

# Beyond Treble Bob on Handbells

## 01 Basic Building Blocks for method ringing

---

### Contents:

- 1 Introduction
- 2 What is change ringing?
- 3 Basic Place notation elements.
- 4 Definition of Plain Hunting on 6 bells by Place notation is:
- 5 Ringing Plain Bob Minor on handbells.
- 6 The extension to Plain Bob Major is:
- 7 To progress into more complex methods requires:
- 8 Further Place Notation elements:
- 9 Ringing the methods
- 10 Summary

### 1 Introduction

This paper explores the very basic approach to ringing to illustrate the learning process in preparation for the more advanced methods. However, it is not a complete treatise on method structure, nor memory, nor ringing. It is a collection of techniques that we have seen working.

### 2 What is change ringing?

Method ringing is to ring each bell once in a given sequence (a.k.a. change row), and continually to change that sequence under certain conditions (adjacent bells only change place). The memorisation of sequences requires a condensation of the information held in the sequence of rows, that condensation is known as a method.

All methods can be defined by whichever bells stay in the same position (a.k.a. place) from one row to the following row. This technique is known as Place Notation.

#### **Example explored: Plain Hunting on 4, 6, 8 bells.**

The act of ringing changes.

A team of ringers each memorise sufficient information about the method to be rung, and combine that information with some rhythm and listening skills to ring the method out loud.

Development of ringing skills requires increasingly complex method structures, and increasing number of bells. This development calls for ways of discussing and understanding methods, and for more advanced memory techniques.

This paper is restricted to "Right place" methods, so changes are rung in pairs handstroke and then backstroke. Places (as in Place notation) are only made from handstroke to backstroke. The transition between backstroke and handstroke is always X, i.e. all pairs cross over.

# Beyond Treble Bob on Handbells

## 01 Basic Building Blocks for method ringing

---

### 3 Basic Place notation elements.

On 4 bells

X – cross over all pairs

14 – bells in places 1 and 4 remain in those places, bells in places 2 & 3 change places

On 6 & 8, by extension from 4, X, 16, 18.

### 4 Definition of Plain Hunting on 6 bells by Place notation is:

X 16 X 16 X 16 X 16 X 16 X 16

The addition of Place notation elements 12, 14, 1234, then enable Plain Hunting to be extended to Plain Bob.

X 16 X 16 X 16 X 16 X 16 X 12 Repeat 4 times for Plain Course, add in Bob 14 and Single 1234 for the full method.

Because the standard methods are palindromic (reflecting about the half lead), the notation can then be shortened to:

X 16 X 16 X 16, 12, B 14, S 1234

This is Place notation shorthand for Plain Bob Minor. With the forgoing rules about change rows it is a complete definition of Plain Bob Minor. It is a very poor aid to memory, no-one rings Plain Bob Minor using only Place notation.

### 5 Ringing Plain Bob Minor on handbells.

Two aspects of change ringing are brought together.

- 1 The three hunting patterns or positions, coursing, 2-3, opposites as they are known
- 2 The special role of treble in calling for a change from hunting (16) to a lead end place (12) and consequent dodging.

The skill of Plain Hunting is merged with the rule (Plain Hunt until the treble leads, when treble leads, 2nds place is made and the bells in 3-4, and 5-6 dodge).

This is known as a method “rule”. (A rule is a short, verbal description of the method structure).

**Plain Bob is the foundation method for all of this approach to ringing beyond Kent and Oxford.**

To get from Plain Bob to Kent and Oxford we have taken the Plain Bob rules and re-applied them to make Kent and Oxford (apart from the places which need special attention).

