

## TROYTE RINGING CENTRE:

### PLAIN BOB MINOR:

#### INTRODUCTION:

This is the first of several learning packages which will explore method ringing on six bells. There are already three packages available on the Troyte Ringing Centre website which explore method ringing on five bells.

Here an assumption will be made that before starting to ring Plain Bob Minor you will be competent at ringing Plain Hunt Doubles and also have some experience of ringing Plain Bob Doubles. Therefore we will assume that you are familiar with such terms as coursing order and lead head order, However, we will start with a quick introduction to plain hunting on six bells.

#### PLAIN HUNT MINOR:

```
1 2 3 4 5 6
X   X   X
2 1 4 3 6 5
| X   X |
2 4 1 6 3 5
X   X   X
4 2 6 1 5 3
| X   X |
4 6 2 5 1 3
X   X   X
6 4 5 2 3 1
| X   X |
6 5 4 3 2 1
X   X   X
5 6 3 4 1 2
| X   X |
5 3 6 1 4 2
X   X   X
3 5 1 6 2 4
| X   X |
3 1 5 2 6 4
X   X   X
1 3 2 5 4 6
| X   X |
1 2 3 4 5 6
```

So we start with rounds as the lead head row and to get to the next row 214365 three pairs of bells swap places

To get to the next row 241635 the bells in first and sixth place make places and the bells in 2-3 and 4-5 swap places. So here two pairs of bell swap.

This arrangement continues until the bells come back into rounds which is after 12 rows. Thus plain hunting on six bells produces a touch of 12 rows.

The bells have come down to lead in the order 246531 and the treble has followed bells in the order 24653 as it has travelled from rounds up to 6<sup>th</sup>'s place and back to rounds. This sequence is known as the coursing order.

The place notation can be expressed as x16x16x16x16x16 le16 in which "x" indicates that no places were made in that change, "16" indicates that places were made in 1<sup>st</sup>'s and 6<sup>th</sup>'s place in the change, and "le16" means that at the lead end change, that is the change between the treble's handstroke and backstroke lead, 1<sup>st</sup>'s and 6<sup>th</sup>'s places were made.

The next diagram looks at the nature of the rows in Plain Hunt Minor. A slightly more detailed explanation of the nature of the rows is given in the package on Plain Bob Doubles.

123456 + The assumption is made that rounds is a positive row.  
 214365 - Therefore the rows which follow are in pairs of negative and  
 241635 - positive rows ending with two positive rows at the lead  
 426153 + end and lead head. This ending is significant as we shall see later.  
 462513 +  
 645231 -  
 654321 -  
 563412 +  
 536142 +  
 351624 -  
 315264 -  
132546 + This is the lead end row  
 123456 + This is the lead head row

The relationship between Plain Bob Minor and Plain Hunt Minor is similar to the relationship between Plain Bob Doubles and Plain Hunt Doubles. When ringing Plain Bob Minor we ring Plain Hunt Minor until the lead end change when, instead of making places in 1-6 as in Plain Hunt Minor, we make places in 1-2. So the place notations are as follows:

Plain Hunt Minor            x16x16x16x16x16x16 or more simply x16x16x16 le16

Plain Bob Minor            x16x16x16x16x16x12 or more simply x16x16x16 le12

**Remember that if the method is palindromic the place notation need only be given until the treble makes two blows in 6<sup>th</sup>'s place as the second half of the lead is a mirror image of the first half. Therefore we use the place notation going from left to right until the treble makes 6<sup>th</sup>'s place - the half lead - and then we read the place notation from right to left until we get to the treble's handstroke lead which is the lead end row. Then we use the lead end change (le) to get the lead head row.**

It is very useful to be able to write out the structure of a method from its place notation. So start doing this from now on beginning with Plain Hunt Minor.

