

**SHEFFIELD
WEDNESDAY**

**Gary
Megson**
**Blind side
running**

Overview:

At any level, a huge number of goals come about through players making intelligent, measured blind side runs.

These runs work when balls are slid down the sides of centre backs and a full back, but they need practice, split-second timing and a good understanding of the weight of a pass.

This session builds up from a technical plan into a possession situation, then a game. We would run this on a regular basis – indeed, the technical session is often used as an extension of the warm up.

Our strikers Neil Mellor and Gary Madine have worked hard on the elements of blind side running, and they put it to great effect for the third goal in our 4-0 win against Tranmere Rovers at the start of April.

“This session builds up from a technical plan into a possession situation, then a game.”

BLIND SIDE RUNNING: MAIN SESSION

SET-UP

AREA

20x20 yards

EQUIPMENT

Balls, mannequins

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

2

SESSION TIME

Technical 20mins,
possession 20mins,
game 20mins

What do I get the players to do?

First, we set up three mannequins down the centre, each five yards apart. Player 1 begins in line with the mannequins, while player 2 is slightly in from the left touchline.

Player 1 runs with the ball, drops his shoulder round the first mannequin before laying a pass down the right side of the middle mannequin. Player 2 has moved in and makes a perfect blind side run. He bends his path so as to practise beating the offside trap.

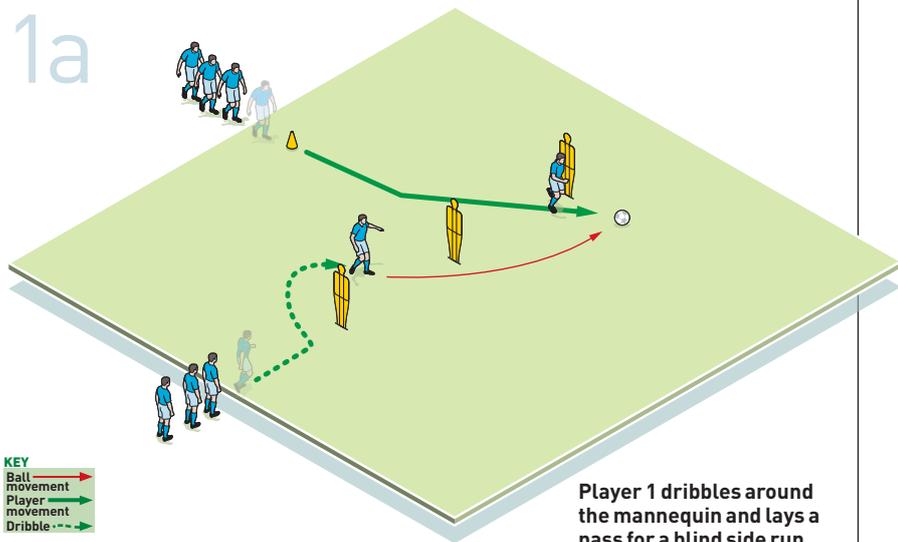
In a variation, players 1 and 2 make a one-two around the first mannequin. When player 1 receives the ball back, he lays a straight pass forward.

In the third scenario, and after the one-two, player 1 needs to adjust, deciding whether to play a quick pass, or to let the ball run across him before playing around the blind side of the mannequin.

How do I progress the session?

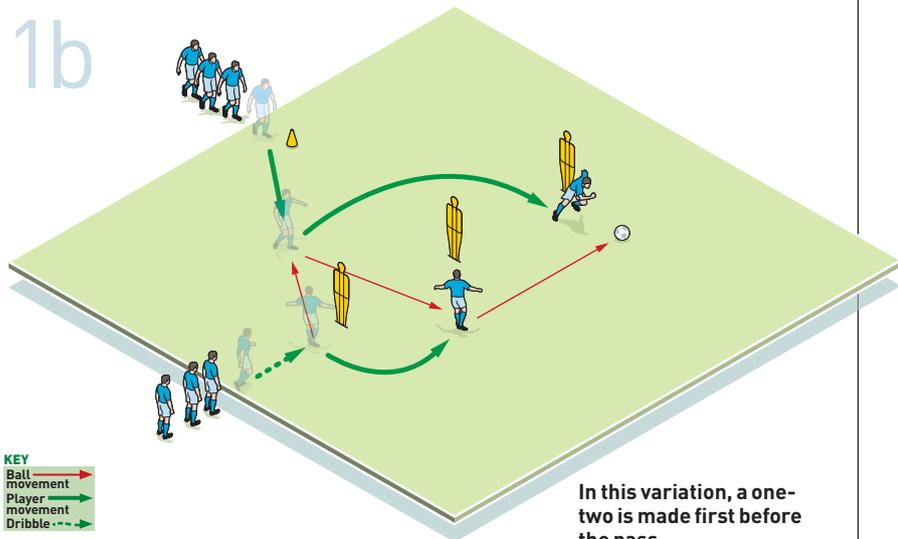
We use a 60x30-yard area, playing an 8v6 possession game