# Beyond Treble Bob on Handbells

## 01 Basic Building Blocks for method ringing

---

Generalising, what we have done is to take some of the possible place notation elements, and used those with some basic handbell ringing skills to lay the Treble Bob foundation stone. The elements are:

- Place notation elements X, 16, 12, 14, 1234
- Ringing skills: Hunting patterns coursing, 2-3, opposites, dodging.
- Memory technique: 1 method rule

### 6 The extension to Plain Bob Major is:

- Place notation elements X, 18, 12, 14, 1234
- Ringing skills: Hunting patterns coursing, 2-3, 3-4, opposites, dodging.
- Memory technique: 1 method rule

### 7 To progress into more complex methods requires:

- Extension of the Place Notation elements not needed for Plain Bob
- Extended ringing skill to cover:
  - Multiple consecutive dodges
  - Multiple consecutive places
  - Structural elements related to treble work other than lead
- Memory techniques:
  - Further use of rules
  - Extended memory techniques

**But there is more to learn about Plain Bob, and how Plain Bob relates to harder methods.** (In later workshops).

### 8 Further Place Notation elements:

6 bells: 34, 36, 56, 1456, 3456

8 bells: 16, 34, 36, 38, 56, 58, 78, 1236, 1238, 1258, 1458, 1678, 3458,

Most 6 bell Place Notation elements can be practiced using Plain methods.

Double Bob, Reverse Bob, Single and Double Court, St Clements College Bob will give practice at all elements except 34 which requires Oxford TB Minor.

A more focused approach is needed for complex major methods, but great value can be derived from ringing Double Norwich CB Major which requires: 36, 58, 16, 1678 over and above the plain bob elements.

Multiple consecutive dodges can be practiced using St Clements College Bob Minor with its 3-pull dodging in 1-2. Counting to 3 is not too hard, but a better technique is to understand the method structure in more detail.

- Treble in 2nds&3rds, places made 16, cross in 2-3 and 4-5 (plain hunting)
- Treble in 4ths&5ths, places made 36, 1<sup>st</sup> dodge in 1-2, cross in 4-5
- Treble lies behind (half lead), places made 36, 2<sup>nd</sup> dodge in 1-2, cross in 4-5
- Treble in 5ths & 4ths, places made 36, 3<sup>rd</sup> dodge in 1-2

# Beyond Treble Bob on Handbells

## 01 Basic Building Blocks for method ringing

---

- Treble in 3rds & 2nds, places made 16, cross in 2-3 and 4-5 (plain hunting)
- Treble leads, places made 12, dodge in 3-4 & 5-6 (Plain Bob Lead End)

Ringing the 3-pull by watching the treble is more reliable than simply counting the dodges.

Practice of the Plain methods like St Clements is used to gain the ability to ring accurately within the changes whilst focusing on the structure of the method.

Practice should, ideally cover 6ths place methods and calls, and half lead rules, to give confidence in ringing all of the place notation elements on 6 bells.

### 9 Ringing the methods

Place notation alone is a poor aid to memory.

Addition of awareness of the place of the treble, and the related pieces of structure, is a stronger memory technique.

One further technique is developed from Plain Bob Minor.

In Bob Minor, on inside pairs, there are two basic patterns, Coursing and 3-4. These patterns give “shape” to the method, the coursing pair has its one split lead, and 4 leads 1-apart at most. 3-4 has two leads in opposites connected by a dodge in 3-4, and 3 leads in 2-3 hunting connected by scissors dodges.

Similar “shapes” can be attributed to other methods. In S Clements 5-6 spend 3 leads with a bell in the frontwork, the central lead has both bells, otherwise 5-6 are working above 1-2. 3-4 spend 4 of the 5 leads with a bell in frontwork, and one where they hunt together above 2nds.

These shapes are important as they provide context for the detail of dodging and hunting. This is further addressed in Workshop 4.

Context and Detail when linked to the position of the treble is a powerful aid to memory, and hence confident ringing.

### 10 Summary

- All ringing can be defined by the bells that stay in their place within a change row between any two change rows, a.k.a. place notation.
- Memorising and using Place notation as an aid to ringing needs further memory techniques
- All development of ringing skill seeks to build on knowledge and skill already acquired.
- Plain Bob is fundamental to all that follows.
- The right place plain methods extend the ringer’s experience of the various place notation elements.
- The right place plain methods are easier to ring when the various pieces of work can be seen relating to the treble and to each other, e.g.: St Clement’s College Bob.