

= Briskeby Arena =

Briskeby Arena , previously known as Briskeby gressbane , is an all @-@ seater football stadium located at Briskebyen in Hamar , Norway . It is home to the Norwegian First Division side Hamarkameratene (Ham @-@ Kam) and is owned by Hamar Municipality . The venue has artificial turf , three stands and a capacity for 8 @,@ 068 spectators . It was used for the 1938 Norwegian Football Cup Final ? which saw the venue 's record 14 @,@ 500 spectators ? and has also hosted five Norway national under @-@ 21 football team matches between 1984 and 2011 .

Construction started in 1934 and the venue opened on 28 June 1936 as the first home venue for Briskebyen FL . The club merged with Hamar AIL in 1946 to form Ham @-@ Kam . The new club has played since 1970 played 22 seasons in the top tier , having been relegated eight times , most recently in 2008 . Ham @-@ Kam 's record home attendance is 11 @,@ 500 , dating from a 1976 match against Lillestrøm . In 1984 , the club house was rebuilt with luxury boxes and a new 2 @,@ 400 @-@ seat East Stand was built . The investments lead the club into financial distress , and in 1993 the municipality had to purchase the venue to save the club . Planning of a new or upgraded venue started in 2001 , construction started in 2007 and the first stage was completed the following year . It cost 111 million Norwegian krone (NOK) , having suffered large cost overruns .

= = History = =

= = = Construction and early years = = =

Freidig was established in 1918 as a local team for Briskebyen in what was then the municipality of Vang . At the time there was a severe lack of pitches in Hamar , so the club was forced to sneak into unused venues and play until they were chased by the groundskeeper . The club was accepted as a member of the Football Association of Norway (NFF) in 1927 , changing its name to Briskebyen FL . This forced it to formalize its pitch renting so it would have a single home venue for each season . In 1928 and 1929 , it played at Vangsbanen , from 1930 through 1933 at Ottestad bane , and from 1934 at Hamar stadion .

As the club was dissatisfied with this arrangement , it launched plans to establish its own venues . First it needed to secure a lot , and in the late 1920s lied its eyes on a parcel of land owned by Hamar Jernstøperi . However , the lot was sold to Oplandske Kreditbank in 1930 and the club had to negotiate purchasing the lot from the bank . The club established a new committee to look into the stadium issue . Hamar IL was invited to become part @-@ owner of the venue , but they chose to remain at Hamar stadion . As Briskebyen was not able to secure a partner to share the costs with , opposition towards the project grew within the club . Yet , the decision to build the venue was taken by Briskebyen FL 's annual meeting on 15 April 1934 , with construction starting on 26 April .

The venue was estimated to cost NOK 26 @,@ 500 . Financing included a NOK 3 @,@ 000 grant from NFF , NOK 1 @,@ 500 from the municipality and NOK 1 @,@ 800 from the club . The rest was secured through various charity events , 320 of 1 @,@ 500 man @-@ days being volunteer work and a NOK 8 @,@ 000 loan from NFF . Construction in 1934 consisted of removing 5 @,@ 600 cubic meters (200 @,@ 000 cu ft) of earthwork and laying sewer pipes . The following year , 200 cubic meters (7 @,@ 100 cu ft) of rock was blasted and the pitch was sown on 3 and 4 September . Construction of the terraces and dressing rooms took place in 1936 . Work was not concluded until the morning of the inauguration match on 28 June 1936 , when the last fence was mounted . Briskeby was the first grass pitch in Hedmark and was inaugurated with a match against Lyn , who won 4 ? 1 . The venue cost NOK 32 @,@ 036 @.@ 28 , leaving the club with a debt of NOK 18 @,@ 688 @.@ 93 . The venue was awarded the 1938 Norwegian Football Cup Final , which required additional upgrades , largely conducted through volunteer work .

The venue was confiscated by the German occupation forces during World War II , who built a cold storage facility south of the pitch . In 1945 , after five years of occupation , the pitch was in a detrimental state . The stadium received a major renovation , including a new pitch and replacing

half the wooden terraces with concrete stands . The cold facility was converted to a club house and a basement was dug out and used as a changing room . In 1946 , parts of Vang , including Briskebyen , were amalgamated with Hamar . The same year , Hamar Municipality signed an agreement with the club whereby municipal subsidies would cover the operating costs in exchange for the club allocating training time to other clubs .