1a



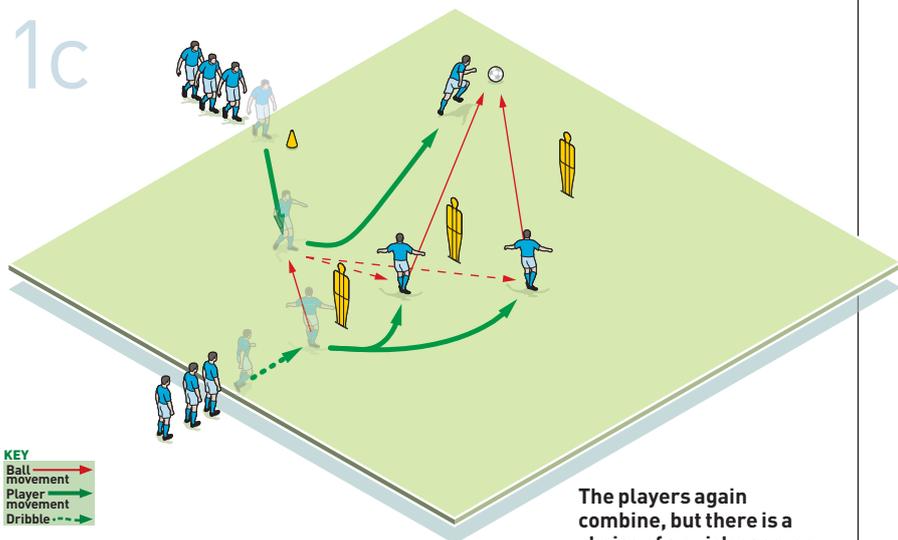
Player 1 dribbles around the mannequin and lays a pass for a blind side run

1b



In this variation, a one-two is made first before the pass

1c



The players again combine, but there is a choice of a quick pass, or a delayed pass around the mannequin



Gary Megson

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When Gary Megson was confirmed as the new manager of Sheffield Wednesday in February 2011, it marked his return to a club for whom he made 223 appearances across two spells in the 1980s.

Wednesday became the ninth side the 52-year-old has taken charge of, with notable spells at West Bromwich Albion, where he twice won promotion to the Premier League; and Stockport County, where he earned the club their highest-ever league finish.

He also guided Bolton Wanderers into the last 16 of the UEFA Cup for the first time in their history.

As a player, Megson was a measured and determined midfielder who began his career at Plymouth Argyle in 1977. He went on to play for Everton, Newcastle United, Manchester City and Norwich City, amongst others, before hanging up his boots in 1995.

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BLIND SIDE RUNNING: MAIN SESSION

in one half. This is a passing drill whereby two defenders remain in their own half.

The team with the overload (here, the whites) must keep possession for six passes in order to score a point. When reds win possession they have to transfer the ball as a one-two, a third man run, a simple short pass, or as a long diagonal pass – but the run is always on the blind side of a defender. They then play the ball to one of their target players to score.

All reds then move to the other half to protect possession. Six whites retreat to pressure them with two staying back, as the process is reversed.

How do I put this into a game situation?

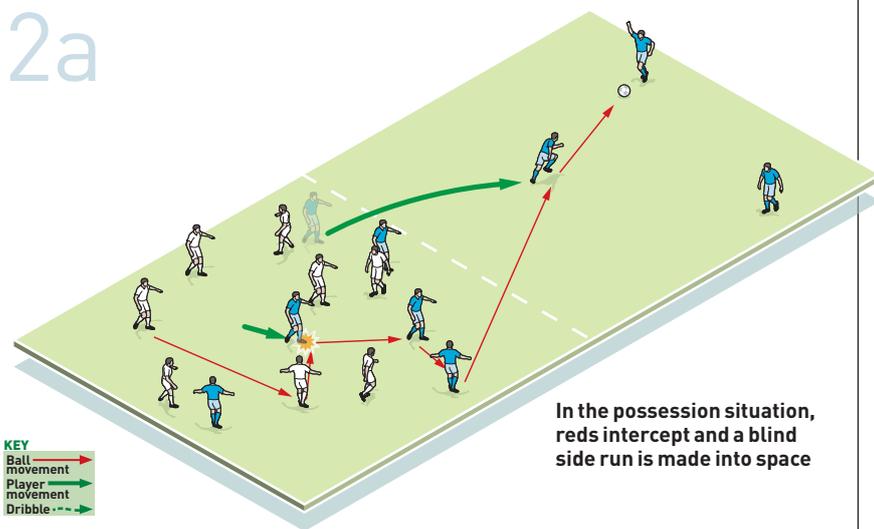
We play 60x40, with an unopposed 15-yard zone in front of each goal. This is 8v8, plus two keepers.

