

Some Notes on Conducting

Presentation by Nicholas Small

1. Round Blocks

A round block is a touch that ends where it started, in terms of the structure of the method; so, if the ringing is allowed to carry on at the end of the touch (instead of “That’s all”) and the calling repeated, exactly the same changes will be rung. Most popular touches are round blocks but the following are not: touches of Stedman whose length is not a multiple of 12; touches of Grandsire coming round at handstroke or of Treble Bob coming round at the treble’s backstroke snap (assuming a normal start).

The calling of a round block may be started at any point (when the end of the block is reached, call the bit skipped at the start). This yields a touch that is the same length as the original, and which is true if the original was, though the changes produced may differ from those in the original (e.g. 65’s may be introduced to a touch of Minor, when there were none before).

If there is an observation bell, usually any working bell can be treated as the observation – but check that this is feasible (c.f. 120 Grandsire Doubles).

2. 120 Plain Bob Minor – PBx5

This is a useful little touch, easy to remember and all the bells do all the work at a bob. Examination of coursing orders reveals that there will be 65’s if the calling is changes to BPx5. (This is equivalent to starting at the second lead; the second bob results in the order of 4 and 6 being reversed.)

On handbells, the first bob puts all pairs into opposites; the second bob puts the tenors into opposites; the third bob puts 3-4 in course and they dodge together in 5-6 at the fourth bob, which puts the tenors back in course.

23456
35264
-35642
54326
-54263
46532
-46325
62453
-62534
23645
-23456

3. Applying touches of Plain Bob Minor to methods with a different lead-end order

Simply making calls by the position of the observation bell will produce a touch in any desired method that has seconds place made at the lead end; however, be aware that the calling positions will come in a different order (e.g. for St. Clement’s College Bob Minor wrong comes immediately before home rather than immediately after it; also, the resultant touch is not necessarily true).

4. The touch 2B, 2I, F applied to Little Bob

As the figures to the right show, this calling gives a touch of 144 Plain Bob Minor, or 112 Little Bob Minor. The lead-heads produced by a bob are identical but, otherwise, there appears little similarity between the two. The first lead-end of Little Bob has the 6 in second’s place; in Plain Bob Minor this does not happen till the third lead-end (for consistency with higher numbers of bells this should be regarded as the pre-penultimate lead-end). Thus, in a sense, a lead of Little Bob Minor is worth three of Plain Bob

Minor (for Major it is worth five, and so on).

Plain B
<u>23456</u>
35264
56342
-56423
-56234
63542
-63425
-63254
35642
<u>54326</u>
42563
-42635
<u>23456</u>

Little B
<u>23456</u>
-56423
<u>34256</u>
-56234
<u>42356</u>
63542
25463
-63425
54263
-63254
42563
35642
-42635
56342
<u>23456</u>

5. Using touches you know to call spliced

Work out how many leads of Plain Bob there are between calls and how many leads of Plain Bob each method is worth; then, fill up the gaps between calls with suitable methods! Thus, for Minor, in the touch WHx2, the intervals are 1 and 4; Cambridge Surprise (or Double Bob) is worth 2 and Norwich Surprise (or St. Clement's) is worth 4; 2+4=6, which is equivalent to 1, as 5 is the length of a whole course. Thus, a lead of Cambridge followed by one of Norwich (or vice versa) will take us to the W and a further lead of Norwich will bring up the H; the second course could be called the same, or varied.

Exercise: using this touch (WHx2) for Major, compose a 8-lead touch of 8-spliced Surprise, using the standard methods.

6. 120 Stedman Doubles with four singles

The singles are made 30 changes apart, one pair when the observation bell leads quick, the other when it makes thirds between its half-turns (these are the points of symmetry of the principle).

Observation bell	1	2	3	4	5
Singles made by	2-3, 4-5	3-5, 1-4	1-5, 2-4	1-3, 2-5	1-2, 3-4

7. What to do if a call is made in the wrong place or missed

If a call is missed, the simplest solution is to carry on ringing the method without calls until the bells return to the point at which the call was omitted, then insert the call. This will lengthen the touch by the length of a plain course.

If an unwanted bob is called, the situation can be recovered by making it the first call in a bob course (a touch with a call at every lead) inserted into the original touch; for Grandsire and Plain Bob Doubles

simply call another bob at the next lead end and this will take you back to the lead end before the mistake was made; for Plain Bob Minor call a bob at the next two lead ends. This solution works whether a plain lead or a singled lead should have been rung.

When a single is called in place of a bob, call an additional bob in Grandsire Doubles, or two in Plain Bob Minor, as in the previous paragraph, then call another single. This will bring up the change that should have been produced by a bob.

Calling a single where there should have been a plain lead can be undone in Plain Bob Minor by calling a bob and a single and then ringing the plain lead. In Grandsire Doubles, call the next leads: bob, single, bob; then ring the plain lead.
