

## Theory of ringing up & down

### Safety

- If you're not sure if a bell is up or down you should test it. Various tests:
  - Hold rope as if ready to ring normally (i.e. as if it is up – tail end (no loops) in left hand) and pull sally – if it swings slowly it is down; if you pull the bell off you have the tail-end in your left hand anyway so you can safely ring it and set it
  - For light bells (or those with good bearings) simply pulling the rope gently with two fingers should be enough to get it swinging gently, but isn't (usually) enough to pull it off. If the bell has plain bearings (or is really heavy) this method is not always conclusive, but if the bell does not swing when you pull with two fingers then you assume it is up anyway.

### Ringling Up

- Pull down hard, then lift your hands as rope goes up, BUT DO NOT resist – otherwise wasting energy.
- Keep back straight – don't lean forward when pulling
- Try to pull straight down (not slightly sideways or forwards) – otherwise you throw the rope across the room (and when nearly up on you wont be able to reach/catch the sally).
- If struggling to get the bell up learn to bend knees as you pull (but keep back straight) – you are then using all your weight (not just arm muscles) to pull the bell up.
- When nearly up and sally starts bouncing up just steady it with right hand (for right handed ringers) – if possible you can pull it, but main focus is still on pulling the backstroke. Don't concentrate on catching sally and forgetting to pull backstroke as bell will start to ring down. If necessary (to get your right (or left) hand back on tail end) let rope slip through your hands from sally to tail-end as ensures you get your hand in the right place easily and quickly so you're ready to pull the backstroke.

### Ringling Down

- A bell that is pulled off will ring itself down – your job is to control the speed it comes down.
- To control the speed of the bell as it comes down you still need to pull down a little (and this helps maintain where the rope is going), but main focus is to resist the rope going up, and thus reducing the bell's swing).
- Once it starts coming down, catch sally with just one hand (right, for right handed ringers).
- Change rope length after the handstroke between sally going down and rope going up to backstroke. Only take in an inch at a time using thumb and forefinger.
- Making loops – when rope in hand starts to get long, or existing loop getting too big (and about to hit you in the face!). (Right handed ringers) Keep right hand on rope and pull left hand (with loop) backwards about a foot. Then bring left hand forward

towards right hand and grab rope immediately under right hand. (Don't be tempted to do anything with the right hand.)

- When sally stops bouncing ignore it and concentrate on taking in rope and making loops.
- As you reach the sally you can start chiming – just give the bell a hard tug as it reaches the top of its swing.
- When ready stop the bell so the rope does not swing up and down.
- Down knot?
  - Each tower does different things with ropes when the bells are down (some tie down knots (a “bowline” for the sailors); some leave them on the floor; some put on a “spider”. No right or wrong way.

### Different bell speeds

- Smaller bells swing faster than big bells so when ringing up in peal lighter bells have to ring up quite a way before tenor can start chiming. Similarly when ringing down trebles will still be a third up (or higher) when tenor is chiming. In these cases (where there is a big difference between treble and tenor) the trebles have to chime whilst still a third up (and must not ring down any lower) so the tenor can chime. This does make catching at the end harder for the trebles though.

### Ringling up and down in peal

- Treble controls the ringing up / down
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> bell is very important when ringing up or down it sets the pace (gap between bells determined by 2).
- Tenor has big impact as the other bells have to ring around the less manoeuvrable (and heavier) tenor.
- Follow the bell in front of you (but watch a couple of bells further forward too in case the bell in front waivers).
- Try to maintain the gap between you and the bell in front – you want to match the speed of your bell to the speed of their bell.
- Getting back in time – when you get out of step with the bell in front of you it is sometimes difficult to work out how to get back in time
  - If your bell is swinging faster than the bell in front (the time between each of your backstrokes is less than the bell in front) your bell is LOWER than the bell in front – pull hard and slow your bell down – the higher your bell is up and slower it will ring.
  - If your bell is swinging slower than the bells in front then either ring your bell down slightly to match their speed or (often easier) stop ringing up and just maintain your bell at the current speed until the other bells ring up to your level (this latter method does mean you may end up on the opposite stroke to the other bells through).

## Trebling up & down

- Trebling Up
  - You are in charge – say clearly: “Here’s one” then start ringing up
  - Each successive bell joins in one at a time (see Appendix A)
  - Fast at start – until all bells ringing both strokes
  - Then reduce the rate of ringing up to allow tenor to get up – remember the tenor is much heavier than the treble. If the tenor ringer is pulling up as hard as they can and going red in the face then you’re probably still ringing up too fast – you should reduce your rate of ringing up more.
  - When everyone is up (if necessary ask the tenor ringer if they’re up), clearly call “Stand”
- Trebling Down
  - Don’t start ringing down until you have reasonable rounds.
  - Treble is in charge – say clearly: “Gently down” or “Downwards”
  - If there are lots of bells (8 or more) it is worth asking everyone to squeeze their bells together as you start going down – this helps the heavier bells to start ringing down. Remember as you ring down you’re all ringing your bells faster so very slow rounds before you start doesn’t help.
  - Slow and steady down – you have to ring down at a slower rate than all the other bells – pulling the tenor down is hard work so if the tenor ringer is being pulled off the ground to keep up with you then SLOW DOWN - you’re ringing down too fast.
  - As you near the end listen for tenor dropping out and then ring down a little faster – see Appendix B
  - Catch up tenor then follow it (on the same stroke) – helps gauge how low to go
  - Do not drop too low – the tenor cannot chime as fast as the treble so once tenor is chiming STOP RINGING DOWN.
  - Catching at the end. Some towers count two, some count three, but process is the same:
    - Treble ringer says: “Two (or three) more, miss and catch (in rounds)”
    - As you chime the treble, count “One”
    - As you chime again, count “Two”
    - Miss the rope once
    - Catch and stop the bell from swinging.
  - For a little variation (or when the team gets adventurous) you can try catching in other changes:
    - Queens (135246 on 6) – odd bells catch after missing once, even bells catch after missing twice.
    - Tittums (142536) – more tricky – 1 and 4 catch after one miss, 2 and 5 after two misses then 3 and 6 catch after three misses. This is harder on big bells as the clapper on the tenor may have stopped swinging enough to chime by the third miss.

- Weasels (14235 – useful for 5 bell towers) – needs good rounds before hand to get the timing – then 1 and 4 catch after one miss, 2 3 and 5 catch after two misses – “Pop goes the weasel”

## Appendix A - Ringing Up

1  
 12  
 123  
 1234  
 12345  
 123456  
 1234561  
 12345612  
 123456123  
 1234561234  
 12345612345  
 123456123456 – now slow down  
 123456123456  
 ...

Keep ringing up fairly fast – until all bells ringing both strokes. From each row on the left to the next you are adding another bell so you have to ring up (and thus space out the bells) enough to fit them in.

Or written another way... 1 12 123 1234 12345 123456 1234561 12345612 123456123 1234561234 12345612345 123456123456 123456123456..

## Appendix B - Ringing Down

...  
 123456123456  
 123456123456  
 12345612345  
 1234561234  
 123456123  
 12345612  
 1234561  
 123456  
 123456  
 ..

As tenor backstroke drops out speed up (slightly) until you are following the tenor – then “hold station” – don’t ring any further down as tenor wont be able to chime any faster.