When six passes have been made, the team in possession must construct a blind side run. If that happens, the player can move into the end zone, 1v1 with the keeper. The game restarts with the coach serving into the middle area.

What are the key things to look for technically/tactically?

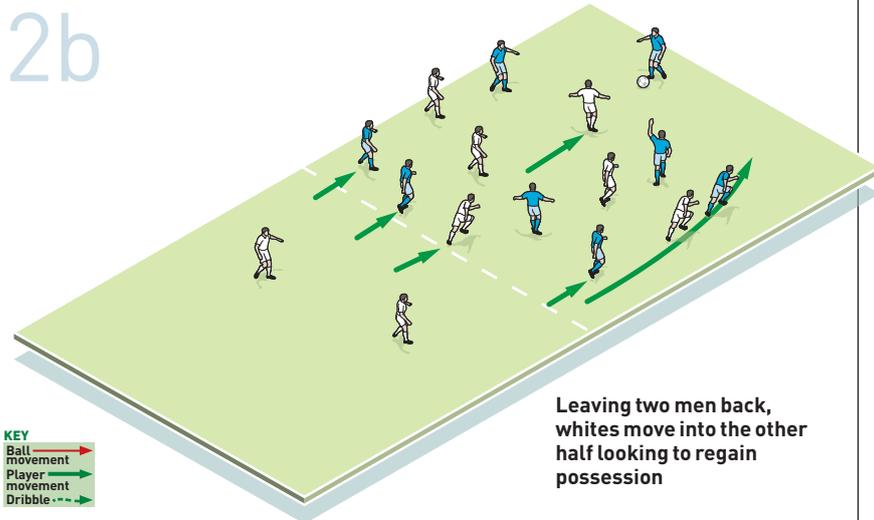
We're looking for the timing of the run, the weight of the pass, good movement and a high tempo. ■

2a



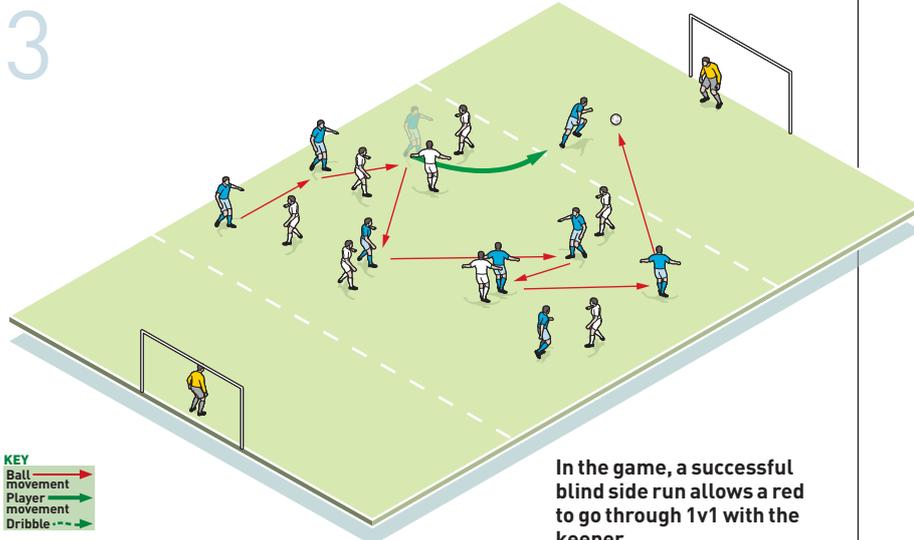
In the possession situation, reds intercept and a blind side run is made into space

2b



Leaving two men back, whites move into the other half looking to regain possession

3



In the game, a successful blind side run allows a red to go through 1v1 with the keeper