



# The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers Education Committee

---

## *Network for Ringing Training (NRT) summary January 2004*

---

### **Thread: Tenseness and fear**

Between Dec 14 and early Jan, an extended thread ran on overcoming tenseness and fear. John's initial post posed the questions:

- What factors cause fear that undermines bell control?
- What techniques or exercises help?
- What approaches help cure tenseness itself?

Posts addressed tenseness in general, and specific fears of hitting the stay, dropping the tail end, missing the sally. Common results of tenseness include overpulling, deathgrip on the sally, and general anxiety interfering with feeling and responding to changes in the bell dynamics.

An important discussion early in the thread developed from posts identifying two extremes that should be avoided:

- 1) learners exposed to hazardous events - a loose tail whipping around the room, someone getting tangled in a rope, stays being broken, causing them to develop entirely rational fears
- 2) instructors that are over-cautious may control the bell to such an extent that the learner gets little opportunity to develop a feel for the bell, and how to compensate for overpulling, underpulling, or other errors.

Some common things to expect:

- a) when learning to pull off the sally, student forgets to let go - arms are strained, hands abraded
- b) when learning to set the bell, the student may leave the bell at the balance, then be startled or hurt when the bell falls again.

Suggestions address how to be prepared for and prevent these problems, as well as the overall statement that an instructor needs to 'exude confidence' (and back it up with knowledge and skill). The instructor should educate the learner to treat the bell with respect, to expect some degree of surprises during learning, but should be able to ensure that the process will be paced appropriately and keep risk to a minimum. Maintain a calm and confident demeanour and don't yell at the student when they do something wrong. . .

Late in December, the thread continues by breaking down the initial handling instruction into a gradual progression of bite sized steps.

A useful exercise suggested by *Don Morrison* is to stand high on some boxes, and raise and lower an

unused sally and tail. The learner can practise catching and releasing the sally, with no risk, and with arbitrary timing controlled by the instructor. He also suggested that when working on a live bell the instructor should always be able to reach above the student's hands to take control of the rope when necessary, and may have to stand on boxes to achieve this.

Many people contributed to the discussion, including John Harrison, Peter Wenham, Don Morrison, Richard Pargeter, Peter Humphrey

### **Thread: Avoiding quasi single handed ringing**

*John Thorp started this thread in mid December:*

Any tips on how to ensure that new learners put their 'spare' hand straight on to the tail-end before or at the bottom of the stroke, rather than waiting till the tail-end is reaching the balance at the end of the stroke? Or on how to get rid of this fault once it has become habitual? Getting rid of it seems very difficult!

One thing worth trying may be always using a dummy tail-end when the new learner is ringing the sally on its own, and not moving on to trying both strokes together until the habit of getting both hands together on to the (dummy) tail-end is well engrained. And reverting to this exercise for learners who are already ringing both strokes together but without getting the spare hand on to the tail-end early enough.

*Peter Wenham responds:* My 'patter' at this stage of teaching is, 'Bring your right hand to your left hand', demonstrating and emphasising that both hands are grasping the tail end before it rises to backstroke. I consider that repeated demonstration is essential till the learner gets it right. (N.B. - I do not teach anyone 'left-handed' . . . take the tail end in the left hand without any enquiry into their personal handedness.)

*After some discussion of demonstrating keeping a pound note stuck between one's hands, and memories of being made to do that as a learner, Laura Dickerson wrote:* 'I wish people would regard the (whatever denomination) note trick as exactly that - a party trick, not a useful teaching tool.'

*JH replied:* I would say it is a party trick that is a useful teaching tool - but as a demonstration, not as an exercise for the student.

In the correct position, the wrists are not touching, but 'flying in close formation' several inches apart. That is why the £5 note trick requires considerable skill in a competent handler to keep the rope movement tidy at the same time, because it forces the hands into an unnatural position.

