

## Calling Stedman Triples

by Michael Henshaw

Before you skip too quickly to the next page, let's get one thing straight; this short article is about calling Stedman Triples, not about conducting it. Why do I make that distinction? Well mainly because there are very few people who conduct Stedman, but quite a lot who call it, and also because although calling a peal of Stedman Triples has undoubtedly been the most challenging 'conducting' I have experienced (in terms of concentration), calling touches is actually more straightforward than many would believe.

That's not to say it's easy, but in this article I shall give some basic information about how to call relatively simple touches of Stedman Triples.

### Methods of calling touches

The most common way is probably to learn where the bobs and singles come relative to the position of one bell, most likely the one you are going to ring. This bell is usually called the 'observation bell'. However, it is also possible to call a touch 'by the music', i.e. by knowing where the calls come relative to particular musical (easily identifiable) patterns - such as 468's.

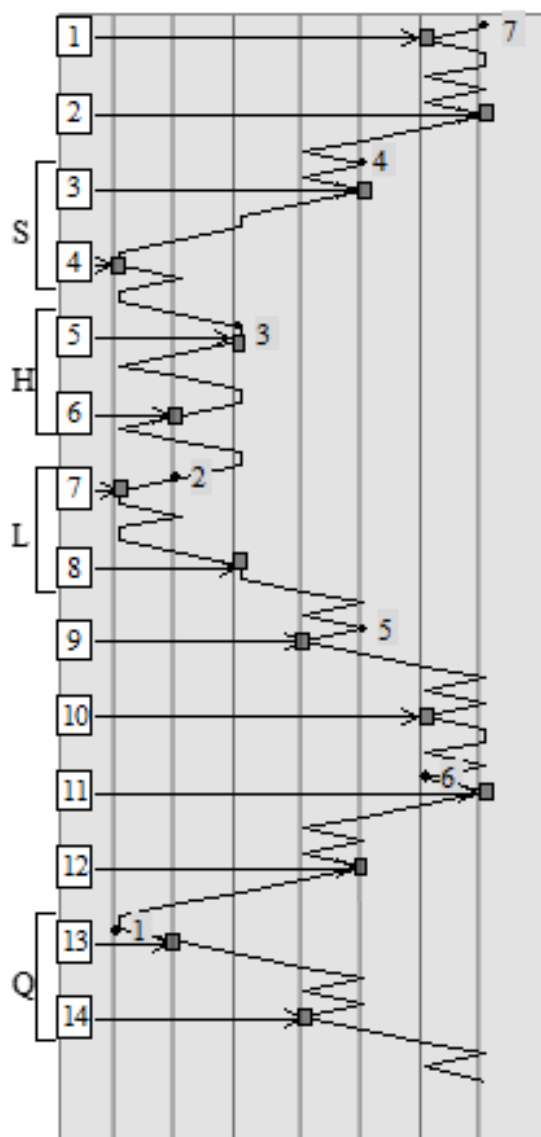
### Calling positions

The diagram shows the line of Stedman Triples, together with the starting position for each of the seven bells (marked with a dot on the method line), and the fourteen calling positions (marked with a square). For many touches only a few of these will be used. Some pairs of positions have been marked with letters; these are the positions when the observation bell is unaffected by calls, and they represent pairs of bobs. The positions are as follows:-

Positions	Name	Meaning
3 and 4	S	In slow and first whole turn
5 and 6	H	First half turn and second half turn
7 and 8	L	Last whole turn and out slow
12 and 13	Q	In quick and out quick

### Simple touches

There are quite a number of simple touches which may be called by just using these four positions, each representing two bobs called consecutively. Here are some of them, the first is pricked out below to illustrate the spacing of the calls within the course, the others are just noted by their letter designation<sup>1</sup>.



SLQ - This is the equivalent of a 'bob course' in Stedman Triples, it is 84 changes (i.e. one course).

SQ,SQ (168 changes, two courses)

S,S or H,H or L,L or Q,Q (168 or two courses)

S,SQ,Q or Q,H,HQ or H,HL,L (252 or three courses)

SHL (3 times) or HQ (3 times) (252 or three courses)

Note that SH and HL actually represent four consecutive bobs, and SHL represents six consecutive bobs.

Now all these touches can be called from any bell (you don't have to ring the seventh) but, of course, you may have to start the touch at a different place. For instance if you wanted to call SLQ from the third bell you would actually have to call LQS, because you start in between the S and L positions. The same touch from the treble would start with one bob (at 13, i.e. second bob of the Q pair) and finish with one bob at 12 (the first of the Q pair).

Any touch that gives an even number of changes coming round at the usual place can be called from any bell.

### When to call "Bob"

<sup>1</sup> I have used commas to indicate which calls occur within the same course.

