

SEECON Sat 6th April 2019 at Horton Kirby, Kent



Preparations and admin done; cakes and biscuits enticingly displayed; bells raised for judges to ring; judges then ensconced cosily in a campervan just beyond the church; people of all ages streaming into the church from 9 am, some a little apprehensive, but all eager to meet up with their teams and do their best.

At 09:45 precisely, the Chairman of the Kent County Association, Dr Phillip Barnes, welcomed the 6 teams able to come on the day: Bucks and Berks, Essex, Guildford, Kent, Surrey and Sussex. Bell-shaped numbers were drawn out of the bag and the first team climbed the slightly challenging staircase to the ringing room.

While the 6 teams sounded out their test pieces throughout the morning, the members of the other teams could occupy themselves in several ways:

- 1: indulge in a spot of change- and tune- ringing on handbells in the Lady Chapel various corners of the church; this was a very popular activity.
- 2: find the answers to 20 questions by exploring the church, churchyard, neighbouring land and village hall area
- 3: keep appetites at bay by eating lots of cake!
- 4: saunter down the road to the Village Hall to try their hand on the Madams Court Mini Ring kindly



brought along by Martin Hooker.

An efficiently delivered "Fish and Chip" style lunch in 2 sittings hit the spot between noon and 1:30 before the hall was filled with lively teenagers and their various companions gathering eagerly to hear the results.

Our judges for the day, Andrew Hills, from Canterbury, and Matthew Jerome, from Cuxton(both graduates of Kent Young Ringers) made their appearance after being kept a closely guarded secret until this morning and commented on the morning's ringing. They were impressed with the determination of all the young ringers entering the contest and with the overall good standard.

Their two main suggestions for most people were to make sure the tenor was "covering" the ringing rather than just coming last and to ensure the targeted musical changes were good.

One team rang Grandsire Triples, with all the others ringing Call Changes including Queens and Tittums or Queens and Whittingtons.

The final results were:

First	Sussex	76% (rang Grandsire Triples)
Second	Kent	72%
Third	Essex	64%
Fourth	Berks & Bucks	53%
Fifth	Guildford	48%
Sixth	Surrey	40%

Phillip Barnes then presented the teams with their certificates, 1st, 2nd, 3rd for Sussex, Kent and Essex and participant certificates and mini eggs for everyone. The judges received bottles of Kent beer and everyone who had contributed to the smooth running of the day was warmly thanked.



The clearing up was dealt with fairly quickly and then ringing at Farningham, Eynsford and Chevening was the order of the afternoon.

Well done to everyone and roll on next year's contest when Essex will be the hosts.

Jen Thomas (Kent)