*In another post, John continues:*

From the start, I teach that both hands move and work together. My students practise doing everything on a dead rope before trying to do it on a moving rope. When they come to do transfers between hand and backstroke, I teach them that both strokes end with the hands together on the rope with the arms down. Both hands are gripping together except for the brief moment as they open and close around the sally. When ringing, I remind them of all this, and if necessary, we stop and practise the appropriate manoeuvre on a dead rope.

*John Thorp writes:*

Thanks, Alison, and to the others who've so far also commented. My gut feeling on 'does it [keeping hands together / avoiding what I've labelled quasi-single-handed ringing] matter?' is that the result is the main arbiter, as you suggest, but that having part of one's brain thinking about getting the second hand on to the rope at the top of the stroke can only be a distraction from good bell control and from the other things that should be taking priority at that moment - pulling the bell appropriately for the next stroke, maybe even thinking when to make the next call, etc etc.

*JH follows up:*

> My gut feeling on . . . keeping hands together . . . ' is that the result is the main arbiter. . .

Agreed - performance is what matters.

I'm not sure how much thinking goes on [about getting the second hand on to the rope]. My experience of people with handling quirks is that they are often unaware of what they are doing, or only hazily so. The reason things like this cause problems is that unbalanced actions disturb the rope, making it harder to control, and potentially causing other problems.

This is where you have to be careful with the style versus performance argument. When I say that performance is what matters . . . I mean able to ring changes accurately on any bell within a reasonable range (depending on stature) and while compensating for its shortcomings.

*Malcolm Bland suggests:* I have used a large, loose elastic band round both wrists. Any separation of the hands is instantly felt by the ringer, who then has to concentrate on keeping both hands together. I only do this after demonstrating it myself (to give the learner confidence that it can be done), and I only use it when the learner is ringing alone, and I am standing with him/her.

It seems to work and it is not dangerous (as the elastic band is quite thin, so will break if stretched too far, and not too tight), but learners are apt to slip back into bad habits again after a while. I suspect that this is true of any method of instruction.

*Tying up this thread, John Thorp added:*

I don't think that the 'thinking' (about getting the second hand on to the rope) has to be conscious / intentional thinking, before it becomes a distraction. The brain seems to have a remarkable (and often useful) ability to prioritise what it is concentrating on, to the exclusion of other material.

(I don't claim originality for this insight. I got it mainly from a ringing booklet that I read recently and found very perceptive. I've lent it on so don't know the title or author - maybe it was even you, John??!)

*And John Harrison responded:*

Yes it does [have to be conscious], to a degree. The currently accepted model sees the brain as a multi-channel resource. Different types of activity can go on in parallel, but similar types of activity interfere with each other because they compete for the same resource. Thus you have difficulty reading while listening to someone talking, because both are verbal tasks, but you can walk while listening to someone talking, because walking is a motor task not a verbal task. But when you need to make a navigation decision and start verbalising instructions to yourself, then you get interference with the listening.

In addition, some tasks, notably motor tasks and some perceptual tasks, can become habituated, which makes them easy to perform more quickly and fluently than by deliberate conscious action. (If that didn't happen, life would be too complicated to do almost anything.) The problem with habituated actions though, is that because the conscious mind is not in the loop, it is difficult to intervene to change them, even after you recognise that they need changing.

> I got it mainly from a ringing booklet. . .

I assume you mean 'Ringing Skills'.

## **Thread: Raising and lowering in peal**

*Peter Wenham introduced this thread with the following:*

A 15cwt six is perhaps not ideal for teaching R&L in peal, especially with a mostly ladies' band. As our progress in this area has not been good I have been considering the overall picture. Mention of R&L usually emphasises the role of the treble and this is undoubtedly important. However, I am becoming convinced that the tenor is the master bell. The following draft notes are offered for discussion and comment:

[I have merged the responses into the framework of the original points. Peter's original elements are in bold, as are his closing comments]

## RAISING:

### **1. The tenor is the controlling bell. All other bells must pace themselves to the tenor.**

*Mark Banner:* I believe the treble, second and the tenor are the controlling bells, with the main emphasis on treble, followed by tenor and lesser on the second. The treble has to judge the correct speed to go up, guided partially by the tenor. The second is an important bell because the space between the treble and itself will tend to govern the spread of the rest of the bells; if the spread is too large then the treble will be ringing before the tenor has had time to ring.

