

Beyond Treble Bob on Handbells

06: Practice Environments

Practice environments

Bellringing combines method knowledge with physical and cerebral skill, to create rhythmic music. Practice needs to be focused on the various elements:

- Method Knowledge
- Physical and Cerebral skill
- Rhythm

The purpose of practise is to make the skill stronger and more dominant. Immediate learning is based on chemical changes in the brain, and we have all experienced the evaporation overnight of something we have studied. Permanent learning is associated with structural changes in the brain. The most powerful learning involves more if not all of the senses, neurons that fire together, wire together.

Hence practise using real bells, and real people is by far the best. But don't rule out the stepping stones.

There are several different environments in which practice can take place:

Mental

The key objective is associate the places to be made with the position of the treble.

1: Mental exercise – Treble to Place Notation:

Sit in a quiet environment, with eyes closed, and bring to mind an empty grid of squares, as many across the top as there are bells, twice as many rows as there are bells for a plain method, four times as many rows as there are bells for a Treble Bob Method.

Imagine the treble lighting up the square in which it rings, one row at a time. As the treble moves, imagine a pair of lights lighting up the (notation) places made from row to row.

2: Mental exercise – Double line to Place Bells:

“Visualise” the course level double blue line for a practice pair.

Work down the double line one lead at a time, calling out the double place bells for each lead end.

3: Mental exercise – Place notation to places:

Take section place notation elements in turn and apply them to position pairs. E.g

Start in 7&8, apply X38X14. Result: X7,8; 6,8; 5,7, 6,8.

Start in 6&8, apply X1258X36. Result: 5,7; 5,6, X5,6, 4,6.

Physical Movement

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4: Mental and physical exercise - – Place notation to places by thumbs:

Perform Mental Exercise 3 and insert right and left thumbs for the pair of bells, up for handstroke, down for backstroke, counting every bells.

Start in 7&8, apply X38X14.

Result:

Rounds

1,2,3,4,5,6,7R,8 L

1,2,3,4,5,6,7R, 8L

X

1,2,3,4,5,6, 7L, 8R

3-8

1,2,3,4,5,6L, 7, 8R

X

1,2,3,4,5L, 6, 7R, 8

1-4

1,2,3,4,5,6L, 7, 8R

Ringling Simulators

5: Mental and physical exercise - Abel assisted thumbs

Exercise 4 can be performed whilst Abel is ringing the method. After the first one or two runs, look away from the screen so that your concentration is on the rhythm and counting.

6: Mental and physical exercise - Abel assisted ringing

Attach e-bells to Abel via Handbell Manager and ring the method. After each course, check the striking report for the detail of any errors, and go back over the Place Notation to avoid repeating the errors.

Abel practice pieces should be reporting 9.5 accuracy, both bells. If you are that good, speed up by 5 minutes and go again.

7: Repetition.

There is real benefit of ringing a lot via Abel. Imprinting the correct rhythm at a “goldilocks” speed, is a very significant enabler of good, rhythmic ringing. 1,000 courses of a method is not too many.

In a band

7: For real

Gather a few friends, get out the bells, and have some fun.

8 To follow:

Ringling Room, Wheatley, Muster, Abel, Handbell Stadium.