**Remember to learn and ring Plain Hunt Minor confidently before trying to ring Plain Bob Minor. Learn to adjust the length of your rope at handstroke and at backstroke as you hunt up and down and keep the open lead as set by the treble ringer during the preliminary rounds.**

When you feel confident ringing rounds and plain hunting on six bells is the time to think about learning Plain Bob Minor. The first step is to learn the plain course.

The next diagram shows a plain course of Plain Bob Minor.

## PLAIN BOB MINOR - THE PLAIN COURSE:

123456 +	135264 +	156342 +	164523 +	142635 +
214365 -	312546 -	513624 -	615432 -	416253 -
241635 -	321456 -	531264 -	651342 -	461523 -
426153 +	234165 +	352146 +	563124 +	645132 +
462513 +	243615 +	325416 +	536214 +	654312 +
645231 -	426351 -	234561 -	352641 -	563421 -
654321 -	462531 -	243651 -	325461 -	536241 -
563412 +	645213 +	426315 +	234516 +	352614 +
536142 +	654123 +	462135 +	243156 +	325164 +
351624 -	561432 -	641253 -	421365 -	231546 -
315264 -	516342 -	614523 -	412635 -	213456 -
<u>132546</u> +	<u>153624</u> +	<u>165432</u> +	<u>146253</u> +	<u>124365</u> +
135264 +	156342 +	164523 +	142635 +	123456 +

The following things are significant about the plain course of Plain Bob Minor:

- Every time the treble leads both handstroke and backstroke are positive rows, there are no negative rows when the treble is leading.
- When each of the working bells is leading both strokes are of the same nature but sometimes they are positive and sometimes they are negative.
- All the bells plain hunt until the treble leads at handstroke, then the lead end change is 1-2 rather than 1-6 as in Plain Hunt Minor
- Throughout the plain course all bells maintain the same coursing order 24653 as they did when ringing plain hunt.
- Therefore Plain Bob Minor is Plain Hunt Minor except when the treble leads.
- Plain Bob Minor is plain hunting below the treble.

The following two pages show a plain course of Plain Bob Minor with some description of what the number 2 bell is doing.

It might help if you draw a line through the path of the second bell as you read through the notes which accompany the rows in the plain course.

A plain course of Plain Bob Minor with notes for the ringer of the second bell.

123456      The number 2 bell starts off leading at handstroke and backstroke, it then  
214365      plain hunts

241635

426153      The number 4 bell is the number 2 bell's after bell

462513

645231

654321

563412

536142      passing the treble in 5-6 places when the treble is coming down to lead  
351624      which results in the number 2 bell *dodging in 3-4 down* when the  
315264      treble leads.

132546

135264      The number 2 bell becomes fourth's place bell at the lead head and plain  
312546      hunts

321456

234165      The number 3 bell is the number 2 bell's course bell

243615

426351

462531

645213      passing the treble in 4-5 places when the treble comes down to lead  
654123      which results in the number 2 bell *dodging in 5-6 down* when the treble  
561432      leads

516342

153624

156342      The number 2 bell becomes sixth's place bell at the lead head and  
513624      plain hunts

531264

352146

325416

234561

243651

426315

462135      passing the treble in 3-4 places when the treble comes down to lead  
641253      which results in the number 2 bell *dodging in 5-6 up* when the treble  
614523      leads.

165432

164523      The number 2 bell becomes fifth's place bell at the next lead head and  
615432      plain hunts

651342

563124

536214

352641

325461

234516

243156

421365      passing the treble in 2-3 places when the treble comes down to lead  
412635      which results in the treble *dodging in 3-4 up* when the treble leads.

146253

142635      The number 2 bell becomes third's place bell at the next lead head  
416253      and plain hunts  
461523  
645132  
654312  
563421  
536241  
352614  
325164  
231546      until the treble takes the second bell from the lead and the second bell  
213456      then *makes second's place* over the treble, becomes second's place bell,  
124365      which is its home position, when the treble leads at backstroke.  
123456

**Remember where you pass the treble tells you what to do next.**

Each working bell makes these periodic departures from plain hunting in the same sequence:

Dodge 3-4 down, dodge 5-6 down, dodge 5-6 up, dodge 3-4 up, make seconds place over the treble and each working bell starts the sequence in a different place.