If I have the choice between people who can ring up and down and those that are learning, I will tend to put the better people on the treble, second and tenor as then you should have the main three bells in approximately the right place most of the time. Of course, we must remember that at some stage those who have learnt how to ring up and down on the middle bells also need to do it at either end.

### **2. Initial chiming: The bells must strike close enough to be within the compass of the tenor [MB: heavier bells]. The [heavier bells] should be swinging in a small arc for initial clapping. The other bells, except treble, have to strike very close to fit into this swing.**

### **3. The treble should INITIALLY leave a wide gap in the striking so that its 'second strike' will sound correctly after the tenor. This means that the treble (and other front bells) must pull up rapidly for the first few pulls; on eight bells this may be as much as halfway up in the first few pulls.**

### **4. Throughout the raise all bells, except treble and tenor, should listen for the bell after [MB: all the bells] them as much as to the bell in front of them. If lighter bells are raised too quickly the sequence will be lost. Lighter bells must conform to the pace of the heavier bells, all must conform to the tenor.**

*Mark Banner:* The treble especially must listen and watch everything.

### **5. Until a bell reaches the balance the only control of its timing is the height of its swing which, in turn, is controlled by the strength of pull. To strike wider, raise the bell more (pull harder) but take care not to 'overshoot' after correcting. If striking too wide, pull less once or twice then resume a normal pull**

### **6. For much of the raise the treble must be guided by listening, to keep striking after the tenor. Until**

### **the tenor rope has sally bounce, watching rope movement doesn't make much sense.**

*Mark Banner:* [Treble should watch] the effort required [by tenors] ... - if the tenors are struggling, you've gone up too fast.

### **7. As each bell reaches the balance take care not to strike wide by over-balancing - because at this stage the heavier bells can't hold up.**

### **8. As the tenor is the last bell to reach balance it seems sensible for the tenor ringer to call 'Stand'.**

*Mark Banner:* I believe that this last point is contrary to the way the majority of bands ring up: however I can see your reasoning. It is normally the treble that calls stand, in some places there is a nod of agreement or comments passed, in other places the treble ringer calls stand when it is (hopefully) obvious that the tenor is all the way up. I also like to think here that as the bells get up to the top, they are spread out a little (depending on how many are ringing), to the normal rounds speed: I think a lot of learners don't realise this and tend to try to ring the rounds fast.

Another point that I would make (I think Steve Coleman makes as well) is that the trebles, as you said, need to go up quickly initially; however once the tenors are chiming, they [the front bells] need to pause for a short time ... to let the tenors catch up with them, and then everyone can progress at the same speed.

*JH:* The reason for the rapid rise on the front is to get to a speed at which the tenors can ring. From there, you go up at the speed that the tenors can rise.

## LOWERING:

### **1. As with raising, all other bells should conform to the tenor. The tenor ringer should concentrate on lowering the bell at a steady pace.**

*MB:* With lowering, I would again say treble, tenor and second are the most important, in similar ways, and again my point about putting more experienced people on those bells applies. However, whether the tenor sets the pace or the treble does depends on the band. I would probably put this point as follows (reflecting my own personal preferences for ringing down), other people would say that the treble sets the pace and everyone has to follow it - but perhaps that's more a situation when bands are wanting to ring down quickly.

*JH:* The tenor and treble should work as a team. The treble can go down at any speed, but the tenor can't go too fast, so the treble should take its main speed cue from the tenor.

*MB:* The treble is the bell that sets the 'race', the tenor is the bell that sets the 'pace'. When ringing starts, normal rounds are rung for the bells to settle down,

after an appropriate time, the treble says 'downwards' (or something appropriate) and the ringing down then starts with the tenors - the tenors are allowed to start closing up on the bells in front of them, whilst the front bells are still at their rounds speed, this only happens for 2-4 pulls, after that the trebles can start going down. This has two effects: allows the tenors to start ringing down and get to a pace where their speed matches the trebles, and consequently stops the trebles 'dragging' down the tenors.