= = = Debt and municipalization = = =

In 1982 , the club decided that it would build a new 2 @, @ 400 @-@ seat stand on the eastern long side . A low construction cost was secured because the construction industry was going through a slump . The costs were covered by NOK 2 @. @ 5 million in national lottery grants and NOK 2 million in loan , which was planned to be repaid through increased sponsor and ticket revenues from increased attendance . The upgrade also included a reconstruction of the club house to facilitate luxury boxes . They were made available for sponsors , who were allowed to bring guests . The boxes and the vestibule became an important informal meeting area for the town 's political and business elite .

The new stand became a financial burden for the club . Operating costs increased after Norwegian clubs were allowed to wage players from 1984 . In addition , interest rates rose quickly , making the club unable to meet its financial obligations . At the same time , the club experienced falling attendance . In 1985 , the club 's auditor warned that the club was heading into financial distress . In 1986 , the club spent NOK 1 million to build terraces between the club house and the pitch on the northern short side , and terraces on the southern short side . In 1990 , Hamar Municipality gave Ham @-@ Kam a grant of NOK 1 @. @ 7 million in an attempt to save the club 's finances , in part because of the club 's debt on the venue .

In 1993 , Ham @-@ Kam proposed selling the stadium , including its 1 @. @ 0 @-@ hectare (2 @. @ 5 @-@ acre) lot , for NOK 6 million , to pay off its debt . In addition , NFF required that the stadium be renovated for NOK 2 million . The club launched the sales plans to the municipality in September 1993 , stating that if they did not purchase the venue , the club would probably be forced to file for bankruptcy . At the time , Lillestrøm and Brann were the only other premiership clubs to own their own stadiums . Ham @-@ Kam 's three star players , Vegard Skogheim , Petter Belsvik and Ståle Solbakken , threatened to sign with other clubs within days unless the municipality saved the club .

On 20 October 1993 , the municipal council voted in favor of purchasing the stadium . The proposal was supported by the Labour Party and Centre Party , who had 28 of 49 councilors , but opposed by the rest of the council . Along with two banks , the municipality established a limited company which would own the venue . The municipality and banks would pay for the club 's debt of NOK 5 @. @ 4 million , and take over the stadium 's operating costs of roughly NOK 1 million per year . Ham @-@ Kam would have to pay rent on the stadium . The transaction took place on 26 January 1994 , and included a clause granting Ham @-@ Kam the right to buy back the stadium at a later date . The municipality issued a loan of NOK 4 million to Ham @-@ Kam in 2003 to allow them to install floodlighting at Briskeby .

= = = Arena = = =

By 2001 NFF was in the process of implementing new stadium requirements in the top leagues , and Briskeby would no longer be permitted to be used in the top tier . Ham @-@ Kam entered an alliance with Totalprosjekt ? an real estate development company working on Lillestrøm 's Åråsen Stadion ? who presented a concept to finance a new venue : The municipality would transfer property to a limited company jointly owned by the municipality and the major sports clubs , the real estate would be re @-@ regulated to increase their value , and the company would use this capital to build a new professional and a new recreational stadium . Parallel with this , a municipal commission made a report that recommended a consolidation in the number of venues in town and the conversion of gravel and grass fields to artificial turf . The commission recommended that a new

professional football venue be built either at Briskeby or Hamar stadion .

Hamar Sportsanlegg (HSA) was established in 2003 to execute the plan . It was owned 34 percent by the municipality , and 22 percent each by Ham @-@ Kam , Hamar IL and Storhamar Dragons . In 2004 , Storhamar 's share was transferred to Hamar Olympiske Anlegg , a municipal company which owns Vikingskipet Olympic Arena and Hamar Olympic Amphitheater . A report estimated the technical value of Briskeby to NOK 6 million , while the sales price of the lot was estimated at NOK 30 million . The municipal council voted on 18 February 2004 to transfer the ownership of the two stadiums to the new company . Ham @-@ Kam rented the venues from HSA , with HSA 's deficit for the first four years being covered by the municipality . Of the NOK 20 @.@ 8 million in value transferred to the company , NOK 14 @.@ 5 million was paid by HSA taking over the municipality 's obligation to build a new athletics venue should Hamar stadion be closed , and NOK 5 million was debt .

