

## Conducting & coursing order - 2

Last month *The Learning Curve* introduced coursing orders as an aid to conducting Plain Bob. This month we look at other uses, and use with other methods. You might find it helpful to work things out with pencil and paper as you go.

### Knowing where to put calls

Most compositions of methods based on Plain Bob are designed and written down in terms of what the Tenor does at the calls. If you are ringing the Tenor, that makes it simpler to know where to put the calls. If you are ringing another fixed back bell then you need to shift the positions a bit. For example, on the 7th in Major, calls W occur when you are in 5-6 up, H when you are in 7-8 up, M when you are in 7-8 down and B when you run in.

On a bell that is affected by the composition, it is not so easy because your position with respect to the Tenor will keep changing. You could keep track of where the Tenor is all the time, but that is not always easy, and if you do have spare brain power to think about the work of another bell, you might need it to help sort out someone who has difficulty. The alternative is to use your position in the coursing order.

Suppose you are ringing the 5th, the coursing order is currently 32546 and the next call is a bob Middle. Using the transformation described last month, you know that a bob Middle changes 32546 into 32465, ie it rotates the three affected bells (underlined) so that ABC becomes BCA. A makes the bob, B runs out and C runs in. In this case, you know that you (5th) will make the Bob, so call it to make you do so. Now suppose that the coursing order is 56432 and the next call is Middle. That will change 56432 into 56324, so on the 5th you are not affected, but there are several places where you can be unaffected. At the call, the 4th makes the bob, ie would have dodged 3-4 up. The 6th is one step away from that, ie dodging 5-6 up, and you are 1 step further, so you will be dodging 7-8 up at the call.

One final example is a bit more difficult. You are still on the 5th with the coursing order 56432, but the next call is a Before. That will change 56432 into 25643, ie all five cycle round one place, but remember that only one of them is actually affected by the bob - the 2nd in this case, which makes the bob. The Tenor and 7th run out and in, and the others appear to change place in the coursing order, because it is defined with respect to the Tenor. Look at the coursing order after the bob, and you see that the 2nd becomes your course bell. By making the bob, it becomes 4th place bell (as if it had just dodged 3-4 down) so you must be dodging 5-6 down. Again, this tells you where to put the call.

### Help with the composition

When you are learning the composition, write it out with the coursing orders, and as well as learning the calls, look to see whether there are

any helpful landmarks in the coursing order. Figure 1 shows a quarter peal of Plain Bob Major, with calls set out in columns headed W M B H (the order the calling positions come in Plain Bob). The corresponding columns on the right show the coursing orders produced at each call. (Blank spaces mean it remains what it was at the previous call.) Above the line (in course 0) on the right is 53246, the coursing order at the start. For ease of reference (but non standard), each course is numbered in the left hand column.

	W	M	B	H		53246
1	1	-			65324	63254
2		-				62534
3	-	S			62345	64325
4		-				63245
5		S				64235
6		-				62345
7	-	1	-	23645	52364	53624
8		-	S		53246	54236
9			-			52346
10			S			54326
11			-			53246

Figure 1: 1280 Plain Bob Major

Courses 1-6 have the 6th at the start of the coursing order and courses 7-11 have the 5th at the start. That means for most of the time, you can keep four numbers rather than 5 in your head. The blocks of four Homes (courses 3-6 and 8-11) also have 5th or 6th (whichever is not at the start) at the end. In these two blocks, all the singles are made by the 4th, which makes it jump forward in the coursing order. At the bobs, it makes the bob and jumps back. If you forget whether it is a single or a bob next, check the coursing order to see where the 4th is.

### Application to other methods

Most methods are more complex than Plain Bob, and the bells don't simply follow each other up and down hunting between leads. You might think that would sink the idea of coursing order as a practical aid, but it doesn't because coursing order is defined in terms of the relationship in Figure 2 (repeated from last month).

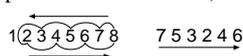


Figure 2: Coursing order from Rounds

For a given method, what happens between the leads is defined in terms of the lead heads, and what happens in the course can be defined in terms of the course head (which is Rounds for a plain course). So to find the coursing order of any course of any method, you just apply the transformation of Figure 2 to the course head.

The same transformations apply for calls in all methods with 2nds place plain leads and 4ths place bobs. Methods like Double Norwich that have an 8ths place plain lead and 6ths place bob (which also affects three bells) use the transformation CAB instead of BCA. Those with a 4ths place bob and an 8ths place lead end, like Kent or Bristol, have five bells affected by the bob, but calls W, H or M, also affect the Tenor, and therefore move the reference point. As a result, they use the same BCA transformation as for a 2nds place method.

### Seeing the coursing order

In Plain Bob, the coursing order is visible throughout, so you can check the ringing anywhere (and put people right quickly). With more complex methods, things are less easy, but the coursing order can still be visible in many places, especially if you learn a few exceptions.

Before calling a method, you should write it out and look at where the coursing order appears. Here are some illustrations of what you can find.

- Little Bob - Coursing order is visible throughout. (It is Plain Bob with bits missing).
- Double Norwich - Working bells (but not the Treble) see coursing order throughout.
- St Clements - Coursing order (with the front bells missing) is visible on the back.
- Kent - Coursing order is visible, but with the slow bell missing.
- Norwich Minor - Bells move between back work and front work in the coursing order.
- Cambridge - Bells go on the back in coursing order. 3rds place bell sees full coursing order.
- Yorkshire - As Cambridge, and coursing order is visible for most of the course if you allow for alternately overtaking and being overtaken by your course or after bell while making places, and swap over the orders of two pairs in 5ths and 2nd place bells.

*Conducting and Coursing Order* has more details of swaps that enable you to see more of the coursing order, for several methods,

### Grandsire

Grandsire has a hunt bell, and including it changes the coursing order at every lead (though at a bob it is cyclic, ie it stays the same with respect to the 7th). The transformations are explained in *Conducting and Coursing Order*, but transposing at every lead, rather than only at calls, is an added load.

Treating the hunt bell as outside the coursing order gives 5346 for a plain course of Triples, which remains through the course. Figure 3 shows the bells that are affected by calls with the 7th in the three back positions: W (4-5 up), H (6-7 up) and M (6-7 down). (Warning: some books swap the meanings of W and M). The bell shown on its own is the hunt bell. Figure 3 also shows the transformations of the affected bells for a bob and a single. Notice the similarity with Plain Bob in both the positions of the bells that are affected in the transformation for a bob.

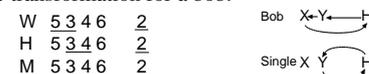


Figure 3: Calls in Grandsire with 7th behind

Figure 4 shows the effect with the 7th in 3rds at the call. A bob gives an end around shunt, like a bob Before in Plain Bob Major, and a single simply swaps the hunt bell with the first bell in the coursing order.

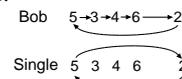


Figure 4: Calls in Grandsire with 7th in 3rds.

The transformations for taking the 7th in and out of the hunt have no equivalent in Plain Bob (See *The Tower Handbook* for details).

### Other numbers

We have used Major and Triples as examples, but the principles apply to other numbers too, as you can verify for yourself by experimenting with pencil and paper.

Tail End

*Conducting and Coursing Order* is available from Profile.

*The Tower Handbook* is available from CC Publications.