*JH:* All the bells should be ringing at the same speed in rounds, and they should remain ringing at the same speed all the way down - else chaos.

When lowering, the bells all have to go faster, and all have to get closer to each other. The only way to do it properly is for everyone to move together, not for one end or the other to pull or push.

## **2. The treble ringer should concentrate on keeping position after the tenor. As the lower progresses listening becomes vital.**

*MB:* The treble ringer needs to concentrate on the whole change (as should the other bells). Especially the treble needs to stop 'bunching' where there is a big delay and then all bells squeezed in, or rushing where they go in front of the tenor.

## **3. During the lower always pull sufficiently. It is easier to check a bell from swinging too high than to pull it up if it is too low. Midway in a lower the middle bells have a tendency to 'fall away' from the tenor. Prevent this by pulling sufficiently. A well-known ringer once said, 'The only way to ring a bell down is to keep it up'. (Think about it!)**

*Jenny Cornwell:* There was an article on the front of *The Ringing World* sometime in the sixties which I found very helpful for describing the right way to control a bell to keep it in the right place when raising and lowering in peal. The key factor I remember from that article was that one should pull each stroke to keep the bell at a higher level than would be needed for it to strike correctly and then check it into the correct position. This would then prevent it from dropping too fast or not rising quickly enough to strike correctly. This is one of the causes behind the falling away

## **4. As with raising, each ringer should listen to the bell after them as well as to the bell that they are following. Lighter bells must keep time to the heavier bells thus, as with lowering (except for treble and tenor), listen and keep in time with the bell following you by adjusting the strength of pull.**

## **5. Lowering should continue until the back bells have minimal swing to keep chiming. The front bells will still have considerable swing to keep in time. Especially with heavier rings, if the back bells are not brought right down when chiming the front**

## **bells will have too much swing for an effective 'catch' at the end.**

*MB:* At the same time the trebles MUST NOT ring too fast for the tenors to fit in - this makes it hard work for the tenors, and invariably, the tenors cannot manage it. Although the front bells need to be down low enough, an effective catch is frequently brought about by the ringers stopping the bells as much as possible at the right time rather than having the front bells down low with not enough room for the tenors to chime. Some people do have difficulty knowing when to catch the sally when it is swinging by a couple of feet, I know that I can normally do it fairly well, however I have no idea how to explain how/when.

*Doug N:* (in response to MB) In my experience the final catch is a unique activity, worth some dedicated practice.

The timing is different: the final catch should occur at the absolute bottom of the rope's descent (whereas the application of tension for normal chiming starts just before the top).

The nature of the action is different as well: it is basically 'catch-and-hold-then-allow-to-rise', the idea being to first stop (or attempt to stop) the bell in its tracks. This should produce the desired final loud chime. Then the rope should be gently (but immediately) allowed to rise to its resting position to ensure there is no second strike. A common mistake is to try (by pulling) to make the rope descend further, rather than just momentarily stopping it from rising.

*JH:* When you are chiming, you let the bell swing, and give it a tug near the top of the stroke. The final catch is different, because you don't want the bell to be swinging afterwards, which it will be if you repeat the same action. The trick is to stop it rising. If everyone does that, and they were in time before the pause, then they should strike together (with no odd dongs afterwards). I call 'catch and hold' to remind people.

*PH:* My version is similar: after 'miss here' or 'miss this one', I call 'stop here'.

The need to stop the bells dead, and how to achieve it, is also a main point in the occasional raising-and-lowering courses I give locally.

## **FOR THE MORE EXPERT -**

Some towers, especially in Devon, start a raise by swinging the bells without checking for two or three rounds then treble only sounds, then 1 and 2, then 1-2-3 and so on successively to full rounds, then continue the raise.

