



# CLIVE JAGGER

## THE LIFE OF A FOOTBALL AGENT

**C**live Jagger (48) is a highly qualified linguist and a professional, FIFA-licensed football agent - enjoying a working life that must be the envy of any football aficionado. He spends much of his time flying around the world, particularly within South America, negotiating player deals and promoting both emerging and acknowledged talent. Meanwhile, his free time and work merge together as he attends countless matches, whilst further developing professional relationships within the labyrinthine and high-octane world of international football.

A passionate sportsman, Clive played for Leeds Juniors as a winger. Realising that he lacked the pure talent to attain success at the highest levels in football he came to Spain, where he has lived and worked for the past 25 years. He is fluent in Spanish and, unusually for a British expat, Valenciano.

Clive has a short, powerful frame and is immaculately dressed in a designer polo-shirt, chinos and moccasins. On the café table by our beers are his two mobile phones, which never seem to stop ringing. Restless and radiating impatience, he is briefly distracted by a beautiful girl strutting past us. As she disappears, he looks back at me through FCUK, wrap-around sunglasses...

"It's fair to say that I love football - and to work within the industry is a real privilege. It's a dynamic, exciting world, driven by extremes of money, adrenaline, fame and ruthless ambition. Within it all are deals within deals and treachery that can sometimes makes the Borgias look amateur.

Which, to some extent, is where I come in. I really care about my players and my greatest pleasure is not just discovering new talent, but the nurturing of a potentially great player as he develops. In this industry, true care and attention to a player can be the critical difference between someone with talent either failing or becoming immensely successful.

Of course, when I initially sign players they are often young and have sometimes never left their home countries. It's vital, therefore, that they are placed

carefully into an appropriate club - one that will carefully and sympathetically maximise their career. All too often, players can be treated merely as financial 'assets'. When this happens, they tend to tragically 'burn out' long before they hit their true potential.

I look after all my players' concerns, which can include their finances, housing and cars - along with even finding good schooling for their children. Meanwhile, I constantly assess their progress whilst trying to improve their contracts or helping them to move to a better club. To the younger players, in

particular, I become an important figure in their lives. My South American players even call me *padrino* (Spanish for godfather), which places me under an enormous duty of care.

Although I have lived here for so long, I still support England when they play Spain and, on balance, I prefer the 'English game' to European football. The

two are becoming ever more similar, but football in the UK is still more exciting - extremely fast and physically demanding. I have always supported Manchester United and the players I have most admired are Eric Cantona, Roy Keane, Glen Hoddle and Matt Le Tissier for their charisma and influence on the game.

My life is fun and the future's a terrific challenge. Amongst other things, I'm currently developing a football academy in Argentina and possibly another one in Uruguay, whilst collaborating closely with Sheffield United, a private academy in Valencia and Athletic Club Bilbao to look for players with Basque blood in South America. Besides that, my life is constantly busy with the daily concerns and long-term promotion of my players.

Football is a great business to be in - full of interesting, ambitious and dynamic people with high expectations. Whilst this can be stressful, it is also tremendously stimulating with dramatic highs and lows. Every day is quite different; and for that I feel truly fortunate."