**Remember that learning any method just by the sequence of the work is insufficient.**

Most learners, and many experienced ringers, will from time to time forget where they are in the sequence of work. Therefore it is helpful to know which is your course bell and which place your bell should be in at the next lead head. This will enable you to correct yourself when you forget where you are in the sequence of work and not have to rely on the conductor to put you right.

Practice ringing plain courses of Plain Bob Minor so that you can shorten and lengthen your rope as you hunt down and up. Practice looking for the treble and remembering where you pass the treble as this will tell you whether to plain hunt or to dodge or to make second's place. Look out for your course bell and your after bell, what they are doing will be very helpful to you.

**Remember when passing the treble and the treble is going up and away from the lead you will plain hunt until you pass the treble next time.**

**Remember when passing the treble in 5-6 and the treble is coming down to lead you will dodge in 3-4 down. When passing the treble in 4-5 and the treble is coming down to lead you will dodge in 5-6 down. When passing the treble in 3-4 and the treble is coming down to lead you will dodge in 5-6 up. When passing the treble in 2-3 and the treble in coming down to lead you will dodge in 3-4 up. And finally when the treble takes you from the lead you will make seconds place over the treble and lead again.**

**Remember all working bells follow the same sequence of work they just start in a different place.**

**Remember that the coursing order stays the same throughout the plain course 24653**

**Remember the lead head order is the same as the coursing order in the plain course, so the second bell becomes fourth's place at the next lead head and then sixth's place at the next lead head, then fifth's place, then third's place and finally second's place at the last lead head at the end of the plain course (which is rounds)**

Practice ringing plain courses of Plain Bob Minor either by ringing a bell yourself or by standing behind and watching someone else ringing plain courses.

### **HERE ARE SOME THINGS FOR YOU TO DO:**

1. Write out plain courses of Plain Bob Minor checking the coursing order and the lead head order as you go until you can do this confidently without making mistakes. Try and do this at a speed which is similar to the speed at which the bells in your tower ring. Do this either as one long column of numbers or write the leads of twelve rows side by side.
2. Write out a plain course of Plain Bob Minor in one long column of figures. Draw a coloured line through the path of one of the working bells 3, 4.5 or 6 writing alongside notes which might be helpful to the ringer of that bell as the above notes suggest for the second bell.
3. Without writing down the rows of a plain course list the sequence of the work for each of the working bells.

### **BOBS AND SINGLES IN PLAIN BOB MINOR:**

“Bobs” in Plain Bob Minor are the same as they are in Plain Bob Doubles. The lead end change has places in 1 and 4 instead of in 1 and 2. This changes the lead head order of the working bells in exactly the same way as in Plain Bob Doubles. Therefore the bell which would have dodged in 3-4 down, runs IN and becomes second's place bell. The bell which would have made second's place over the treble runs OUT and becomes third's place bell. The bell which would have dodged in 3-4 up MAKES FOURTH's PLACE and becomes fourth's place bell. Below is a simple illustration:

**Remember that calls are made when the treble is in second's place before leading at handstroke, the call - whether “Bob” or “Single” takes effect at the lead head change which is between the handstroke and backstroke lead of the treble.**

**Remember that when a “Bob” is called one working bell runs in, another bell runs out and a third bell makes two blows in fourth's place and the bells in fifth's and sixth's place are unaffected. This changes the coursing order until another call is made by the conductor.**

The following diagram shows what happens in a short touch of 72 rows.

