**Ringing Up and Down in Peal**

AIM OF COURSE

To get students comfortable with raising and/or lowering bells in peal, and to understand how ringing in peal requires a slightly different approach to ringing a single bell up or down.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Tower with adequate sound control

Up to 6 students

Tutor plus six helpers (but could work with 5)

Facilities for refreshments.

Ideally, but not vital, white board and pens

SYLLABUS

***10:00 Introductions and Admin:***

Tutors and helpers introducing themselves, and each student to do the same, but indicating level of expertise in ringing up and down.

Outlining the day.

Allocating a helper to each student.

Dividing students into two groups, in order to allow each student to concentrate on up or down for each half day. Each student will become and ‘upper’ or a ‘downer’ for half a day.

***10:15 Theory :***

 The three key points in a raise or lower.

 Important messages :

***10:45 Practical 1 :***

Uppers (all) to practice chiming in rounds.

***11:00 Practical 2 :***

Each Upper following a helper (ie just two bells) for a raise.

Each Downer to watch the raise and be advised by his or her helper about what is happening.

***11:00 Practical 3 :***

Each Downer lowering with just one bell in front.

Each ‘Upper’ to watch and listen and to advised by his or her helper about what is happening.

***11:50 refreshments***

***12:00 Practical 4 :***

Having students in a 6 bell raise.

***12:00 Practical 5 :***

Having students in a 6 bell lower.

***1:00 Lunch:***

***Admin :***

Uppers and Downers swap roles. Helpers to swap around to be with a different student.

***1:45 Theory :***

Give general feedback, highlighting key issues from the practicals.

Reinforce the pervious theory

***2:00 Practical 6:***

Repeat practicals 1 to 5, but with the student groups reversed.

***4:15 Conclusion :***

Gather general feedback from helpers and all students about what was learnt and what was difficult.

Each student should be given specific advice from his or her helper for ongoing improvement.

**Ringing Up and Down in Peal**

Suitable for anyone who can ring well in rounds, and can raise and lower a bell independently, and is now wanting to raise and / or lower in peal.

What do you know? – using skill you already have.

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|  | Discussion | Exercise |
| How to follow another bell in rounds, at various speeds |  | Take every opportunity to ring rounds |
| How to listen to the ‘beat’ set by the Tenor, and to make the gap between you and the bell you are following the same as the gaps between other pairs of bells. |  | Even when not ringing, watch and listen to the ringing |
| How to raise a bell on your own at a steady pace. Specifically to ensure that the rope length is increased gradually and steadily throughout the raise – especially when releasing a loop. |  | Raise a bell with your tutor standing by you to judge the smoothness of the raise. Do this on different bells to feel the difference. |
| How to lower a bell on your own at a steady pace, in particular to ensure that the rope length is shortened gradually and smoothly throughout the lower – especially when taking a loop. |  | Lower a bell with your tutor standing by to judge the smoothness of the lower. Do this on different bells to feel the difference. Let a bell ring itself down – pull it off, and speed up until just below the balance – and then do nothing other than keep hold of the rope. See how different bells fall at different speeds if there is no intervention. |

What do you need to know?

