

**LMA AMBASSADOR**

**Anthony Williams**  
**Switching play**

**Overview:**

Switching of play is a devastating and dynamic way of catching opposition players out of position, and this session takes the basic principles of switching before adding progressions and advancements in play so that teams can really utilise this attacking weapon. We witness the benefit of switching in every game we play. And of course, examining its principles as an attacking team also helps us learn how to defend against the switch when in defensive mode.

“Switching of play is a devastating and dynamic way of catching opposition players out of position.”

**SWITCHING PLAY**

<b>SET-UP</b>
<b>AREA</b>
Up to 40x40 yards
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>
Balls, cones, goals, mannequins
<b>NUMBER OF PLAYERS</b>
Up to 16
<b>SESSION TIME</b>
Passing drill and Transfer game 10mins each, Small-sided game 20mins

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

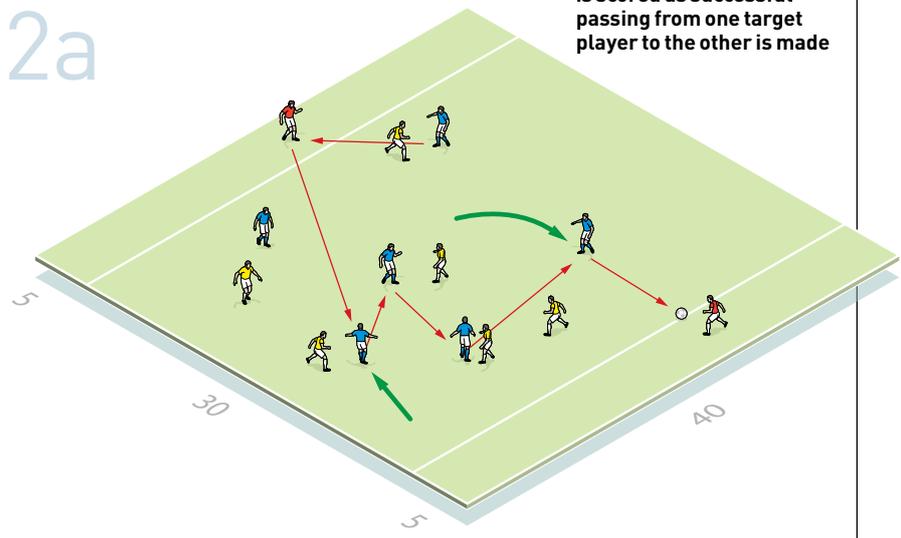
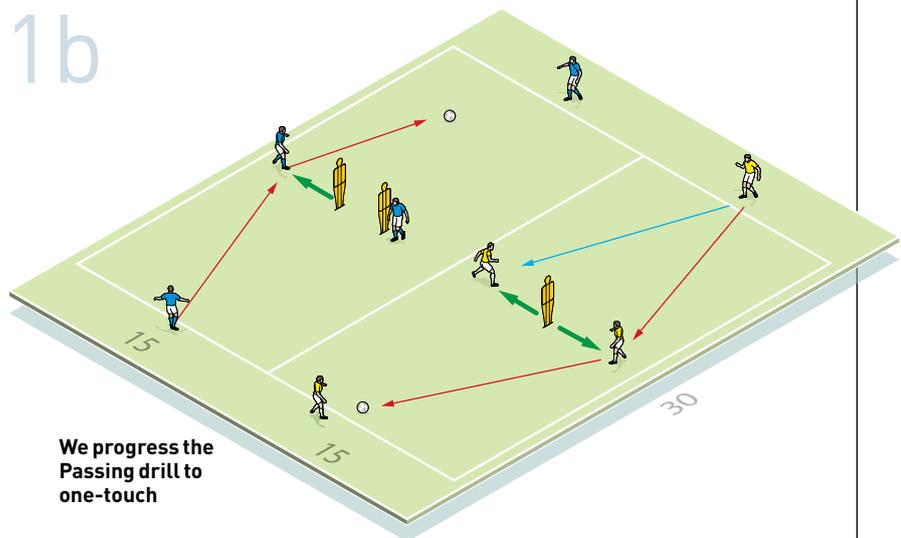
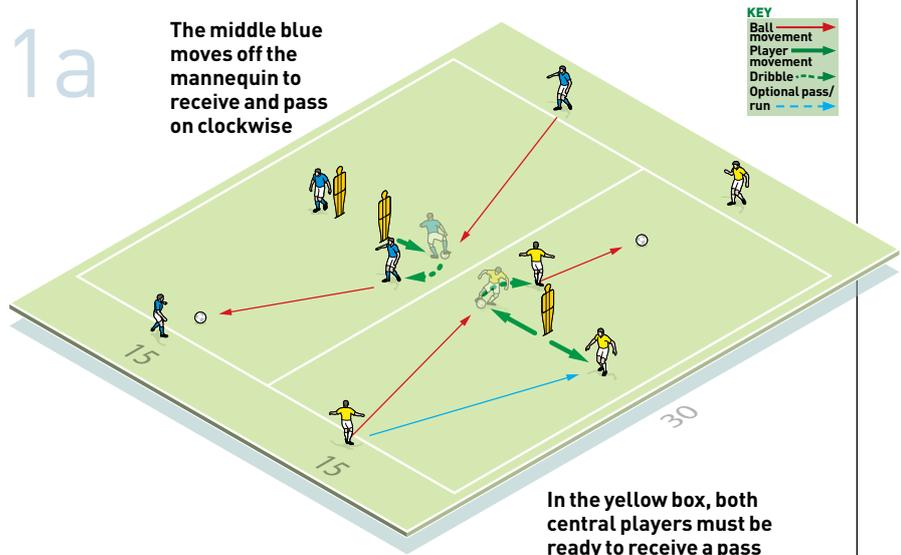
**Passing drill (1a)**