123456 +	123564 +	136245 +	164352 +	164523 +	142635 +
214365 -	215346 -	312654 -	613425 -	615432 -	416253 -
241635 -	251436 -	321564 -	631245 -	651342 -	461523 -
426153 +	524163 +	235146 +	362154 +	563124 +	645132 +
462513 +	542613 +	253416 +	326514 +	536214 +	654312 +
645231 -	456231 -	524361 -	235641 -	352641 -	563421
654321 -	465321 -	542631 -	253461 -	325461 -	536241 -
563412 +	643512 +	456213 +	524316 +	234516 +	352614 +
536142 +	634152 +	465123 +	542136 +	243156 +	325164 +
351624 -	361425 -	641532 -	451263 -	421365 -	231546 -
Bob315264 -	316245 -	614352 -	Bob415623 -	412635 -	213456 -
<u>132546 +</u>	<u>132654 +</u>	<u>163425 +</u>	<u>146532 +</u>	<u>146253 +</u>	<u>124365 +</u>
123564 +	136245 +	164352 +	164523 +	142635 +	123456 +

This is a touch of 72 rows which was produced by the conductor calling the number 5 bell to make the bob twice. This is not a touch I have ever used when ringing, but I have used it here to demonstrate one important fact regarding the nature of the rows in Plain Minor methods. You can prove for yourselves the accuracy of the following statement by writing out any touch of Plain Bob Minor - or any other Plain Minor Method, with Bobs and plain leads only. The maximum true length of touch that can be produced using bobs only is 360 rows. Thus it is not possible to ring an extent of 720 rows of Plain Bob Minor using only bobs. This is because every time the treble leads only positive (+) rows are produced. In an extent of 720 rows the treble will lead 60 times at handstroke and 60 times at backstroke and half of these rows must be (-) and half (+).

We get negative rows when the treble is leading by using Singles. A Single in Plain Bob Minor has the lead end change 1234 therefore only one pair of bells swap over and thus the lead head row becomes (-). From the lead head following the use of a Single the treble will only produce negative (-) rows every time it leads - handstroke or backstroke - until another Single is called. Therefore, in an extent a minimum of two singles must be used and if only two Singles are used they must be placed 360 rows apart. Several pairs of Singles may be used and there are extents of Plain Bob Minor available which only use Singles. There are no true extents available which only use Bobs. Therefore it is normal to use both Bobs and Singles remembering that Singles must be used in pairs.

Using a Single swaps over the bells in 3-4 places when the treble leads. Therefore the 2<sup>nd</sup>'s place, the 5<sup>th</sup>'s place and the 6<sup>th</sup>'s place bells are unaffected when a Single is called. The bell that would have dodged in 3-4 down, had no call been made, makes two blows in third's place when a Single is called and becomes third's place bell. The bell that would have dodged in 3-4 up makes two blows in 4<sup>th</sup>'s place at a Single and becomes fourth's place bell.

Now it is necessary to get good practice opportunities to ring touches of Plain Bob Minor first as plain courses, then touches using Bobs only, then touches using Singles only, and then touches using both Bobs and Singles. It is more helpful to the conductor if you ring either the third or fourth bell for your early touches of Plain Bob Minor.

Below I have given some touches which provide good opportunities to get confident when ringing Plain Bob Minor. There are many different touches of Plain Bob Minor and most conductors have their favourites. The touches which follows are only a very small selection from those available in many publications including the Ringing World Diary.

### **TOUCHES USING ONLY BOBS:**

Remember that the maximum length of a touch using Bobs and plain leads only is 360 rows.

The simplest touch is to call a Bob when the tenor bell is dodging in 5-6 down. This touch is 180 rows long and the Bobs affect only the second, third and fourth bells. In this respect it is just like an extent of Plain Bob Doubles. At the first Bob the 2<sup>nd</sup> bell runs out, the 3<sup>rd</sup> bell makes the bob, and the 4<sup>th</sup> bell runs in. At the second Bob the 2<sup>nd</sup> bell makes the bob, the 3<sup>rd</sup> bell runs in and the 4<sup>th</sup> bell runs out. At the third Bob the 2<sup>nd</sup> bell runs in, the 3<sup>rd</sup> bell runs out and the 4<sup>th</sup> bell makes the bob. The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> bells ring plain courses throughout.

