

DERBY COUNTY

**Nigel Clough**  
**Switching play**

**Overview:**

This session is about maximising space so as to be able to switch the ball quickly in creating positive attacking options. And at the heart of this is helping players recognise when to play forward and when to switch play.

It's important to practise this because moving the ball quickly with both short and long passes gives us the chance to create 1v1 situations or overloads, which are key situations for exploiting the opposition.

Keeping possession under pressure and knowing when to switch is a major part of our style of play. For that reason, we'll work on this type of session frequently.

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SWITCHING PLAY

SET-UP

<b>AREA</b>	Up to a half pitch
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>	Balls, cones
<b>NUMBER OF PLAYERS</b>	Up to 8v8 plus keepers
<b>SESSION TIME</b>	Passing drills 10mins each, Games 20mins each

**What do I get the players to do?**

**Passing drill 1**

Set up as shown, with two players on each corner, and two balls starting at opposite corners (1). In each square, the two players in possession pass and follow to their right until they make it back to their starting places. We'll then restart the practice with players moving in the opposite direction.

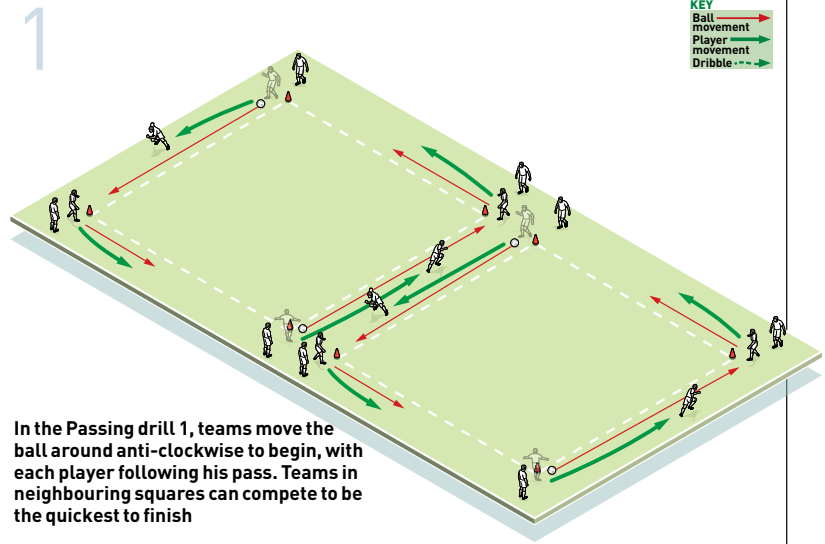
We like to set up with two squares going in competition with each other – which team can complete the task quickest?

**Passing drill 2**

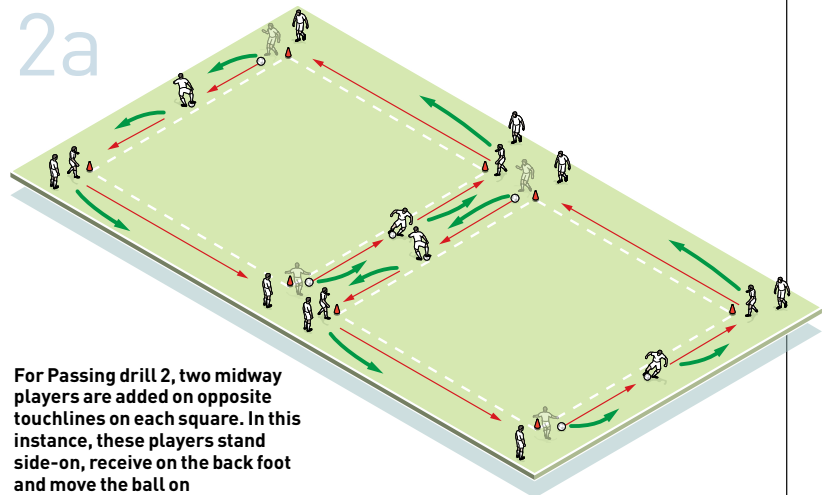
We now add in two players midway along two opposite sides. These players either receive on the back foot and move forward (2a), or set the ball for the approaching player (2b), depending on the coach's instruction. Again, players follow their passes until they return to their starting places.