**An alternative, more suited to lighter rings, is to swing silently in rounds then, on a signal from the treble ringer, everyone checks, giving immediate rounds.**

*Doug Nichols* expected more emphasis on watching ropes, not to diminish importance of listening, as this makes it possible to see that your rope is straying and fix it on the spot. Also, you see the bigger picture so you may find it easier to disregard [a bell that is off].

*John H:* Not sure that is true. The relationships between adjacent rope movement can be very odd part way up.

*Martin Mansley:* I assume that we are talking about a 'Bristol' start to the raise ie 1 12 123 1234 etc. A Devon start requires rounds to be struck from the start. Most competition bands sacrifice a fault by making the first strike virtually a Fire. The second round drops into rounds as the relative swing of the bells allows the correct gap to form between all the bells. With this style the tenors go up much quicker and can be almost double clapping on an eight by the time they would strike their first blow in a 'Bristol' start. Having done both styles over many years I definitely find Devon style easier to get good results.

For those unfamiliar with this start it is usual to have two silent swings and strike the third. On a light ring it would be just one swing. The call is 'Catch on the third pull - GO' - as the treble ringer pulls off.

The biggest fault is getting the bell at the wrong height in comparison with the rest. Probably the easiest way for the learner to keep right is to watch the sally bounce on the bell in front and try to get theirs to be the same.

*Doug Nichols added the query:* I have a difficulty with the business of raising and lowering in peal that might not affect many towers; but it affects us.

We leave our bells raised all the time. ... Many of our ringers are not proficient at raising and lowering in peal and some are hostile to the idea ('too much hard work', 'a complete waste of time' ...).

Coming from rural Leicestershire in the 1970s, where R&L in peal was the norm, I enjoy doing it, I enjoy the sound, and I am certain that it improves confidence and bell-control.

We have a small knot of local 'converts' (younger members who have been taught the skill from the outset) plus one or two older members who have, like me, acquired the skill from elsewhere. When we try it, we make a moderately good job on four or five bells, but would be shaky, at best, on six.

Over the years as tower captain I have left it alone as too hard. But now I want to turn things around... to improve our abilities in this area, increase the numbers willing to take hold and make it routine. But I fear  
*NRT summary No 25, Dec '03, Jan '04*

many are going to feel threatened by the idea of tackling a physical ringing skill that they know they can't do properly when they are meant to be senior members of the band. Some injuring of pride is at risk.

We have the numbers to put a capable band around someone who might agree to learn, so the prospects would seem good. But at present the majority of the band tries to hide when I ask for the bells to be raised or lowered.

How can I change things in a politically gentle way?

*Peter Wenham:* A 'softly, softly' approach, inferring that R&L in peal is the mark of a fully capable ringer since it is undoubtedly the ultimate in bell control. Due to your isolation it may be an uphill struggle. Work with the ones who can as an example even if it means raising/lowering 3 or 4 in peal? (On Sundays if we are short of the more experienced members we raise 1-3-5 followed by 2-4-6 - it's kinder on the neighbours.) Given the example that it need not be cacophony perhaps the 'diehards' will not want to be left out.

*John Harrison concludes:* This was the topic of the first ever edition of *The Learning Curve* (RW June 1999 or Chapter 1 of the book). It does not go into great detail, but you might find the ideas useful.

Also, even experienced ringers might find some useful ideas in 'Raising and Lowering in Peal' (CC publications) if they were persuaded to take it away and read in private.

Good luck. I went through exactly this process with our band some years back.

References:

JH: 'Raising and Lowering in Peal', CC pubs, 1989  
& *The Learning Curve* (RW 6/99 or Ch 1 of the book)  
MB: Steve Coleman's book (*Bedside Companion?*)

## **Thread: Problems covering**

*Chris Baxter started a thread in early January by asking how to help two people learning to ring cover.* The two have rung cover for several QPs, but required a lot of help from the band. I've tried the 'look for the last rope' approach and the 'listen and count' method that worked for me and I still use.