Another simple touch is to call a Bob at every lead EXCEPT when the tenor is dodging in 5-6 down - this is called the tenor's Home position. This touch is 108 rows long. The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> bells dodge together in their home positions at each plain lead. The touch comes back into rounds after the third plain lead

Another simple touch using Bobs only is to call bobs when the tenor bell is dodging in 5-6 up - which is called Wrong, and in 5-6 down - which is called Home. This touch is 120 rows long and is normally written out as follows:

<u>23456</u>	W	H
45236	-	-
<u>23456</u>	-	-

### **TOUCHES USING SINGLES ONLY:**

Extents of Plain Bob Minor can be obtained using only Singles and plain leads. However this small selection is chosen to provide opportunities to ring short touches with Singles only.

Call a Single at every lead. This will produce a touch of 72 rows. This touch is a bit boring for the ringers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bells as you will see if you write out the numbers in full.

Call a Single when any bell makes 2<sup>nd</sup>'s place and repeat once. This will produce a touch of 120 rows. The bells in 3-4 places when the first Single is called will change their coursing order and change back again when the second Single is called. Try this first by calling Singles when the tenor is about to make 2<sup>nd</sup>'s place at the lead end change.

The touch of 120 rows above in which Bobs are called at W and H can also be used with Singles instead of Bobs. This can be shown as follows:



<u>23456</u>	W	H
54326	s	s
<u>23456</u>	s	s

### TOUCHES USING BOBS AND SINGLES:

The touch of 108 rows calling Bobs at every lead except when the tenor is at Home can be extended to a touch of 216 rows by calling a Single instead of a plain lead at the third Home and repeating the touch. So the touch looks like this

BBPBBPBBS BBPBBPBBS

Here is a touch of 240 rows using Bobs and Singles with calls only at W and H

<u>23456</u>	W	H
54326	s	s
23546	-	s
45326	s	s
<u>23456</u>	-	s

And here is a very useful touch of 540 rows using Bobs and Singles only at W and H. Combined with an extent of 720 rows this produces a quarter peal of 1260 rows.

<u>23456</u>	W	H
45236	-	-
32456	-	s
<u>34256</u>		s

Repeat twice.

### COMPOSITIONS FOR EXTENTS:

There are many different compositions for extents of 720 rows of Plain Bob Minor. My intention with these packages is to keep the compositions simple as these are introductory packages for methods on five and six bells. Once the whole band is competent at ringing the method using touches including Bobs and Singles and has rung several quarter peals then the conductor can try other compositions. So I am giving just two standard compositions which combined with the touch of 540 rows above provide a quarter peal of 1260 rows, or two extents of 720 rows can be used to produce a quarter peal of 1440 rows.

<u>23456</u>	W	H
45236	-	-
<u>34256</u>	-	(s)

Repeat 5 time with (s) only in the third and sixth part.

<u>23456</u>	W	H
52436	-	
32456	s	
53426	-	
<u>42356</u>	s	-

Repeat twice

### COURSING ORDERS FOR LONGER TOUCHES:

This package is not about conducting. However, any touch of minor which is longer than one course either requires a conductor to make the calls in appropriate places, or each member of the band has to learn the touch, so that it can be rung non-conducted. We have tried this on Bampton practice nights with extents of Plain Bob Doubles, and it works well because everyone has to concentrate that bit more than during a touch with a conductor. Unfortunately many peal ringers have stories about a peal that did not come round. It does not happen so often now because conductors are much more competent than some conductors were fifty years ago. It can be very embarrassing as a conductor to call all the bobs and singles and then to find after three hours or so of ringing the peal does not come round.

So it is good practice for the conductor to have some understanding of what is going on during the touch. This is normally taken to mean knowing what the coursing order will be following any Bob or Single and checking that all the bells are coursing in the correct order. What follows is an example of a touch during which Bobs are needed at Wrong and at Home only.