**What are the key things to look out for?**

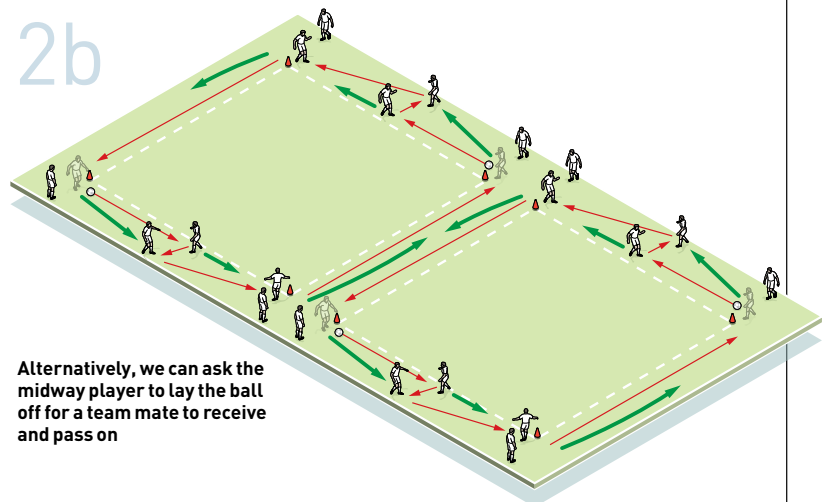
The emphasis here is on passing quickly, receiving on the back



In the Passing drill 1, teams move the ball around anti-clockwise to begin, with each player following his pass. Teams in neighbouring squares can compete to be the quickest to finish



For Passing drill 2, two midway players are added on opposite touchlines on each square. In this instance, these players stand side-on, receive on the back foot and move the ball on



Alternatively, we can ask the midway player to lay the ball off for a team mate to receive and pass on



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Nigel Clough has been manager of Derby County since January 2009, consolidating the club's power Championship status whilst bringing through an exciting breed of young talent.

The 47-year-old, like his legendary father Brian, has a measured and pragmatic approach to the game, a fact borne out by his 11 years in charge of Burton Albion prior to accepting the Pride Park post, during which time he took the Staffordshire club from the Southern League to Football League Division Two.

As a player, Clough made his Nottingham Forest debut in 1984, and went on to clock up 403 appearances in two spells with the club, becoming the second highest scorer in Forest's history with 131 goals.

As a midfielder or striker, Clough also turned out for Liverpool, Manchester City, Sheffield Wednesday and Burton, and pulled on the England shirt a total of 14 times

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**SWITCHING PLAY**

foot and playing at a high tempo. Players must communicate and concentrate at all times.

**Directional possession game, 8v8**

This game is full width, played in the area between the penalty box and the halfway line. Setting up as shown, teams can dribble through any of the end line goals (3a) or in the middle goal (3b). If scoring in the middle goal, the ball must be passed to a team mate on the other side for the goal to count, and it cannot then come straight back through.

**8v8 game with keepers**

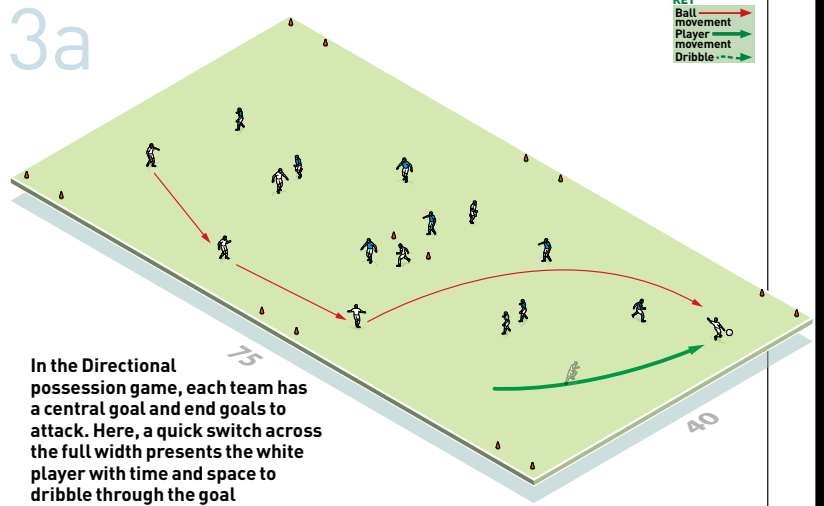
Now on a half pitch, we're looking for players to use the full width and to switch the ball, in the process creating overload situations and breaks (4). We might choose to introduce three-touch to ensure the ball is moved quickly.