This is very important, and will be a crucial factor in whether or not your touch is successful; a bob in the wrong place in Stedman (too early or too late) will often confuse a good proportion, and maybe even the entire, band. In all methods the call should be made one whole pull before it takes effect; in Stedman Triples the call takes effect at handstroke following the six-end, so the call must be made at the preceding handstroke. The diagrams are marked to show where you should actually call 'bob'. For the calling positions used in the touches above it is as follows:-

3 - On the last blow in fifth's place (following the dodge 4-5 down) before going in slow.

4 - On the first handstroke of the first whole turn (i.e. before the snap seconds).

5 - On the handstroke in third's place before the first half turn.

6 - On the handstroke in second's place before the second half turn.

7 - On the first handstroke lead of the last whole turn

8 - On the handstroke which is the first blow in third's on the way out of the slow.

Touch: <b>SLQ</b>				
1 2 3 4 5 6 7		7 4 6 2 5 3 1		5 1 3 6 2 4 7
2 1 3 5 4 7 6		4 7 6 5 2 1 3		5 3 1 2 6 7 4
<u>2 3 1 4 5 6 7</u>		<u>4 6 7 2 5 3 1</u>		3 5 1 6 2 4 7
3 2 4 1 6 5 7		6 4 7 5 2 1 3		3 1 5 2 6 7 4
2 3 4 6 1 7 5		6 7 4 2 5 3 1		1 3 5 6 2 4 7
2 4 3 1 6 5 7		<u>7 6 4 5 2 1 3</u>		<u>1 5 3 2 6 7 4</u>
4 2 3 6 1 7 5		6 7 5 4 1 2 3		5 1 2 3 7 6 4
4 3 2 1 6 5 7		6 5 7 1 4 3 2		1 5 2 7 3 4 6
<u>3 4 2 6 1 7 5</u>		5 6 7 4 1 2 3		1 2 5 3 7 6 4
4 3 6 2 7 1 5		5 7 6 1 4 3 2		2 1 5 7 3 4 6
4 6 3 7 2 5 1		7 5 6 4 1 2 3	call "Bob" ▶	2 5 1 3 7 6 4
6 4 3 2 7 1 5		<u>7 6 5 1 4 3 2</u>	Bob takes effect	<u>5 2 1 7 3 4 6</u>
6 3 4 7 2 5 1		6 7 1 5 4 2 3		2 5 7 1 3 6 4
3 6 4 2 7 1 5		7 6 1 4 5 3 2		2 7 5 3 1 4 6
<u>3 4 6 7 2 5 1</u>		7 1 6 5 4 2 3		7 2 5 1 3 6 4
4 3 7 6 2 1 5		1 7 6 4 5 3 2		7 5 2 3 1 4 6
3 4 7 2 6 5 1		1 6 7 5 4 2 3		5 7 2 1 3 6 4
3 7 4 6 2 1 5		<u>6 1 7 4 5 3 2</u>		<u>5 2 7 3 1 4 6</u>
7 3 4 2 6 5 1		1 6 4 7 5 2 3		2 5 3 7 1 6 4
7 4 3 6 2 1 5		1 4 6 5 7 3 2		5 2 3 1 7 4 6
<u>4 7 3 2 6 5 1</u>		4 1 6 7 5 2 3		5 3 2 7 1 6 4
7 4 2 3 6 1 5		4 6 1 5 7 3 2		3 5 2 1 7 4 6
7 2 4 6 3 5 1		6 4 1 7 5 2 3		3 2 5 7 1 6 4
2 7 4 3 6 1 5		<u>6 1 4 5 7 3 2</u>		<u>2 3 5 1 7 4 6</u>
2 4 7 6 3 5 1		1 6 5 4 3 7 2		3 2 1 5 4 7 6
4 2 7 3 6 1 5		6 1 5 3 4 2 7		3 1 2 4 5 6 7
<u>4 7 2 6 3 5 1</u>		6 5 1 4 3 7 2		1 3 2 5 4 7 6
		5 6 1 3 4 2 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7
		5 1 6 4 3 7 2		
		<u>1 5 6 3 4 2 7</u>		

S

L

Q

12 - On the last blow in fifth's place (following the dodge 4-5 down) before going in quick.

13 - On the handstroke in second's place after leading quick.

### Learning more

I have had to assume that you have a certain level of knowledge about Stedman Triples in order to describe calling touches briefly. If you wish to have a go at calling Stedman then you ought to try to learn something about its construction, it will make the calling much easier if you do. Bob Smith's book 'Standard Methods' gives a really excellent introduction, and Wilfrid Moreton's booklet 'Conducting Stedman Triples' gives a concise, but clear, description, covering all that is necessary to get started.

Why not have a go at calling a simple touch? In a later article I shall give some slightly more difficult, but possibly more musical, touches and discuss how these may be called.