didn't have a second rocket balloon on me, I realized I would have to either go off stage and get another one from the sales table at the back of the auditorium which would kill momentum, or I would have to just stop the pitch. Either of which would have sent the message that the balloons were crap and no one would buy one.

So I pinched the end of the balloon as I blew, and it inflated. I let go of the balloon, and it shot off loudly like it was supposed to. I watched in fascination as it hung in the air deflating from both sides instead of just the one it was supposed to.

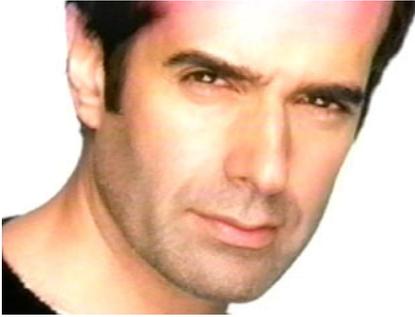
Back to the shoe: I turned back to the kid and said since his balloon flew away, I'd give him a consolation prize – his Dad's shoe. He took the shoe and walked off.

My chair routine was next so I immediately went out into the audience to get my four volunteers. Because of the storm, I didn't have a lot of people in the audience to pick from. I couldn't find a fourth suitable guy so I was forced to make my way over to wear the guy with the wet shoe was.

I looked at him to see if he had noticed his shoe was wet and was pissed off. He didn't seem to be. So to add insult to injury, I picked him for the chair routine. I brought him up on stage and led him through the circus salute, watching him the entire time to see if he was going to say anything.

The routine ended. Intermission started. I ducked back into the audience and thanked him for helping me out, again waiting for him to have noticed that I really poured red dyed water into his boot. He smiled, said he was having fun, and we chatted for a bit before I went back stage. I checked with the organizer and he sold his entire supply of rocket balloons.

I didn't mention it to anyone backstage; I just kept going as if nothing happened. But, man, that was a huge bullet that I dodged.



David Copperfield assistants sue over wage dispute

(Yahoo News)

Attorneys for magician **David Copperfield** and several current and former Las Vegas stagehands said Friday they're in talks to make lawsuits they've traded in a backstage dispute

disappear.

A Feb. 15 federal wage-abuse lawsuit filed by seven stagehands alleges that over the past three years the veteran Las Vegas illusionist sometimes made them work 14 hours a day and seven days a week without paying overtime.

A Jan. 3 state court lawsuit lodged by Copperfield business entities *Backstage Employment and Referral Inc.*, *David Copperfield's Disappearing Inc.* and *Imagine Nation Company Inc.* accuses six stagehands of breach of contract, conspiracy and disclosure of trade secrets.

Jakub Medrala represents stagehands in both cases, including three who are named in each: **Jaruslaw Jastrzebski**, **Zachary England** and **Robert Smith**.

Medrala and Copperfield attorney **Greg Kamer** said they were in talks about settling the cases. Each declined additional comment.

Medrala alleges that Copperfield and Backstage Employment and Referral Inc. pressed the January contract complaint in Clark County District Court to try to deter his clients from pressing their wage complaint and filing their February civil lawsuit in U.S. District Court.

Kamer issued a statement to the Las Vegas Review-Journal for a Friday report (<http://bit.ly/OiqDxY>) saying that Copperfield does the right thing for his employees.

The stagehands' federal complaint said they were "constantly reminded" that they were bound by secrecy agreements prohibiting them from discussing

the conditions of their employment with others, and that any dissent would be punished.

"As a result of this coercive system, throughout the years the defendants were able to exploit their employees while earning tens of millions of dollars from their labor," the civil lawsuit said.

Another Copperfield lawyer, **Philip Varricchio**, called the federal lawsuit "smoke and mirrors."

He said it aimed to divert attention from employees "systematically" revealing Copperfield trade secrets and intellectual property.

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Concept by: Steve Seguin

The Shell Game is a free newsletter sent to members of the London Magicians Guild and other people in the community interested in magic.

Opinions expressed do not reflect the views of the London Magicians Guild.

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