*Alistair Donaldson suggested:* Ensure they can ring reasonably steadily in rounds - a sense of rhythm is an essential milestone. Listen to the gap before the tenor - if off for more than two blows, adjust speed very slightly. Match rhythm first, then adjust striking. Similar advice appeared from others in the same timeframe.

*Lucy Dawson* asked whether the issue is covering, or just the weight of the bell. Ringers often learn on the front, then are moved to the back and need to learn

how to ring the heavier bells. Her tower starts with covering to rounds and call changes, then ringing first of 3 covers to hunt on 3, before moving on to covering for Doubles.

*Peter Wenham concurs that control of heavier bells may be root of problem.* Also, difference following heavy and light bells (different swing times) can cause problems. Different strategy is used ringing heavy bells (adjusting height) compared to light bells (ringing to balance). Remember to pull harder on last stroke to get bell back up to stand. Try ringing cover to a simulator, or facing outward with a steady band.

*John Preston also suggested that if bell control is OK, force tenor to listen by having them face outward!* Start with rounds, then call changes, then hunt on 5. This is also useful for learning to lead correctly.

*John Harrison suggested focusing on ringing steadily and listening - don't focus on ropesight.* Remove thoughts about who they are following. If the band is unsteady, it is important for tenor to 'act like a flywheel and ride smoothly over the bumps.' There are two Learning Curve articles about ringing heavy bells: RW 4 February 2000 - Ch 9 of the book and RW 3 May 2002.

*Greg Russell suggested:* Choose a landmark on the tail and concentrate on ringing regularly, pulling just so the handstroke rises to the same height on the tail each time, getting a steady rhythm going. Then minor adjustments by ear can compensate for changes in speed of the band. Combining this with Laura's suggestion - noting when you pull in relation to the sounding of the front bells, allows adjusting fairly early, before a real clash occurs. Start using ropesight to compensate for other ringers' irregularities only after rhythm and listening are solid.

*Doug Nichols writes:* Make it clear to someone covering for the first time that they are following ALL the bells, with the actual bell followed being less important. Appropriate ropesight can narrow the choice down to two bells, but no tenor-behind ringer ever needs more detail than that: a steady rhythm is the real key. Maybe try silent call changes on the two bells in front of the cover - done with a nod or whatever, to wean the learner from a strict adherence to following one bell. 'follow them both, and who can say in which order?'

*John Harrison echoes this:* I tell them 'follow whoever is there - and if you can't see who is, ring in your place anyway.

*Peter Humphrey also emphasises rhythm:* Rhythm, rhythm, rhythm!!! Speed of ringing must not change when the bells go into changes! If it does, treat this problem first. Don't let the method get beyond the first two rows until they cause the drummer no problem.

*Roger Booth offers an historical anecdote:* The thought of inexperienced ringers taking their first steps  
*NRT summary No 25, Dec '03, Jan '04*

in change ringing by learning to cover worries me. Teaching them to adjust to inconsistencies caused by other members of the band also seems quite inappropriate.

About 30 years ago, I ventured up a tower where a band of very prominent ringers were practising . . . I offered to ring the tenor, [but] was told in no uncertain terms that the tenor was a very important bell in terms of setting and maintaining the rhythm, and it would be far better for me to learn the method instead. I can usually teach a beginner to cover reasonably well on a simulator within the first 10 minutes, but I find many more experienced visitors to my tower have great difficulty because they have already been taught that listening is not important.

In the long term it is far easier to teach a band to ring well right from the outset. There are many exercises which can be used to do this, including Kaleidoscope ringing, and a single bell simulator can cost less than £100 to set up using a second-hand PC and a copy of Abel.

If you want your band to ring more quarters, not just now but in the long term, and to make more rapid progress, concentrate on a step by step approach to improve bell handling, including achieving the three basic speeds of ringing; develop the concept of position or place in a row; a knowledge of what good ringing should sound like; and the ability to hear or distinguish one's bell from the rest. . . . By all means let the beginners ring the tenor behind if they have the aptitude to do it, but I think they too would feel a greater sense of achievement if they rang the treble to their first quarter.

