

MICHAEL HART

of the
EVENING STANDARD
says

PETAR Borota probably doesn't realise it, but Peter Shilton thinks that Chelsea's Yugoslav is a pretty useful exponent at the art of goalkeeping. The other day I attended a lunch in London at which Shilton, one of the world's foremost goalkeepers, talked about his trade and the men who have most influenced him.

Borota's name cropped up a couple of times, but one of the goalkeepers Shilton most admired was a Chelsea star of the recent past—Peter Bonetti.

Shilton, the 30-year-old Nottingham Forest goalkeeper who has 28 England caps—and would have had many more had it not been for Ray Clemence—closely studied three men during his days as a youngster at Leicester City.

One of them, of course, was the incomparable Gordon Banks, a vital member of England's World Cup-winning team of 1966 and the first-team goalkeeper at Leicester when Shilton was at Filbert Street.

"Everyone thinks I modelled myself on Gordon, but that is only partly true," said Shilton. "He was a fantastic goalkeeper and I had great admiration for him. I based much of my game on his style, but there were qualities about two other men that I also particularly liked. They were Bonetti and the legendary Russian goalkeeper Lev Yashin.

"Peter Bonetti was at his peak with Chelsea when I was just starting," said Shilton. "He was strong and wiry, not built as heavily as I am now, and maybe this gave him his tremendous natural agility.

"He was probably the fastest goalkeeper around at that time. One of the things I most liked about him was the way he would come out of his goal and collect crosses other goalkeepers would think twice about.

"He had the judgement to dominate not just the six-yard box, but the whole penalty-area, and that is something I try to do now. In fact, in today's game I think a goalkeeper has got to be prepared at times to push forward almost as far as the half way line."

Of Yashin, Shilton said: "I met him once when I was a young lad. I don't think he was technically as good as Gordon or Peter but he had this image, this presence . . . size combined with agility.

"Size is important in a goalkeeper. When an opposing forward looked at Yashin he must have wondered how on earth he was going to get past him. That's probably one of the things that made Peter Bonetti so great. He wasn't big, but he compensated for that with his agility.

"With Yashin it was his size. Just by walking out on to a pitch, dressed all in black, he looked invincible."

Shilton played first for his hometown club of Leicester City before moving to Stoke for a then record fee of £340,000 in September 1974. Two years ago Brian Clough, a long-time admirer, paid £270,000 to secure his services for Nottingham Forest.

"In terms of value, I think a good goalkeeper is second only to a good striker," said Shilton. "But it's no good expecting a good goalkeeper to work miracles in a poor defence.

"Our success at Forest is because of the team effort. I've played my part but basically the whole team has worked well together. I feel I was playing as consistently at Stoke, but it wasn't noticed because the team were struggling."

Shilton listed five qualities he believes every good goalkeeper should possess—physique, a safe of pair of hands, agility, courage and personality.

Chelsea's current goalkeeper, Petar Borota, has his share of each of these attributes and, in terms of personality is one of the top men in the League.

Of course, Petar has experienced a few problems that only a foreign goalkeeper could face. The language is the biggest single hurdle.

At the England get-together before the international against Denmark last week, Geoff Hurst was discussing goalkeeping with Shilton.

"Apparently, in the past when Petar has come out to collect high crosses his shouts for the ball have not been consistent," said Shilton. "He might shout 'It's mine' or 'leave it', or 'I'll get it'.

"Well, Geoff has been teaching him to shout just 'keeper' each time he comes for the ball, and he's beginning to do that now. He's a good goalkeeper, and he can only get better playing in the Football League."