

# THE HULL HANDBELLS PROJECT

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

Newsletter Number 40, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

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## ***News roundup: Recorded lengths.***

### ***Quarter Peals***

#### **Beverley & District Society**

##### **Kingston-upon-Hull**

33 Westbourne Avenue  
Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2020

##### **1440 Kent Treble Bob Minor**

1-2 **Karen Lane**

3-4 **Christine M Church**

5-6 **Peter Church (C)**

First Treble Bob in hand: 1-2.

##### **Market Weighton**

26 Sancton Road  
Sunday 12th January, 2020

##### **1260 Plain Bob Minor**

1-2 **Christine M Church**

3-4 **Peter Church**

5-6 **Karen Lane (C)**

##### **Market Weighton**

26 Sancton Road  
Sunday 26th January, 2020

##### **1264 Plain Bob Major**

1-2 **Karen Lane**

3-4 **Jenny M Hastings**

5-6 **Neil Turner**

7-8 **Peter Church (C)**

First "inside": 3-4.

### ***Peals***

#### **Beverley & District Society**

##### **Kirk Ella**

60 Riplingham Road  
Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January, 2020

##### **5056 Plain Bob Major**

Composed by CK Lewis

1-2 **Peter Church**

3-4 **Christopher LD Munday**

5-6 **Samuel M Austin (C)**

7-8 **Roderick R Horton**

##### **Kingston-upon-Hull**

33 Westbourne Avenue  
Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2020

##### **5040 Plain Bob Royal**

1-2 **Samuel M Austin (C)**

3-4 **Christopher LD Munday**

5-6 **Simon Humphrey**

7-8 **Peter Church**

9-0 **Roderick R Horton**

First peal of Royal in hand since 1975: 7-8, 9-0.

### ***Out and about.***

We had hoped to start the year with a peal of Plain Bob Major, but numbers conspired against us and in the end we met to ring Kent TB Minor. With excellent ringing until well past the 1,250 Quarter Peal length, we hit a rough patch half way through the last course. With more than a quarter peal's worth of good ringing the conductor decided to let this one stand.

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup>

#### **Older But No Wiser.**

We were nudging boundaries rather than pushing them, but along the way I noted:

- Plain Hunting on 10
- Some plain courses and a 2 course touch of Plain Bob Major
- A plain course of Kent TB Major
- A 2 course touch of Oxford Treble Bob Minor and some plain courses

I had hoped to shoot for a couple of quarters but the clock ran against us.

There were a few learning points over speed of ringing. **Chris M** correctly identified that we had tried to ring some of the Oxford too quickly. But in general there is a need to let the sub-conscious brain do the striking by listening carefully. Like all motor skills, start off conscious brain in charge, practise a lot, and let the sub-conscious take over.

We did a lot of things right today, hence the enjoyable quality of the ringing.

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Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> **Karen Lane** dusted down her conducting and called a good 1260 of Plain Bob Minor in Market Weighton.

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup>

It was great to get **Ron Barclay** back ringing after his illness in Portugal. Unfortunately the Hull traffic conspired to keep **Karen Lane** and **Jenny Hastings** away, so we had a solid session of Kent TB Minor and Plain Bob Major.

The evening saw an interesting gathering of **Peter Church, Chris Munday, Sam Austin, and Roddy Horton**, with a set of bells and CK Lewis's 5,056 of Plain Bob Major. A good peal was rung which also explored some unexpected aspects of speed and rhythm. This was at **Chris Munday's** home in Kirk Ella, Chris definitely has the best seats for ringing lengths.

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> had a gathering out at Weighton for Plain Bob Major. Some of us were "rusty" and the method proved too much after a few courses, the practise was invaluable.

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup>

The morning session started with some Plain Hunting on 10 bells, followed by a first course of Kent TB Major, and then also Oxford TB Major for **Karen**, progressive touches of PB Major for **Chris (C)**, touches of Oxford TB Minor and Kent TB Minor. A really nice course of Cambridge Surprise Minor was icing on the cake even if Hull Surprise was attempted with too few neurons online to guarantee success.

The evening session proved more challenging, 5 of us met to ring Plain Bob Royal, which we did as well as Little Bob Royal. However, the lack of practise over the Christmas break showed; we were very rusty.

Some of the rust was still apparent two days later when we met in Melton Ross to ring Kent TB Minor. But a good practise session covered the pairs in Kent TB, a course of Oxford TB and a 3 course touch of Little Bob Minor.

A quarter peal of Bob Major on Roddy's bells came to grief after about half way following a

trip; however, hitting the "sweet spot" on the rhythm had proved to be quite difficult.

The peal band met again on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> augmented yet again by **Simon Humphrey** from deepest Derbyshire. A peal of Plain Bob Royal was duly despatched in spite of a frustrating time for yours truly trying to hit the exact places within the change. It should not be that hard.

And Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> **Jenny Hastings** faultlessly rang 3-4 for the first time to a quarter of Plain Bob Major. Well done **Jenny**. The quarter was followed by a practise session, 3 leads of Kent TB Major, and courses of Little Bob Major and Gainsborough Little Bob Major. St Clements College Bob Major was a step too far so we finished off with three courses of Spliced Plain and Little Bob. A fun session.

