

HEADLINES FROM THE 12 BELL COMMITTEE MEETING

CHANGES TO ELIMINATORS FOR THE 2025 CONTEST

- Eliminators will be known as **qualifiers** from 2025 onwards.
- There will be **four** qualifiers in 2025, with two teams going through to the final from each. This is to reduce the number of teams competing at each tower – this year there are 8 or 9 teams at each venue.
- There will be **no pre-contest practices at the qualifier venues** in 2025. In 2024 we took the decision to cancel practices before the eliminators because there were only a small number of suitable practice slots and a large number of teams. Some teams have questioned whether there is a need for practices to continue in future contests (although others are still in favour of having an opportunity to practise at the venue), and this is an issue on which several people feel strongly. The committee will consider feedback from teams ringing in the 2024 eliminators and 2025 qualifiers before making a decision on practices in 2026 onwards.
- Each team at the 2025 qualifiers will have a **40 or 45 minute slot** (final duration TBC) on the day to practise and then ring their test piece, which is longer than the current timetable allows. This is partly to compensate for the removal of pre-contest practices, and is possible because with four qualifiers there will be time for each team to ring for longer.

These changes only affect the qualifiers (i.e. current eliminators) – there are no changes to the final.

MORE RADICAL CHANGES TO THE STRUCTURE OF THE CONTEST

The committee also considered some more radical proposals to alter the structure of the contest.

It was decided not to split qualifiers across more than one date, introduce a third qualifying round, or hold an extra round for teams who don't qualify for the final – it was felt that introducing any extra dates would cause too many logistical issues.

We considered whether the date for entries should be brought forward to September, with the draw at the start of October. This would allow pre-contest practices to be organised further in advance, giving teams more notice. However, with no practices at next year's qualifiers, it was decided to keep the entry date and draw in mid-November and early December, as usual.

Proposals to move to a semi-regional qualifying structure will be worked on further, and will be revisited at a later meeting. The algorithm for assigning practice slots at the final will also be reviewed, potentially to give preference to the teams travelling the furthest. Any changes to this algorithm will be voted on at a later meeting to take effect in 2025 onwards; there will be no change for the 2024 final.

DEFINING GOOD RINGING

The working group on Defining Good Ringing have designed a questionnaire which has been circulated to team captains and previous judges. The questionnaire asks them to rank various aspects of ringing, such as the quality of leading or absence of method errors, according to how important they are for achieving good ringing. The aim of this survey is to collect information on what is generally considered to make ringing 'good', and in particular, to help advise future judges and drive developments of Hawkear.