**What are the key things to look out for?**

Players should show excellent awareness, move the ball quickly out of tight areas and make forward runs at pace.

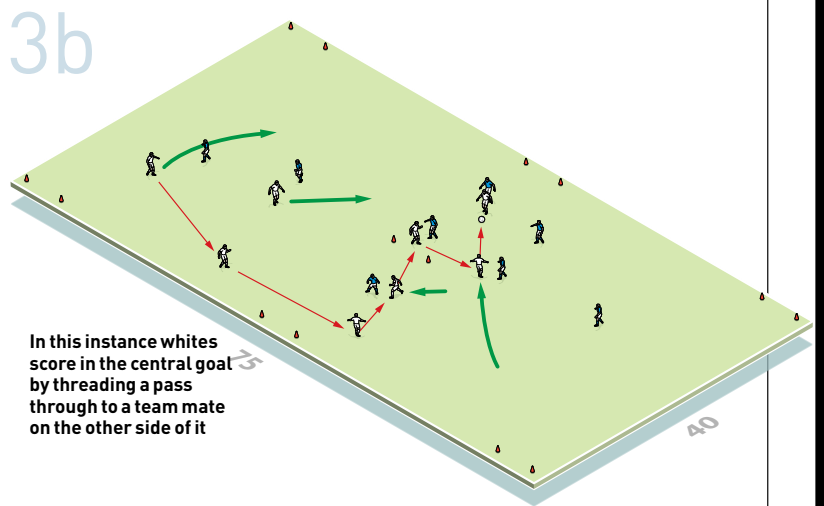
Technical skills are important – particularly receiving on the back foot – but players must also resist challenges and be comfortable passing the ball over a variety of different distances. ■

3a



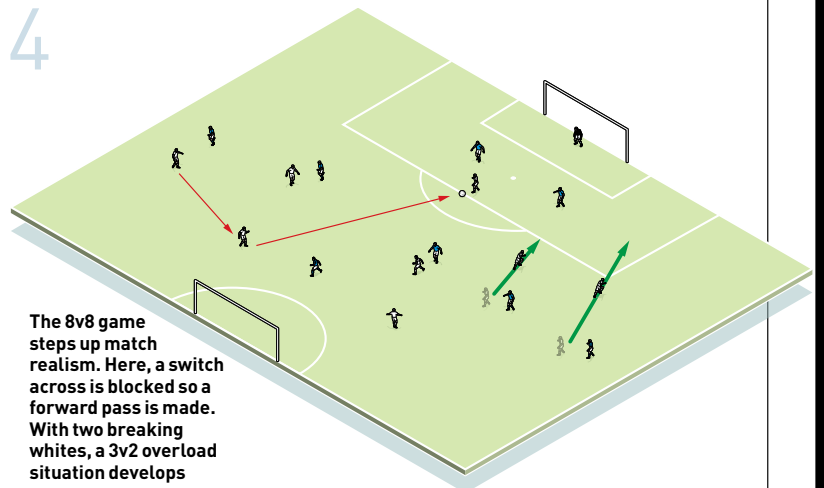
In the Directional possession game, each team has a central goal and end goals to attack. Here, a quick switch across the full width presents the white player with time and space to dribble through the goal

3b



In this instance whites score in the central goal by threading a pass through to a team mate on the other side of it

4



The 8v8 game steps up match realism. Here, a switch across is blocked so a forward pass is made. With two breaking whites, a 3v2 overload situation develops