



MORE THOUGHTS ON BELL CONTROL

Ringing rounds we keep the bell swinging to a steady rhythm, so when we have found the right strength of pull to ring with minimum effort, this can be kept constant. But when the bells are rung in changes something more is needed

Taking call changes first. If you are affected by a call you have to do one of two things, either ring one blow (only one blow) a bit slower, or ring it a bit faster. Think of ringing the third to rounds and the call is '3 over 4'. On the next handstroke you must wait for 4 to ring in front of you, so you have to balance your bell for a moment longer to move 'up' from third's place to fourth's place. To be sure of doing this, pull the previous backstroke a LITTLE harder to be sure the bell will balance and then, having waited for 4, resume the previous ringing speed and rhythm

But if the call is '2 over 3' your next handstroke has to be quicker, to move 'down' from third's place to second's place. To help with this, pull the previous backstroke a LITTLE less to help pull in the handstroke sooner, also pull this handstroke harder to restore your bell to the balance and thus restore 'rounds' speed. Every pull should position your bell for the next pull, a bit like a snooker player planning his next shots. Making a smooth transition from one place to the next is the key to good call changes. This means holding up or pulling in just sufficiently to make the change of place and immediately resuming 'rounds' rhythm

In method ringing you are constantly changing your 'place' among the other bells, which means frequently changing the speed and rhythm of your ringing. Think of ringing the treble to Plain Hunt on five bells. Hunting 'up', you must ring slower than in rounds, which means balancing your bell at each pull for a moment longer. So, on the last backstroke at lead, pull a LITTLE harder to be sure of balancing your bell and waiting to strike in seconds place. As you pull handstroke in second's place think of holding up on the backstroke into third's place - and so on for fourth's place and fifth's place. Four slow pulls. As you 'lay' in fifth's place this handstroke pull will be a little faster than hunting up because you 'stay in the same place', and on the next backstroke you start hunting down so this pull will be quicker still. To help make quick pulls, pull less until, as you reach second's place (a backstroke) pull a little harder to steady your bell for the open lead.

These notes have described the action pull by pull, but it can be summed up as:

- Think at least one pull ahead
- If the next pull is to be a slow one, pull a LITTLE harder
- If the next pull is to be a quicker one, pull a LITTLE less
- The heavier the bell, the more this technique will help you

This technique becomes even more important in dodges - a subject for next time.