

Plain Hunt Doubles – the backstroke length

One of the most common difficulties that ringers have when learning to plain hunt is ringing at different speeds. Some ringers find it hard to ring slowly enough to strike their bell correctly in fifth place, or when hunting down to lead quickly.

Theory

It is worth thinking about what is going on with Plain Hunt Doubles from a tail end/sally position perspective:

- Understand that there are three positions for catching the sally – high for quick ringing, medium for steady ringing and low for slow ringing.
- Understand that there are three backstroke lengths – a long backstroke length for slow ringing, a medium backstroke length for steady ringing and a short backstroke length for quick ringing.
- Hunting on five requires the ringer to move seamlessly from four slow strokes, one steady, four quick, one steady, four slow, one steady, four quick.
- Because we alternate handstrokes and backstrokes as well, when turning round at the back, the transition for backstrokes is for two consecutive backstrokes to be from a slow length to a fast length (it's the interim handstroke which is steady). A 'shortening' of the backstroke rope length has to take place.

1 st						
	2 nd				H	Catch the sally low
		3 rd			B	Let backstroke out to slow length
			4 th		H	Catch sally low
				5 th	B	Maintain backstroke at slow length
				5 th	H	Catch sally in steady position
			4 th		B	Shorten backstroke to achieve quick length
		3 rd			H	Catch sally high
	2 nd				B	Maintain short backstroke for a quick blow
1 st					H	Catch sally high
1 st					B	Let backstroke out to medium/steady
	2 nd				H	Catch sally low
		3 rd			B	Let backstroke out from medium to slow
					H	

Practical exercise

Try to ring two bells together as a chord, where a ringer and their teacher strike them simultaneously. Ask the ringer to copy the rhythm set by the teacher. Ring four slow blows, one steady, then four quicker blows, one steady and repeat. This exercise will allow the teacher to easily spot any handling issues, and it helps the ringer to appreciate the different speeds required when they are not being distracted by having to look around at find which bell to ring after.

The ringer can concentrate on keeping pace with the teacher and perfecting the physical skill of changing speed.

Perform this exercise on a tied bell, on a simulator or in with the sound control closed.