

THE HULL HANDBELLS PROJECT

Promoting double-handed change ringing throughout the East Yorkshire region.

Newsletter Number 89, March 1st, 2024.

A full list of Project performances for 2024 is on Bellboard at:

<https://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/event.php?id=18198>

Beverley and District Ringing Society

Kingston upon Hull

33 Westbourne Avenue

Tuesday, 6th February, 2024 (13 in E)

1260 Plain Bob Minor:

720 & 540

1–2 Christine M Church

3–4 Peter Church

5–6 Karen A Lane (C)

Kingston upon Hull

33 Westbourne Avenue

Tuesday, 6th February, 2024 (15 in C)

1264 Plain Bob Major:

1–2 Heather LE Peachey

3–4 Neil Turner

5–6 Barry F Peachey

7-8 Christopher LD Munday (C)

First Major inside on handbells: 5-6.

Market Weighton

26 Sancton Road

Monday, 12th February, 2024 (13 in E)

1320 Kent Treble Bob Minor:

600 & 720

1–2 Neil Turner

3–4 Karen A Lane

5–6 Peter Church (C)

First TB inside: 3–4

Out and about

The Hull Handbells meetings in the school half term week had some challenges. We started with a Quarter of Kent where Karen Lane rang an inside pair to Treble Bob Method for the first time. That was followed by a jam session including Norwich Surprise Minor and a range of interesting Plain methods.

The following day's meeting at Kirk Ella was focused around Kent Treble Bob Royal and Bristol Surprise Major.

The Friday session saw courses of Kent TB Major, Duffield, St Clement's College Bob Major, Reverse Bob Major, Double Bob Major, and Spliced Plain and Little Bob Major.

The Learning Curve

How do you . . .

The question "How do you ring this stuff" comes up quite often as we tackle various methods such as those mentioned above. The answer is usually quite personal, a bit of blue line here, grid there, coursing order and place notation might be part of it. But when you reach performance level the pieces of applied skill are so integrated you can no longer tease them apart.

What is clear is that over-reliance on any one single technique makes a ringer inflexible and fairly slow to adapt to new methods.

There are a couple of superb (Bill Jackson) articles from the Ringing World worth a revisit:

http://www.pchurch.org.uk/ringing/06_appendix/downloads/1r.08.01_rw_2007_pp536-7.pdf

http://www.pchurch.org.uk/ringing/06_appendix/downloads/1r.08.02_rw_2007_pp560-1.pdf

Wading through treacle

Getting stuck trying to do something hard can be really, really depressing, we all like the dopamine hit from conquering a new method, but the fix can be hard to obtain. Here's the notes that I penned after one e-mail:

"Do persevere with Norwich, it's an important step.

Norwich is worth ringing as a step up from Kent and Oxford, but there are intermediate steps which might be valuable, Duke of Norfolk TB, Morning Star TB for example.

*So you are not only learning a new, complex method, you are **also learning-how-to-learn** new complex methods.*

Double blue lines are a tower bell ringer's

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normal way to get started, and there's nothing wrong with that apart from being a bit limiting in the longer term as every pair for every method needs memorising time. Developing other skills can be a slower start but quicker, and more fun in the long run. The technique(s) of track the treble, treble defines the places, the places define the dodging and hunting, is a skill set that pays dividends.

Studying the grid, analysing how the bells work together, seeing where the coursing order is preserved or not, are all also useful.

And as ever with bell ringing, it's important to get to be able to ring a course on all the pairs, but try not to get stuck at the base level, add a little bit of knowledge in on a regular basis, implement a strategy for overcoming trips, and practice, practice, practice.

1,000 courses, eh wot?

Westminster Surprise, Norwich Surprise and Bourne Surprise all extend to Major and Royal and that's a recognised alternative development route (alternative to Cambridge, Superlative and Yorkshire).

I can't count to ten

That statement was made at a recent handbells practice, by a very competent handbell ringer. It's a blanket statement that needs a bit of picking apart. What's really being said is "when we ring on 10, I have difficulty listening to the bells and knowing exactly which place every bell is ringing in, especially 5ths-6ths-7ths-8ths.

The open handstroke lead gives a reasonably marker for the first few bells in a change-row, as it does for those bells near the end of the change row. It's the places more deeply embedded that cause trouble. (And the "wafting around" much worse on 12).

Because the rhythm is more finely tuned with bells packed closer together, there's a tendency to use course bells for guidance, which is fine when linked with internal spacing (1 for coursing pair, 3 apart for 3-4 etc) and when the band is confident, but the slightest

hesitation makes for difficulties.

What can we do to improve?

Just ringing a lot helps. It helps build the neural pathways in the brain which means better concentration and more spare brain power for other thoughts.

For a lot of the ringing we do (Treble dodging), thinking of the places in pairs can be helpful.

http://www.pchurch.org.uk/ringing/01_meth od_ringing/04.02_counting.html

To improve counting skills, try using emphasised counting when you are ringing something you know you can ring.

Or let Abel provide the ringing, and see if you can count every bell but emphasising your pair, for a lead, then a course, then a touch, then . . .

Simon Humphrey's viewpoint:

*Casting my mind back to when I was practising on thumbs for my first peal of surprise in hand, pre-motion-controllers (the predecessor of e-bells), I remember counting places explicitly as per Bill Jackson's approach "one two three **four** five six **seven** eight nine ten".*

Whilst I can count consciously on the lower numbers, on ten or twelve I have to let the sub-conscious do the work on higher numbers at handbell speeds.

Sam Austin:

I start slowly by learning the detail, and making sure that I get it right, I avoid repeatedly making and hence assimilating mistakes.

Robert B Smith:

"There's no silver bullet, you just have to put the work in, learn as much as you can, and practice, practice, practice".

Peter Church

1st March 2024.