The Sun FOOTBALL In association with Ladbrokes

BILLY THE KID Chelsea's Billy Gilmour left home aged 16, modelled for Burberry and copies heroes by watching 'countless YouTube clips'

Jon Boon
4 Mar 2020, 11:53 | Updated: 4 Mar 2020, 14:19

Comment now

IT was a coming-of-age performance that will act as the perfect springboard for Billy Gilmour's path to regular first team football.

The classy midfielder, dubbed the 'Scottish Iniesta', ran the show as Chelsea knocked out Liverpool 2-0 in the FA Cup to earn the Man-of-the-Match award.

Billy Gilmour was the best player on the pitch against Liverpool

Credit: Getty Images - Getty

POPULAR ARTICLES

HORNET STUNG Watford mascot's fury as Palace unmask him on big screen amid simmering feud

ZIP IT Watch Bruno Fernandes shush Pep Guardiola in touchline row as Utd down City in derby

JU ARE NOT ALONE Ronaldo high-fives imaginary fans as Juve beat Inter behind closed doors

NOT KEANE Keane and Richards argue after Man Utd legend questions former defender's claims

KOP PARTY KO Liverpool may celebrate title with NO FANS as Prem ponders coronavirus action

MAN UTD 2 MAN CITY 0 McTominay stunner seals derby double to bolster Champions League push

COR BLIMEY Serie A players threaten to strike as coronavirus causes chaos in Italy

LET IT DY Dybala rang agent to cancel Man Utd transfer when he was sat in Woodward's office

CHONG MOVE Man Utd confident Tahith Chong will sign new long term deal despite interest

GUNNAR GET YOU Ole says Man Utd are 'one, two or three' transfers away from title challenge

Gilmour had a year-long modelling contract with Burberry Credit: Burberry

B. GILMOUR
THE Emirates FA CUP
MAN OF THE MATCH
13

His performance against Liverpool earned Gilmour the man of the match award
Credit: Getty Images - Getty

Spraying passes from left to right, the 18-year-old was tidy in possession and aggressive in the tackle as he bossed Fabinho on the pitch.

Gilmour left school at 16 to pursue his football dream, starting off with Rangers before moving to Stamford Bridge to continue his football education.

He soon found himself modelling for British designer Burberry, but the 5ft 6in star didn't let that distract him.

Instead, he scrolled through YouTube videos of his heroes Cesc Fabregas, Luka Modric and the Barcelona legend Andres Iniesta desperate to learn about the art of passing and becoming the complete midfielder.

DEDICATED RANGER

Gilmour was raised in the tiny coastal town of Ardrossan, a 50-minute drive from Glasgow.

As a young boy, he remembers being taken to the local park by his mum and granddad, where he would spend hours kicking a ball around every weekend.

He was scouted by Rangers at the age of eight, where his dedication to his craft showed early on.

With his mum working till 4pm during the week, and his dad away in the Navy, it was left to his grandad, his uncle and aunt to ensure he made training.

He told Versus: "They used to take me up to the bus to Rangers after school and then pick me up after at 9 o'clock at night every day – so it was long days for them, then the next day it would be the same thing, all over again."

SCOTTISH LEADER
SCOTCH WHISKY
13

Gilmour was raised in the North Ayrshire coastal town of Ardrossan

Credit: Refer to Caption

FROM ARDROSSAN TO COBHAM

By the time he was sitting exams at secondary school Grange Academy in Kilmarnock, challenging himself by taking Mandarin as a language instead of the customary German or French, Gilmour was already training with the Rangers first team.

His early promise had seen the likes of Liverpool, Manchester United, and Arsenal all send scouts to monitor the wonderkid's progress.

But it was Chelsea who made the first move.

When he was 16, Gilmour bravely decided to take up an offer by the West London giants and travel some 411 miles down south to Cobham, Surrey.

He knew no one there, and it was a move dictated by a desire to take his ability to another level.

"It was my dream to come to the Premier League, to be honest," he revealed.

"But it was also about improving myself as a player – playing against better players forces you to grow up and mature."

Gilmour carefully juggled school life with his ambitions of becoming a footballer

Credit: Refer to Caption

SCOTTISH FA
PERFORMANCE
SCHO
GRANG Y

At Grange Academy in Kilmarnock Gilmour studied Mandarin Credit: James Grady

By 15, Gilmour was training with Rangers' first team

Credit: Keith Campbell - The Sun Glasgow

A MODEL PRO

Normally when footballers make the crossover to the fashion world, they're established names. Think Beckham and Ronaldo.

However, Gilmour was given a year-long contract with Burberry before his debut for the Blues against Sheffield United in August last year.

He said: "My agent just rang me up after training out of the blue one day and asked 'fancy being a model?'

"I was like 'what?'...he said 'it's only gonna be for a year, just a couple of shoots.' I then said, 'for who?' and he said 'for Burberry'...it was at that point where I said 'aye!'

The black and white shoot has Gilmour modelling the brand's famous trench coat, as well as a patterned scarf.

In another arty shot, he has a postage stamp rested on his tongue.

