OXFORD DIOCESAN GUILD OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

GUILD STRIKING COMPETITIONS

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of Guild Striking Competitions is to promote the Objects of the Guild, to encourage Sunday Service and Branch Bands to improve their striking and to regard good striking rather than the complexity of methods rung as a primary aim.

B. RULES

1. The competition organiser must receive the name of the team by the date specified.

2. The names of the team members and the conductor shall be notified to the competition organiser before, or immediately after, ringing.

3. Every ringer taking part in any Guild striking competition must be either a resident ringing member or a resident life member or a resident honorary ringing member of the Guild. No person shall ring for more than one team (except for those in Youth Teams as set out in paragraph 5(d) below).

4. **Membership of Teams**

   A Tower Team shall consist of members who normally ring together at the same tower for Sunday Services, whether or not they ring at more than one tower and shall be chosen by the Tower in any way it thinks fit. One substitute member shall be permitted who shall be a member of the Branch in which the tower is located. Branch Teams shall consist solely of members of the Branch and shall be chosen by the Branch in any way it thinks fit.

5(a). **Six Bell Competition**

   This competition shall be open to one team from each Branch. A Branch wishing to participate must be represented by a Tower Team from within the Branch.

5(b). **Eight Bell Competition**

   This competition shall be open to one or more teams from each Branch and every Tower in the Guild. A Branch or Tower wishing to participate must be represented by a Branch or Tower Team respectively. A Branch or Tower which enters more than one team shall designate them ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’, etc.

5(c). **Ten Bell Competition**

   This competition shall be open to one team from each Branch. A Branch wishing to enter must be represented by a Branch Team.

5(d). **Youth Teams**

   In addition, and in order to encourage participation by the Guild’s younger ringers, all striking competitions will be open to teams consisting entirely of Youth Members.

   A Youth Member for the purposes of these rules, is any Guild member who is aged 18 or under on 31st August of the academic year of the competition.

   Youth participants can only ring in one Youth Team, but may also ring in no more than one other qualifying team. If a Youth participant is ringing in two teams, to prevent unfair advantage, they should not ring the same bell in both teams (except at the discretion of the organiser).

Ringing

6. The order of ringing of the teams shall be drawn in advance or at the start of the competition.

7. The bells will be up.

8. Up to two minutes (three minutes in the case of the Ten Bell Competition) practice will be allowed to each team immediately prior to the test piece, after which the bells must be stood.

9. Open handstrokes will be assumed unless otherwise stated on the entry form.

10. Only the test piece which must finish with rounds will be judged.

11(a). **Six Bell Competition**

The test piece will consist of at least one minute's rounds followed by 240 changes of any method of Doubles or Minor or 240 rows of call changes. If a method is rung then plain courses will be acceptable. If call changes are rung then at least 30 changes must be called and at least 5 different bells brought down to lead. Any team intending to ring call changes should notify the organiser at the time of entry.

11(b). **Eight Bell Competition**

The test piece will consist of at least one minute's rounds followed by a set touch of Triples or Major, in alternate years, which all teams must ring. The touch will be circulated at least 28 days before the competition.

11(c). **Ten Bell Competition**

The test piece will consist of at least one minute's rounds followed by a set touch of Caters or Royal which all teams must ring. The touch will be circulated at least 28 days before the competition.

12. The competition will be judged on striking alone.

13. Any team failing to obey any of the above rules will be disqualified.

14. The judges' decision will be final.

C. ORGANISATION

i. Where possible each competition shall be held in a tower which has no team competing.

ii. At least two judges should be appointed to judge each competition. Preferably the judges should not be resident members of the Guild, but if resident Guild members are appointed, wherever possible they should not have a direct connection to any branch entering a team into the competition (be it a branch team or a tower team from within that branch).

iii. At least two marshals should be appointed, one to supervise the entry of the teams into the tower and the other to take charge in the belfry.

iv. Eliminator rounds may be arranged if necessary. For these rounds the judges may be members of the Guild but should not be members of any Branch or Tower taking part.

NOTE

These rules are for Guild Competitions. Branches are free to decide their own rules for Branch competitions but it is suggested that the Guild rules should be borne in mind when Branch rules are determined.

May 20th 2000. Amended 14 March 2026.