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|  | Discussion | Exercise |
| The stages of a raise in peal | 1 Chiming.2 The actual raise 3 The finish. | 1 Practice chiming on different bells – this will show the different speeds for different bells. 2 Changing from chiming to ringing, and the gradual increase of the swing, with a smooth change of speed. 3 Changing from ringing in rounds below the balance to setting by slowing down (consistently with all other bells) and increasing the gap between each pair of bells |
| The role of each bell in a raise in peal | 1 Treble is leading2 Tenor is last, setting the pace3 each bell is following the preceding bell, just as in rounds | Listen and watch a raise and notice how the bells are in rounds at all times. Note especially the leading – no gap between Tenor and Treble - and the even spacing between all pairs of bells. Watch an expert and see how he or she manages to be smooth, no sudden changes of speed. |
| The different paces of the raise in peal for each bell. | 1 Treble starts very quickly, but then has to increase the swing only little from that point2 Tenor start slowly, but is gradual and consistent throughout.3 bells in between will be the same, but less extreme than the two ends. | Listen and watch a raise to see the different pace for the treble and tenor.  |
| The stages of a lower in peal | 1 The start.2 The actual lower3 The finish. | 1 Changing from normal ringing in rounds to ringing just below the balance by speeding up and shortening the gap between each pair of bells (consistently with all other bells).2 Decreasing the amount of swing gradually, until the tenor is swinging so little that it is being chimed. The gaps between each pair of bells decreases as the bells speed up, and remains consistent.3 Settle into quick rounds, and then when instructed, all stop the bells from swinging (and making them silent) |
| The role of each bell in a lower in peal | 1 Treble is leading2 Tenor is last, setting the pace3 All other bells are following the preceding bell, just as in rounds | Listen and watch a lower and notice how the bells are in rounds at all times. Note especially the leading – no gap between Tenor and Treble - and the even spacing between all pairs of bells. Watch an expert and see how he or she manages to be smooth, no sudden changes of speed. |
| The different paces of the lower for each bell. | 1 The tenor will ring all the way down to chiming 2 The treble will be ringing until about a third of the way up, so will be lowering more slowly than the tenor.3 bells in between ring down to a slightly different level, depending on how close the front (less lower) or the back (more lower).  | Listen and watch a raise to see the different pace for the treble and tenor.  |

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| Useful Hints | 1 As well as following the bell in front of you, make sure you are in front of the bell following you. In other words, fill the space between those two bells evenly.2 If you find yourself no longer in the right place, do not panic and so do not take drastic action. Look carefully at the bell you are supposed to be following, and adjust your rope length to match that of the person you are following. Do this gradually, no more than an inch or two at a time. With luck someone will see your predicament and advise you what to do. 3 when raising, never check your bell to make it quicker. If you are swinging more than other bells – in effect you are higher and slower than the others – keep swinging at the same level – the others will join you.4 when lowering a bell, never ring it up by pulling more than you have been. If you are swinging less than the other bells – in effect lower and quicker than the others - stay at the same level and they will join you.5 if you can see that the bell in front of you (the bell you are following) has gone wrong, then – just as in normal rounds – follow the bell in front of that one. Place your bell in the correct position, rather than blindly following someone who is wrong. |  |
| Important  | All you are doing is ringing rounds, the difference is that the overall speed is changing. |  |

**RINGING UP AND DOWN IN PEAL**

***Additional Information and Advice For the Tutor***

Tutors and helpers to introduce themselves, each student to do the same, but indicating level of expertise in ringing up and down.

Give an outline of the day.

Allocate a helper to each student.

Ensure each student is able to ring up and down individually. If not, either spend a bit of time in getting them competent (if nearly there) or ask them to leave (if not likely to be able to with just a short bit of tuition)

Divide the students into two groups. This is to allow each student to concentrate on up or down for each session, but mixing the two to make life easier for the helpers. If there are students only available for part of the day, concentrate on what that student would benefit most from – do not try to do both in half the time.

***Theory :***

 There are three key points in a raise. It is no point going on to the next stage until the previous one is correct.

The first is starting from rest: A raise starts with chiming. Explain and demonstrate the different speeds of the front and back bells.

The second key point comes when the bells are settled into rounds with the tenor about to move from chiming to swinging.

After the initial chime, the treble will be a third of the way up, the tenor, basically, still down. This means that the treble has a shorter distance to go than the tenor, this being more noticeable as the treble will go up with much less effort. To cater for this, when ringing a small bell, be gentle, raising well within the bell’s natural speed (and your own!) Put it another way, once reaching the second point in the raise, the back bells have to be raised more quickly than the front bells in order to end up together. Also remind them about the speed of ringing (closeness), and how it starts with everyone close and as the bells get higher, the gaps gradually increase.