In the left-hand practice, there is a blue server at each end of the box, and a blue on each mannequin in the middle. The ball is played in from the top, moving clockwise with a diagonal pass towards the wing. The player must react to the pass and step back off the mannequin, ready to receive. Two-touch, the ball is then played on, before the move is repeated back in the other direction.

In the second box, we position two players on a single mannequin. Now, the ball can go to either player, so both need to react to the potential of the pass. To progress, we restrict players to one-touch (1b).

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

Players must receive the ball on the back foot, side-on so they can see both servers. Movement off the mannequin must be realistic, with a sensible weight of pass from the server. ▼





## Anthony Williams

### LMA AMBASSADOR

Anthony Williams spent the latter part of the 2013/14 season at Sky Bet League Two side Portsmouth, working alongside first-team manager Richie Barker as the club's goalkeeping coach.

Previous to that, he'd also partnered Barker at Crawley Town and Bury, following a long and successful playing career that saw him appear for 15 different clubs, including Hartlepool United, Grimsby Town and Wrexham.

He also made 16 appearances for the Wales Under-21 side.

## SWITCHING PLAY

### Transfer game

We now remove the poles and add a target player at each end, in a 5-yard zone (2a). It's 6v6, with each team required to switch play to target players quickly. This is all-in, then reverts to two-touch, and there must be three passes before a pass is fed into a target player. Involving both target players in a move, uninterrupted, earns a point.

If play is turned over the new team in possession attacks (2b).

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

Players must recognise when they have space and time to turn. They need to create a picture in their heads before the ball arrives at their feet, something aided by good communication.

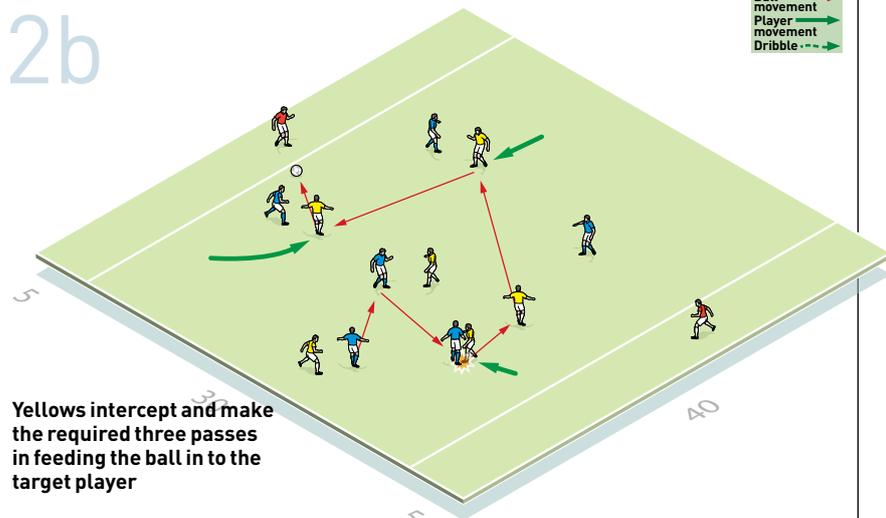
### Small-sided game

We now switch direction of play by adding goals, as shown (3a). Target players no longer represent the scoring mechanism, but the switching mechanism, feeding the ball back into the middle to be attacked (3b).

