

## b) No.10 Drops Back to Act as a 'Link Player' & Move the Ball to the Free Player in the Final Third

This 3 v 2 situation in the centre of the pitch can be exploited by the attacking team to find time and space on the ball for a successful forward or through pass. If this is achieved, one of the advanced players can drop back to receive, turn and then make the final pass (in a favourable 4 v 4 or 5 v 4 situation).

If the advanced player who drops back is marked by a defender, which is more likely to happen, he can be used as a 'link player' to move the ball to a midfielder who makes a forward run - this player will be able to receive between the opposition's midfield and defensive lines and also make a final pass in a favourable situation.

### Moving the Ball Forward Through 'Link Players' + Final Pass (4-2-3-1)



In this example, the winger (7) has dropped back to receive (as explained on the previous page) and it's possible that he will have available time to receive and turn before blue No.8 closes him down. No.10 moves towards the available passing lane and No.8 moves forward, between the opposition's midfield and defensive lines.

No.7 passes forward to No.10 who plays a first time pass inside and back to No.8. No.8 receives in space (facing the opponent's goal) and has 3 passing options with a 5 v 4 situation, including the full back No.2 who has made a well-timed forward run. If the pass to No.8 is blocked, No.10 can instead pass to the full back (2) and then run in behind the blue full back (3) to provide a passing option.

### Finding the 'Free Player' in a 3 v 2 Situation in the Centre (4-2-3-1)



This is a variation of the previous example. If No.7 is immediately put under pressure after receiving the pass from the centre back, the ball needs to be passed to the 'free player'. In this example, No.8 is in an advanced position which is monitored by blue No.6. This means that red No.6 is free to receive in a deep position.

As soon as No.7 passes to No.6, red No.10 moves towards the available passing lane and the available space behind the blue opponent No.8. At the same time, red No.8 moves forward between the lines.

No.10 can either receive and turn if he is free of marking, or play a first time pass inside to the oncoming No.8. In the diagram example, red No.10's direct opponent (blue No.5) puts him under pressure, so he passes inside to No.8. No.8 receives in space (facing the opponent's goal) and has 3 passing options in behind the defensive line, as shown in the diagram.

If the pass to No.8 is blocked, No.10 could instead pass to the full back (2) and then run in behind the blue full back (3) to provide a passing option. Additionally, No.9 can also be used as a 'link player' and both No.8 and No.10 could be potential receivers of a lay-off pass.

# SESSION 2



**Based on Tactics of  
Jürgen Klopp**

**Exploiting 3 v 2 in  
Midfield to Receive  
Between the Lines**

## PROGRESSION (4-2-3-1)

### 3. Exploiting 3 v 2 in Midfield to Pass Forward and Receive Between the Lines in a Functional Practice



**Objective:** Creating/exploiting a numerical advantage in the centre to receive between the lines.

#### Description (4-2-3-1)

In this progression of the previous practice, we now use 2/3 of a full pitch and mark out a 35 x 25 yard area in the centre as shown. The white zone is 35 x 20 yards and the yellow zone is 35 x 5 yards.

We have the red back four, 2 central midfielders (6 & 8), the No.10 and 2 wingers who start in the positions shown - the No.10 is positioned in the yellow zone. The 2 blue central midfielders stay within the white zone.

The coach starts the practice by passing to one of the defenders and they pass the ball around until one of the centre backs (No.5 in diagram) decides to move forward with the ball. As soon as this happens, either the winger on the strong side (No.11) or the full back (No.3) enters the white zone and creates a 3 v 2 situation.

The 3 red players exploit their 3 v 2 advantage and move the ball to the forward moving midfielder (No.8) via a 'link player' (No.10 or No.9 who drops back). No.8 or No.10 must receive the pass back within the yellow zone (in between the lines) and can then take the best passing option for the attack, based on the players' movements.

**Restriction:** The blue players are not allowed to enter the yellow zone at any point.

## VARIATION (4-3-3)



### Description (4-3-3 Variation)

The first diagram on the previous page shows the 4-2-3-1 formation. The practice can easily be adapted to the 4-3-3 formation (as shown above). The attacking midfielders (8 & 10) rotate between the white zone and the yellow zone. The strong side's attacking midfielder moves forward into the yellow zone, while the attacking midfielder on the weak side drops back inside the larger white zone.

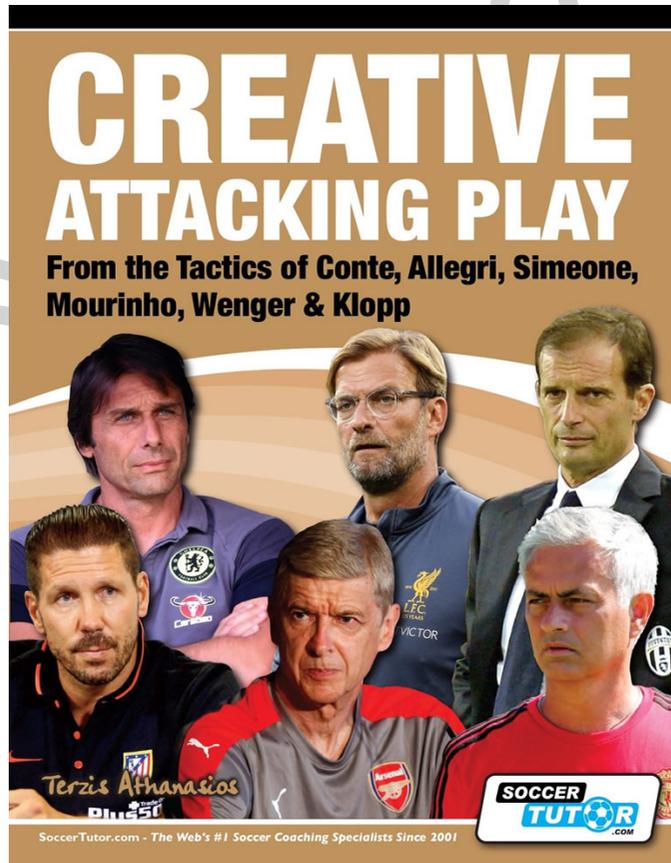
In this example, No.8 has moved forward into the yellow zone and No.10 has dropped back into the larger white zone (rotating). The centre back (5) passes to the left winger (11) who drops back and passes inside to the defensive midfielder No.6.

The aim from the point that No.6 receives, is to move the ball to No.8 or No.10 who must receive within the yellow zone (in between the midfield and defensive lines). The forward (9) drops back to act as the 'link player' and pass to No.10.

No.10 must receive the pass back within the yellow zone (in between the lines) and can then take the best passing option for the attack, based on the players' movements.

### Coaching Points

1. The forward and wingers should move towards the potential passing lanes.
2. All players have to use synchronised movements to exploit the numerical advantage.
3. A high speed is needed when taking all the actions required for this practice.



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