The third point is when all bells are up, and ringing rounds. It will be fast, with the bells below the balance. West Country style ringing has the bells at this point for the ‘peal’, but for our style, there will be a gradual slowing down – separating the bells - to reach the balance and hence stand or go into a method.

 The lower is exactly the same, but in reverse.

 Rounds; fast rounds just under the balance; tenor going down faster than the others until chiming; catch (with treble some way still up) to get all bells still.

Important messages to be repeated all day :

Raises and lowers are rounds.

 The tenor sets the pace, the rest fit round it (actually true for all ringing, by the way).

 The treble and tenor work as a team – the treble should understand the tenor’s job, and vice versa. In particular, the treble must match the tenor’s pace, in effect leading off the tenor at all stages.

The second is important as it defines the gap between bells.

The Tenor, once started, must be smooth in it’s change of speed (length of swing). For a perfect lower, the tenor will fall at it’s own pace – no checking, certainly no pulling up.

***Practical 1 :***

Uppers (all) to practice chiming in rounds. This is to make sure the raise starts from a sound basis, and also reinforces the theory about different speeds.

Do not proceed until this is of an acceptable standard.

***Practical 2 :***

Have the Uppers one at a time following a helper (ie just two bells) for a raise. The purpose is to ensure that the student is able to raise smoothly. This can be done with two students. It saves time, but also helps the students to pick out his or her own bell.

NOTE : while this is happening, make sure the Downers are watching and being told by their helpers about what is going on, what is right and what is wrong.

***Practical 3 :***

When one bell is up. Have a Downer lowering with just one bell in front. As before, it is to ensure a smooth lower. NOTE : the person leading MUST be smooth and gradual – it is not a race, nor is it a big dipper.

NOTE : while the lowering is happening, the corresponding ‘upper’ should be watching and listening, with advice from his or her helper.

Repeat 2 and 3 enough times for each student to have had sufficient goes to be comfortable, and deemed to be OK.

Have a short break at this point : repeat the words ‘ringing up and down is just rounds’

***Practical 4 :***

Have two ‘upper’ students on bells 3 and 5, with helpers standing behind.

Start from being still, get to chiming correctly, then go up, gradually.

The other students to watch and listen. Gather feedback from leader, helpers and non-participating students.

***Practical 5 :***

Have two ‘lower’ students on 3 and 5, with helpers standing behind.

Settle into round and then lower, gradually. The treble will decide whether the rounds are good enough to start, and will give a relevant instruction to let the tenor ringer know to start the lower.

The other students to watch and listen. Gather feedback from leader, helpers and non-participating students.

Repeat Practical 4 and 5 until all students have mastered their bit.

***Lunch:***

***Admin :***

Uppers and lowers swap roles. Helpers to swap around to be with a different student.

***Theory :***

Give general feedback, highlighting key issues from the practicals.

Add some new theory / advice :

When raising, make sure you never go down.

When lowering make sure you never go up.

If you are out, adjust by a very, very small amount. Remind the students that in raises and lowers, mistakes are really exaggerated. Watch the person in front, match his rope length and gradually return to the right place. The worst mistake is to attempt to get the bell correct with one blow, as this completely affects the overall speed of your lower / raise. You will be correct, perhaps, for the one blow, but the next one will almost certainly be wrong the other way, and need further, remedial action, needing effort.

As with ringing rounds – remember that you are fitting between the treble and tenor. The gap between the treble and second should give you a clue, but mentally divide the tenor beat by six (if ringing on six). Make sure you are behind the bell you are following AND in front of the bell who is following you.

Do everything gradually – this reduces the effort.

***Practical 6:***

Repeat what was done for practicals 1 to 5.

***Conclusion :***

Gather general feedback from helpers and all students about what was learnt and what was difficult.

Each student should be given specific advice from his or her helper for ongoing improvement.