

Ten Card Poker Deal - Bent Corner Scam

I have been playing with the Ten Card Poker Deal for informal performances lately. It has an appealing plot for casual settings because once you fully understand the Jonah card concept, it opens up the trick to have plenty of improvisation. I particularly enjoy encouraging and responding to a participant's challenges to apparently increase the fairness of each round. With the right energy, this turns the trick into a real *happening* as you and your opponent fight it out in a game that you'll clearly always win. When performed this way, it becomes less of a magic trick and more of a magical bar bet, which I particularly enjoy.

But, even with the liveliest of participants, routines like this need pacing and variation to remain interesting. Darwin Ortiz, for example, would increase the fairness of the routine with each stage and Harry Lorayne would start getting more and more shouty with each phase, ending only when at least one audience member got diagnosed with tinnitus.

For my build, I try to give my opponent a seemingly better edge by doing more and more interesting things. I might do one phase with the cards face up, or have someone cover my eyes while I choose my cards ... basically anything that adds to the fairness and makes the moment interesting. Every situation is different and I go into the trick embracing that. I have a series of phases rehearsed, and then improvise around them, changing them to meet the situation. Here's one of them ... it's a phase that you can use within any Ten Card Poker Deal routine that makes use of a Jonah Card (a card that automatically makes the hand lose). I have adapted the classic bent corner ploy ("the lug," as Erdnase referred to it) used in Three Card Monte routines and adapted it to the Ten Card Poker Deal.

In effect, you bend the corner of the three Aces and shuffle them into the packet. Then, the participant is allowed to select their cards, which of course, will be the three bent cards (Aces) and two other random cards. There's no way they can lose ... but they still do!

The method is really easy. I'll break it down into steps:

1. Collect up the ten cards and cut the Jonah card to the face.
2. Spread through the cards, remove the three Aces (or the highest-value cards in your stack) and place them on the face, catching a break beneath the Jonah card.
3. Pick up all four cards and openly bend the upper right corner of the packet upwards a little. Explain that this way, the participant gets to identify the three Aces and will easily be able to pick them.
4. Holding the bent packet in your right hand, turn the remainder of the packet face down, then flip the four-card packet face-down on top.
5. Spread off the top three face-down cards (the Jonah and two Aces) and drop them face down onto the table. Casually place your thumb on top of the bend on the top card of the packet (the switched-out Ace) to conceal it.
6. Spread the packet between your hands, casually unbending the corner of the top card as you do so. (I wish I could give you the best handling or timing here, but it's different every

time based on the audience and the situation, but all I can say is that it's a tiny little move as you spread the cards and should never be exaggerated).

7. Insert the three tabled face-down cards into various places in the packet and give it a loose overhand shuffle so that the three bent cards are randomly distributed. You can freely shuffle the cards but must keep track of the top Ace (I simply shuffle it to the face and then back to the top).

8. Now allow the participant to pick their first card — they, of course, select one of the three bent Aces.

9. Then, you take your turn and give yourself the top Ace. Continue alternating, allowing the participant to pick a card and then pick any non-bent one yourself. The participant will think they got three Aces and two random cards. Actually, they get two Aces, the Jonah card, and two other cards and because they received the Jonah card (they have to take it — it's bent!), you'll always win.

The only goal is that the participant must pick all three of the bent cards (because one of them is the Jonah). Technically, they can select the Ace that you unbent too, but I like to give the impression that I stole it from them which is why I like to take the Ace. The part of the method that makes me smile is that you don't need to force the Jonah because the participant will automatically select it.