And the last OBNW

It was also good fun. The Plain Hunting on 10 was a good, if difficult start to the day, and we enjoyed **Chris Munday's** PB Major touch (V F B B), the Kent T.B. Major was challenging, the Oxford T.B. Major was beyond us, but we did ring a course of St. Clement's College Bob Major, that's a first. And not a blow of Plain Bob Minor was heard.

--oo0oo--

BTW.

It seems that Chris (M) has an inexhaustible stock of strange touches of Plain Bob Major. We look forward more touches from Munday on Tuesdays, thankfully we only have to ring two bells each, and not four.

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## ***The Learning Curve***

### ***Speed of ringing:***

- *What's fast*
- *What's slow*
- ***What speed should we ring at?***

These questions all came back to the surface this month with the two peals called by Sam Austin.

Ringing peals has a different purpose from ringing quarters, from practise ringing, and from performance ringing. And they all have different speed requirements, so, here goes:

### **Practise ringing**

Learning a new method, do your studying, learn what you can and then have a blast on Abel. Start as slow as you like but get to ringing courses on the pairs you want to be able to ring, with striking over the 9 out of 10. Then progressively speed up, maintaining your striking performance until you are ringing at a speed where the time elapsed between blows is less than normal human reaction time. Target Abel practise speeds<sup>1</sup>:

**6 bells: 2hrs 10**

**8 bells: 2hrs 30**

**10 bells: 2hrs 40**

**12 bells: 3hrs**

So **Goldilocks** speed: 5 to 10 minutes quicker than the above.

To see how these figures relate to reality I looked back in my handbell peal records, and in comparison, these are the average peal speeds in B&D:

**Minor 1hr 51 (11 peals)**

**Major: 2hrs 24 (15 peals)**

**Royal: 2hrs 45 (3 peals)**

So ringing a bit faster than the target practise speeds would put you at the average peal speed.

A number of early B&D peals of Minor were rung on size 11 in G, and the first peals of Royal and Major were rung in 1971 on St Mary's Beverley's handbells, size 17 in A. Apart from one peal there was no attempt to force the speed in either direction, all the

effort was concentrated on quality of striking; so these are natural average peal speeds.

So Abel target practise speeds and "real" peal speeds can be much the same.

But ringing for practise is often for exploration of new methods or new pairs, or for development of skills like watching the treble, or for a novice to try conducting. Until skills are assimilated at the sub-conscious level the demand for brain power means that ringing speeds often have to be slowed down, otherwise people just can't think fast enough, and the whole thing fires up.

So the target speeds take you into the realm where the power of the "autopilot" becomes real.

**Quarter peals** are different again. There can be development purposes, historical purposes, just plain enjoyment, etc. However, there is time within a quarter peal to settle into a consistent rhythm and style. Many of our quarter peals were rung untimed, so numeracy on speeds is not possible.

**Peal ringing** is more demanding than quarter peal ringing. Mental stamina (and for the tenor ringer physical stamina) needs to be developed along with strategies for avoiding boredom. (I cannot speak for complex methods, my experience is severely limited).

A peal band might choose to push faster but why would you choose to ring faster than the natural speeds shown above if it creates more mental stress?

There are a couple of factors I haven't discussed, viz: size of bells, and age of the ringers.

The fastest peals for B&D were all rung in 1975 as follows:

**Minor: 1hr 41, on size 14 in D**

**Major: 2hrs 8, on size 15 in C**

**Royal: 2hrs 32, on size 15 in C**

In 1975 none of us was over 30 years of age.

By "**performance ringing**" I mean ringing performed for other people to listen to.

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Mostly this is a “dinner touch”. Ringing trip free is more important than fast or slow, especially if the audience is mainly ringers.

## **To conclude.**

Pursuing reasonable Abel speeds would lead to ringing at around a natural peal speed, and pursuing the objective of quality of striking rather than speed will eventually lead to perfectly respectable peal speeds if the ringers are all young enough!

Reference:

1: Simon Gay, 15<sup>th</sup> August 2014

<https://www.handbellringing.co.uk/blog/ringing-speed-rhythm-and-reaction-time>

Accessed 26th Jan 2020.

## **AND.**

On the last Tuesday (28<sup>th</sup>) I was faced with:  
***“I still have the same problem as on towerbells, that I get lost when I “wake up”, i.e. go from autopilot to conscious control, what can I do about it?”***

***The short answer is “just ring a lot”.***

We have all experienced this problem, it’s the way the brain works. But like all motor skills just practise, practise, practise; ringing a lot, does you the world of good.

Ringing is like learning to walk, in the end it’s so automatic you can’t even remember learning.

Eventually you ring by instinct while going from autopilot to conscious control. But to get that good, you need to trust the autopilot, and to do that you need to be ringing at the goldilocks speed, i.e. fast enough, but not too fast.

1,000 courses of Bob Major is not too many.

***Peter Church***

1<sup>st</sup> February, 2020.