

Is Manchester City striker Mario Balotelli's 'chicken' hat a fashion own goal?

Mario Balotelli was a largely anonymous figure for Manchester City against Everton last night, but TV viewers could not take their eyes off him – or, more specifically, his headgear – as he arrived at the ground.



Head boy: Mario Balotelli pairs chicken hat with ipod headphones for the ultimate winter footballer look Photo: SKY SPORTS

By Hilary Alexander, Fashion Director

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The 20-year-old striker gave a lacklustre performance, failed to score and was substituted in the 83rd minute. But his hat caused an online fashion controversy on football blogs.

Balotelli appeared to have taken inspiration from Wallace & Gromit's animated classic, *The Wrong Trousers* (see above) where a penguin is pictured in a police poster with a rubber glove on its head and a caption stating: 'Have you seen this chicken?'.

Or else his five-fingered 'Glove Head' salute was intended to challenge the critics who question his extreme sense of style; Balotelli has previously been photographed in green and orange high-tops and a highly reflective blue quilted jacket. Perhaps it was intended as an homage to Diego Maradona's 'Hand of God'? Or maybe he was just having a bad hair day and turned into a 'Glove Header' for the night?

The chic Manchester branch of the fashion emporium, Harvey Nichols, where many of the city's footballers

shop, denied selling the hideous brown-and-yellow woollen beanie with fingers. Some blogs suggested it could have come from a Christmas market or been knitted by a fan.

The London-based hand-knitting website, www.granniesinc.co.uk (<http://www.granniesinc.co.uk>), meanwhile, has offered to make versions in a choice of 24 different colours for from £80.

[Rio's war on the snood \(http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/football/picturegalleries/8191550/Rio-Ferdinands-war-on-the-snood-in-pictures.html\)](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/football/picturegalleries/8191550/Rio-Ferdinands-war-on-the-snood-in-pictures.html)

[Mario Balotelli: profile \(http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/football/teams/manchester-city/8216574/Manchester-Citys-Mario-Balotelli-profile.html\)](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/football/teams/manchester-city/8216574/Manchester-Citys-Mario-Balotelli-profile.html)