Again, if the ball is transferred from one side to the other a point is earned, with two points for finding the net.

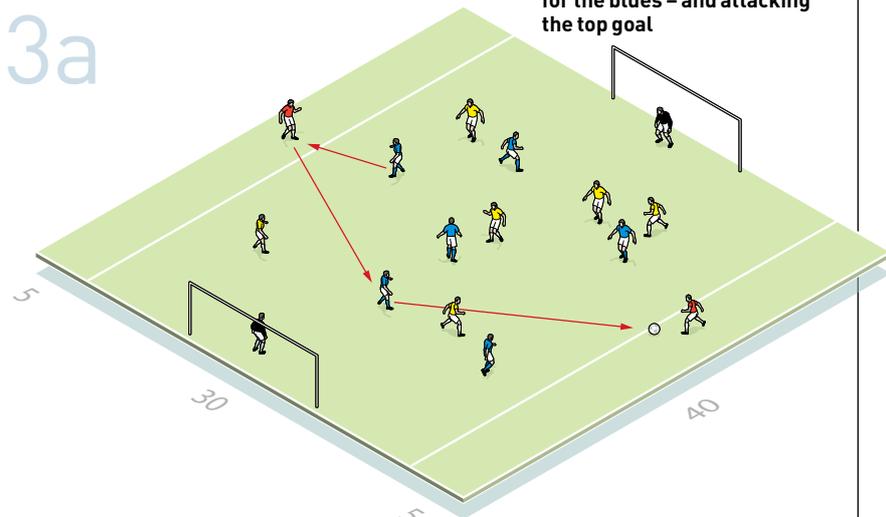
First this is two-touch, then remove wide areas and play 7v7, hoping players will still hold on to the principles of switching. ■

# 2b



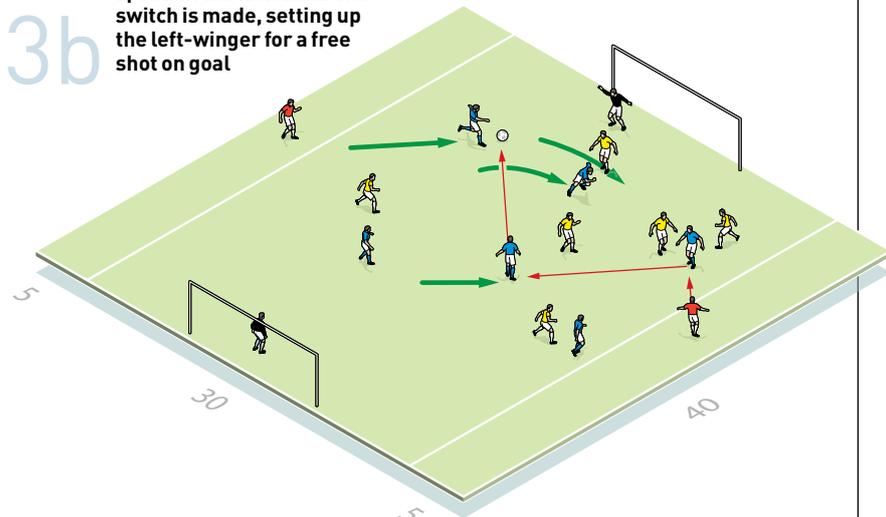
In the Small-sided game, the direction of play has now shifted 90 degrees, with target players the switchers – here, for the blues – and attacking the top goal

# 3a



The ball is fed inside and an attacking blue drags his defender away to create space on the left flank. The switch is made, setting up the left-winger for a free shot on goal

# 3b



“They need to create a picture in their heads before the ball arrives at their feet.”