Needless to say, his team-mates ribbed him for it.

He said: "I was getting a bit of stick in the training room off the pitch for that when the pictures came through, but it was definitely worth it – it was some buzz, something different as well."

Gilmour was a Burberry model before he played his first game for Chelsea

Credit: Burberry

Wonderkid Gilmour admitted his team-mates ribbed him about his Burberry fashion shoot

FOOTBALL ALWAYS CAME FIRST

Despite his dalliance in fashion, Gilmour was well aware where his future lay.

It was at the 2018 Toulon Tournament, where he made his debut for Scotland in the Under-21s, that he showed he was destined for big things.

A man-of-the-match performance in a 1-0 win over France, coupled with leading the Scots to a fourth-placed finish earned him the 'Revelation of the Tournament' award.

A star was born, and Chelsea knew they had a rough diamond in a youth squad already filled with talented boy wonders like Mason Mount, Callum Hudson-Odoi, Tammy Abraham, and Reece James.

Coaches at their Cobham HQ were particularly impressed by Gilmour's maturity off the pitch.

Make your debut with Ladbrokes

£20 of free bets for new customers

The FA
YOUTH CUP

Gilmour shone for Chelsea's youth squad, lifting the FA Youth Cup
Credit: Getty - Contributor

Coaches at the Blues' Cobham HQ were struck by Gilmour's maturity Credit: Instagram

A STUDENT OF THE GAME

Whoever the sportsman, the best will study footage of their predecessors to pick up hints on how to improve their game.

And Gilmour is no different.

It was fitting that after seeing his display against Liverpool on Tuesday evening, former Chelsea playmaker Fabregas took to Twitter to praise his fellow midfielder.

After all, he may have seen something in Gilmour's game reminiscent of his own.

The student of the game spent hours poring over the ex Arsenal midfielder's passing skills, as well as Barcelona star Frenkie de Jong on YouTube.

"Cesc is definitely someone who I've compared my game to a lot in recent years," Gilmour revealed.

"He was a top player, still is, so he's someone who I aim to model myself on.

> Fantastic. Personality on the ball, intelligence in his desicion making, always making angles to offer himself and has that bit of aggression in him which is very important specially in the Premier League. 👏
>
> — Cesc Fàbregas Soler (@cesc4official) March 3, 2020

Gilmour's composure on the ball was reminiscent of former Blue Cesc Fabregas

Credit: Getty Images - Getty

Gilmour has admitted that he studied Cesc Fabregas, Luka Modric and Frenkie de Jong by watching their clips on YouTube Credit: Instagram

LATEST FOOTBALL FEATURES

STRONG ARM Chelsea prodigy Broja, 18, idolised Drogba growing up & was plucked from Spurs

FAUST SHOW Chelsea starlet Faustino Anjorin idolises Lampard but was named after Asprilla

DINHO SORE Ronaldinho's sad demise from Barcelona legend to house seizure & passport fraud

REAL DEAL Real Madrid's Rodrygo is the 'next Neymar' & Nike's youngest EVER sponsored star

"Iniesta is another, Frenkie de Jong too – I love watching him play. These were and still are the players I watch all the time and base my game on.

"I've watched countless YouTube clips of midfielders in my position – "Art of Passing" compilations – that's all I've been watching."

And the kid from a small town on the North Ayrshire coast seems to have learned well.

WATCH THE VIDEO

Youngster Billy Gilmour wins Man of the Match award for Chelsea against Liverpool in the FA Cup

Comments are subject to our community guidelines, which can be viewed here.

TOPICS

Football Features

Chelsea

FOLLOW THE SUN

SERVICES

©News Group Newspapers Limited in England No. 679215 Registered office: 1 London Bridge Street, London, SE1 9GF. "The Sun", "Sun", "Sun Online" are registered trademarks or trade names of News Group Newspapers Limited. This service is provided on News Group Newspapers' Limited's Standard Terms and Conditions in accordance with our Privacy & Cookie Policy. To inquire about a licence to reproduce material, visit our Syndication site. View our online Press Pack. For other inquiries, Contact Us. To see all content on The Sun,

FOLLOW THE SUN

SERVICES

Sign Up To The Sun | About Us | Editorial Complaints | Clarifications and Corrections |
News Licensing | Advertising | Contact Us | Commissioning Terms | Help Hub |
Topic A-Z | Cookie Settings | Contact Preferences

©News Group Newspapers Limited in England No. 679215 Registered office: 1 London Bridge Street, London, SE1 9GF. "The Sun", "Sun", "Sun Online" are registered trademarks or trade names of News Group Newspapers Limited. This service is provided on News Group Newspapers' Limited's Standard Terms and Conditions in accordance with our Privacy & Cookie Policy. To inquire about a licence to reproduce material, visit our Syndication site. View our online Press Pack. For other inquiries, Contact Us. To see all content on The Sun,
please use the Site Map. The Sun website is regulated by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO)

Our journalists strive for accuracy but on occasion we make mistakes. For further details of our complaints policy and to make a complaint please click here..