When ringing Plain Bob Minor the coursing order during the plain course is 65324. If a Bob is called at Wrong (when the tenor is dodging in 5-6 up) the bells coursing in 532 will change position so that "abc" becomes "bca", therefore 6(532)4 becomes 6(325)4. If a Bob is called at Home (when the tenor is dodging in 5-6 down) the bells coursing in 324 will similarly change position therefore 65(324) becomes 65(243).

<u>23456</u>	W	H
45236	-	-
<u>34256</u>	-	

Repeat twice.

So here is the touch showing the coursing orders as well as course heads

23456	W	H	W	H
45236	-	-	5324	(325)4
<u>34256</u>	-			(543)2
25346	-	-		(435)2
<u>42356</u>	-			(524)3
35426	-	-		(245)3
23456	-			(532)4

### **MORE THINGS FOR YOU TO DO:**

4. Call a bob at each lead except when the tenor is at Home. This touch will come round at the third plain lead head having called a total of six bobs. Write out all the rows and see what effect the bobs have on each working bell.
5. Call a single at every second lead (PSPS...) write out all the rows and see what happens to each of the working bells.
6. For the last touch for which I have shown the coursing orders call a Single at the end, that is when the Tenor is at Home. This prevents the touch coming round. The Single changes the coursing order at the lead head to give the course head 24356 with the coursing order 65423. Now work out the coursing order for the remainder of the touch. Which will now give you an extent of 720 rows.

### **A SUMMARY:**

Plain Bob Minor is an important first step into six bell method ringing. It is worthwhile learning the method properly so that you can ring it with confidence. Start with the plain course, learning the order of the work and understanding that where you pass the treble tells you what to do next. Be aware of the coursing order and which is your course bell and your after bell. Learn the starts of the second, third and fourth bells by ringing them to plain courses. The bells in fifth's and sixth's place are unaffected at either Bobs or Singles. It helps to know why bobs or singles are called in particular places and this package has only looked at some of the options. It may help to discuss with your conductor which touches will be used when you progress beyond the plain course.

I really enjoy ringing the treble to touches of Plain Bob Minor because I can see what is going on. So either ring the treble or stand behind the treble ringer whenever you can so that you can observe the changes in coursing order when Bobs and Singles are called.

Learn to look ahead. If you are dodging in 3-4 down remind yourself that at the next lead head you will be sixth's place bell and dodging in 5-6 down. Confirm this by noting where you pass the treble next time the treble is coming down to lead. There is a lot to learn, but don't try and learn everything at once. Plan your progress one step at a time. Start with plain courses, then short touches with Bobs only, then short touches with Singles only, then short touches with Bobs and Singles and lastly attempt quarter peals which of course must include one or more pairs of Singles.

### **FURTHER STUDY:**

Here are some other publications which deal with Plain Bob Minor which are also available through the Librarian of the Guild of Devonshire Ringers. His contact details are shown in the Annual Report of the Guild.

- Adams, Chris    Ringing circles: a guide to learning methods  
CCCBR 48pp 2000
- Coleman, Steve The bellringer's early companion  
Sue Coleman 439pp 2008
- Coleman, Steve The method ringer's companion  
Sue Coleman 437pp 2008
- Copson, Pam    One per-learner book  
Sherbourne 40pp 4th ed. 1992
- Copson, Pam    The follow-on book for bell-ringers  
Sherbourne 40pp 2<sup>nd</sup> ed 1988
- Copson, Pam    The ringers exercise book  
Sherbourne 24pp 1987
- Harrison John A & Lewis Catherine    The new ringer's book  
CCCBR 156pp 2012
- Penny Pip        Ringer's guide to learning the ropes  
Association of Ringing Teachers 80pp 2<sup>nd</sup> ed 2017

All the above titles are part of the "Learners' Library" collection which is stored with the Guild Librarian in Tiverton.

Ring me on 01398 331843 or email me on [michael.r.hatchett@gmail.com](mailto:michael.r.hatchett@gmail.com) if there are parts of this package which I have not made sufficiently clear for you or if you have any questions.