



TOBY KEBBELL

THE BRITISH ACTOR UPS HIS GAME AS A FAST-TALKING, SELF-DESTRUCTIVE ROCK STAR PLUCKED STRAIGHT FROM THE TABLOIDS

Toby Kebbell is feeling rather chuffed these days, to use one of his favorite expressions. "I've been learning to ride horses," he says happily over the phone from Morocco, where he's filming the upcoming blockbuster *Prince of Persia*. "I've been sword-fighting and stunt-running and jumping—the kind of fantastic stuff you did as a kid in the back garden and wish you could do as an adult."

Kebbell has been doing all this swashbuckling as the brother of the film's hero, played by Jake Gyllenhaal. But the Errol Flynn stuff is new to him. Since landing his first role in 2004 as Paddy Considine's mentally challenged younger brother in the rural revenge drama *Dead Man's Shoes*, the 26-year-old Yorkshire native has been leaping headlong into character parts in films like *Alexander*, *Match Point*, and *Control*, where he clearly relished his scenes as Joy Division's foul-mouthed manager. Despite his nimble eyebrows and houndish good looks, Kebbell disappears into his roles. He claims he doesn't get recognized on the street. That may change, however, with his blazing third-act performance in Guy Ritchie's latest gangster farce, *RocknRolla*.

Kebbell plays the film's titular character, a fast-talking, cracked-out, erstwhile rock star in full revolt against his stepfather, an old-school London mob boss (Tom Wilkinson). "He's the anti-mobster. He hates that whole life," Kebbell says of his damaged, Pete Doherty-esque rebel. By the end of the convoluted caper, this attitude turns Kebbell's character into the biggest badass in a cast of badasses that includes Gerard Butler, Thandie Newton, Jeremy Piven, Idris Elba, and Ludacris. Another costar was new Bond girl Gemma Arterton, who's also in *Prince of Persia* and with whom Kebbell was reported this summer to be pursuing an offscreen relationship.

New equestrian skills notwithstanding, Kebbell admits he's unlikely to be cast as, say, Mr. Darcy: "I don't really see myself as that handsome, period-drama hero." Clearly, Kebbell, a high-school dropout ("I don't recommend it as a life choice"), has a dark streak. To achieve his bone-thin, cracked-out look in *RocknRolla*, he says he starved himself for a week then ate one meal a day during the ten-week shoot. "But," he hastens to add, "it wasn't Christian Bale-style, an apple and a shot of whiskey. I didn't want to set a bad example for my nephews."

DARRELL HARTMAN

TOBY KEBBELL IN LONDON, JUNE 2008

PHOTOGRAPHY ADAM WHITEHEAD

STYLING CLARE RICHARDSON

HAIR STEVEN LOW (STREETERS)

GROOMING JANEEN WITHERSPOON

STYLIST ASSISTANT SOPHIE LAWRENCE

LOCATION PARK ROYAL STUDIOS RETOUCHING SIMON PERRY

COAT, SHIRT, PANTS **LOUIS VUITTON**

TIE **BAMFORD & SONS** HAT STYLIST'S OWN

ROCKNROLLA IS OUT IN OCTOBER 2008 FROM WARNER BROS.