



THE GOAL MAKER

GURO REITEN CREATES MORE ASSISTS THAN MOST, AND TODAY SHE'S HOPING SHE CAN PLAY HER PART IN HELPING CHELSEA WIN ANOTHER VITALITY WOMEN'S FA CUP



Words Abbie Ingham

Guro Reiten has been a central part of Emma Hayes' side since she joined the club in the summer of 2019. During her stay, the Norwegian has helped guide Chelsea to three consecutive league titles, and at the same time established herself as one of the greatest creative talents in the BWSL.

The 28 year old can do it all, but when it comes to creating goals, nobody does it better, and she currently leads the league as the top assist provider this season. She will be hoping her personal feats will help steer the team to a fourth-straight domestic title. But before that,

they face title rivals Manchester United in the Vitality Women's FA Cup Final.

Reiten describes her time at Chelsea as 'unreal' as she reminisces about her move from Norwegian side LSK Kvinner: "There have been so many moments that I'm never going to forget, special moments with my team, on and off the pitch. I was 24 when I came to Chelsea, which is not too early, but when I moved here, I knew I was ready for this challenge and this step," she said.

"I remember in my first few weeks here I was exhausted. We learned English in school, but you guys talk so fast. A new place, long days, higher level on the pitch. It was a lot. I was happy to have my Scandinavian crew understanding me when I spoke my own language."

The winger has certainly become used to that winning feeling at Chelsea, helping them secure three league titles, two league cups and the Community Shield in just under four years. Today, she is looking to add a third consecutive FA Cup to her name, but she admits that before her move to Kingsmeadow, she had not heard of the competition, and learned of its importance from her teammates:

"At first, I didn't think it was that big of a deal. We have the league and cup in Norway as well, but the FA Cup is sick. I understood that when my teammates were talking about it for the first time, like 'You have to be there, it's the biggest game in England', and I get it."

"We know the feeling you get after winning this competition, and you just want to do it again and again, but it just gets tougher and tougher."

Chelsea are in the hunt for a domestic double for a second straight year, and although they make winning look routine, Reiten confesses that it's difficult to maintain such high standards every season. Manager Emma Hayes is credited with instilling a winning mentality into this team, who have been English football's most successful club over the last decade, and Reiten offers a further insight into the side's obsession with winning.

"What was good enough last year isn't going to be good enough this year. You always have to push further. It's difficult, but at the same time you look around, you see your teammates and the staff, and we all agree on one thing: we want to win, and we have to do everything we can to make sure we're doing that. Everyone is willing to risk anything, so you just have to put in the work as well."

"Whenever I go onto the pitch, I just want to be the best version of me. I am an attacking player, so I want to contribute to the team, but for me, it doesn't matter if it's goals, assists, or something else. Obviously, I'm playing left wing and that's kind of my job, so I think I should've had more."





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Despite winning it all at a domestic level, the Champions League is something that has eluded Chelsea. They reached the final in 2021 but ultimately experienced European heartbreak in a 4-0 defeat to Barcelona. This year they suffered again at the hands of the Catalan side, a narrow 2-1 loss on aggregate in the semi-finals, but today they're looking to bounce back from the defeat that happened just over a fortnight ago.

"I think we're already past that because our schedule is crazy. We have to win every game if we want to lift anything, so we have to focus on the here and now and the next game. Yeah, it sucks, it does, but at the same time, there are positive things that you can take from that too. I think we need to talk about that when the season is over because we have a job to do here," she says.

They face a Manchester United side today who, in juxtaposition, have not yet lifted a major trophy.

They have also failed to defeat Chelsea in any competition, but Reiten insists Chelsea won't become complacent ahead of the Final.

"With the titles and the trophies that we've been winning the last few years, the pressure is there already from everyone else. We've shown it again and again that we're willing to do the job, to put everything in, and we never give up. We know it's not easy, but I know for a fact that we won't underestimate them, because they are a great team. They are tough people, and they have been playing some really good football this year, so we have to be ready from the off.

"They have quality players all over the pitch. Full-backs that like to join in the attack, good crossers, and then they have Russo and Toone scoring goals. So, we have to stop all of them,

Reiten has built up a
lucrative partnership
with Sam Kerr



not just one of them, because United are a team. We have to prepare for their threats, but also focus on us."

When the two sides last met, Sam Kerr produced a sensational lob over Mary Earps to secure a 1-0 win that sent them top of the league. The prolific Australian goalscorer joined the club shortly after Reiten ahead of the second half of the 2019-20 season, and ever since the two have shared the pitch, they have combined to devastating effect. The Reiten-Kerr partnership is something that Chelsea fans are accustomed to this season, but Reiten



Reiten has won
eight trophies with
Chelsea so far

GURO REITEN



reveals that the secret to their successful partnership is instinct.

"Sam is a dream to play with, she's amazing. She runs in behind and when I get to the line, she's always in the box. We talk about where I should put

my crosses in and her movements, but sometimes it's just a feeling, I just put it up there and she's always there. She has scored some amazing goals this season, and hopefully, she can score again."

The last meeting with United also served to show the depth of talent that Chelsea has at their disposal. Reiten joined a long list of players unavailable for the clash at Kingsmeadow, which included Fran Kirby, Pernille Harder, Katerina Svitkova and Erin Cuthbert. Hayes has made use of her full squad in the competition so far, and squad depth has proved vital to combat a gruelling run-up of fixtures across four different competitions.

"We rely on everyone. Every season, towards the end, you see there are some injuries that always happen and then someone else needs to come in and step up. I don't know how but somehow everyone is ready every time. We talk a lot about that, because it's a hard position to be in, to sit on the bench early on in the season, and you don't play and maybe you feel like you deserve to be on the pitch, but your time will come, and you have to be ready. Everyone that comes in just shows it. We have had our two centre backs out, and then Maren [Mjelde] comes in, it's just amazing."

With the Final being sold out for the first time in the competition's history, Reiten hopes that Chelsea can retain the trophy for the third time in front of a full Wembley Stadium. Some more silverware would only add to a glittering career with the Blues.