*Laura Dickerson adds:* It is also true that having the treble in the right place is vital, [but] that's the other bell most often given to beginners for a first quarter. At the stage that a learner is starting on rounds, emphasis should be given to ringing in exactly whatever's place, rather than just following the specific bell in front of him or her. If you can ring precisely in 3rds place, for example, you should be able to ring the tenor precisely in last place as well, and it might be easier to hear because it has the lowest pitch.

I think it would be interesting to start a beginner on rounds and call changes without ever telling her/him to follow a specific bell but rather to only explain about keep track of what place s/he is ringing in. This could still be done by looking as well as by listening, and I think ropesight would develop just as well.

*In response to Laura's comment ' . . . having the treble in the right place is vital . . . ', John H replied:* I assume you mean because the treble is a (visual) landmark. It can do that job providing it is within + or - 50% of the gap between where it should be and the next bell. If the tenor covering wanders by that much it wrecks the ringing.

*In response to Laura's comment '... start a beginner on rounds and call changes without ever telling her/him to follow a specific bell', John replied: This is precisely what we do by putting learners on a simulator, which, as Roger says, they can master in minutes providing their bell handling is reasonable.*

*Rebecca Banner talks about an 'inherited' ringer: I asked if he knew when the bell made a noise when he rang it ie at what part of his arm movement. when I was satisfied that he did, I told him to count to six in time with the other bells and make sure his bell rang when he got to '6'. His tenoring definitely improved. Several people had already said to him things like 'just listen to it' or 'just ring steadily at rounds speed' which didn't seem to have much effect. Just goes to show that different people need things explaining in different ways.*

*Chris Baxter, the original poster, writes that after reading all the posts and observing the tenor ringers again, it appears that:*

- 1) both make every attempt to pull the bell out of the tower (apparently a problem caused by tension when ringing with other people)
- 2) they are struggling to identify the first bell and count from there - they both have trouble identifying which is the last rope.

One of the learners responded well to a demonstration of ringing whilst looking outward.

*In response, John H suggests to 'just ring last,' (i.e. identify the end of the sequence rather than the beginning).*

*Caroline Birdsell points out: To start with, looking for a new bell at backstroke is not the natural thing to do after many sessions of call changes where everything happens at handstroke. I try to explain to my 'new tenor' ringers what will be going on in front of them - i.e. in 5th place (as we are only a 6-bell tower).*

For Grandsire - at backstroke 2 blows on treble, 2 on 2nd - 2 bells working together in pattern AABABB & next time that pattern comes round, one of the bells will be the other 'working' bell.

For PB - starting with last blow of 4 at the back, then at backstroke 2 on another and then 2 on the treble, 2 on another and 4 on the next etc, so I encourage them to try to look for the 4 blows and the treble and then I find the 'another' just fits in.

I find that covering to plain hunt is the least easy to start a tenor learning her skills.

## Do you have e-mail?

*John Harrison, Chairman CC Education Committee writes:*

You receive this summary by post because, when you joined NRT, you did not have an e-mail address (or cannot use it for some reason) – a key principle of NRT is that anyone interested in training can be a member.

If, since you joined, you now do have e-mail, please let us know. It will give you better access and it will help to control postal costs.

With e-mail you have two options:

– You can continue to receive the regular summaries, but instead of being delivered by post they will be sent by e-mail.

– You can subscribe directly to the discussion list and participate.

Currently about 60% of members use the discussion list, 25% just receive the summaries by e-mail and 15% receive postal summaries.

Please send an e-mail with your name, stating which option you want, to:  
NRT-DBA@fredbone.waitrose.com

Summary prepared by Gregory Russell  
*This is a highly condensed summary of the major threads from December '03 and January '04. Several smaller threads will be incorporated into the February summary. As this is my first summary, I've used several different summary styles, and I have taken some liberty in paraphrasing many of the actual posts. Please forgive any misinterpretations.*