In October 2004 , Totalprosjekt presented the concept Skibladner Stadion , which would have been located on Tjuvholmen , a peninsula which sticks out into Mjøsa . In addition to a 9 @,@ 000 @-@ seat stadium , the project included a cultural center with an 800 @-@ seat auditorium and a 22 @-@ story hotel . However , Tjuvholmen is a popular recreational areas and a process to regulate the area as such had just been completed . The location would also cause problems for the railway , who wanted to expand Hamar Station . The Tjuvholmen project was rejected by the municipal executive committee on 8 December , and on 16 March 2005 , the municipal council voted to continue working on a new venue at Briskeby . This caused Totalproject to leave the project .

In 2004 , Biong Arkitekter was contracted to design the stadium , with Byggeråd as structural engineers . Five proposals for Briskeby were launched , estimated to cost between NOK 61 and 150 million . Three of them retained the current alignment and would give a capacity of between 8 @,@ 800 and 10 @,@ 200 spectators , and two of these again contained commercial and residential properties within the stadium complex . The two other proposals involved turning the pitch 90 degrees , which would give the least encroachment on neighbor properties . The residents ' association demanded that an impact study be made and that more specific plans be presented before municipal approval . The municipality concluded that neither were required . The municipal council passed a regulation plan on 1 February 2006 , which involved building a 10 @,@ 200 seat venue , but with the smaller of the two possible commercial property sizes . The residents ' association appealed to the county governor , who reject the appeal on 1 September .

At the time NFF awarded an annual license to clubs which permitted them to play in the top two divisions . This included a series of criteria that the home venue needed to meet . As Briskeby was severely substandard to the criteria , Ham @-@ Kam was required to apply for annual exemptions . These were only awarded to clubs who were actively working on upgrading or building new venues . If an exception was not granted , the club would either be relegated to the Second Division (the third tier) , or would have to play their home games at an approved stadium in another town .

In December 2006 , HSA sold Briskeby to a new company , Briskeby Gressbane AS (BG) , which was owned 50 percent each by Ham @-@ Kam and HSA . Another company , Briskeby Eiendom 1 AS (BE1) , was established and owned 66 percent by HSA and 34 percent by BG . The latter was also given 50 percent of the shares in Hamar stadion . BG was non @-@ commercial and was to own the stadium itself , while BE1 was commercial and was to rent out the commercial property . The two shared board , managing director and accountant . In May 2007 , NCC was awarded the contract to build the new venue by BG and BE1 . Although NCC was NOK 8 million more expensive than the cheapest bid , they offered four months shorter construction time . Briskeby 's lot needed to be expanded , which was done by purchasing neighbor lots for NOK 34 million . Hamar stadion and the neighbor lot Fuglsetmyra were sold for NOK 295 million in June 2007 , of which NOK 9 million was paid to BG and another NOK 175 million was a guarantee which would be paid after the lot was re @-@ regulated .

Construction was financed through a loan of NOK 218 million from Handelsbanken , which was secured on the revenue which would be generated from the sale of Hamar stadion and Fuglsetmyra . However , the bank was not willing to lend money secured on the basis of sales price of Hamar stadion being based on the re @-@ regulation of the lot . The municipality was pressed on time by

the possibility of NFF denying Ham @-@ Kam the right to play at Briskeby . Hamar Energi Holding AS (HEH) , which owns Hamar Municipality 's share of Eidsiva Energi , had large assets . Both HEH and BE1 had as chair Hans Kolstad , who proposed that HEH could issue a guarantee of NOK 75 million for BG and BE1 ? which was issued in September 2007 . This allowed construction to start , but the project was still under @-@ financed by NOK 50 million . HEH therefore issued another guarantee the same month , for NOK 58 @.@ 75 million . Because of delays in the regulation work , HEH issued another two guarantees , NOK 60 million in March and NOK 25 million in June 2008 .

In August 2007 , the stadium was planned to be built in three stages , with a combined budget of NOK 156 @.@ 6 million . The first stage would involve the northern and western sides and cost NOK 78 @.@ 4 million , the second stage would involve the eastern side and cost NOK 43 @.@ 0 million , while the third stage would involve the southern side and cost NOK 35 @.@ 1 million . After construction started , BG changed two specifications , moving public rest rooms from the basement to the ground floor , and changing the angle of roof . Both of these gave increased construction costs and alteration of the architectural design plans .

During this entire period , BE1 was insolvent . The bank therefore required that the entire sales price of Hamar stadion be transferred to BG , even though NOK 50 million was to go to the construction of Børstad Idrettspark (BIP) . Therefore , Hamar Municipality decided to finance BIP to secure sufficient funding for Briskeby , essentially subsidizing Briskeby with a further NOK 50 million . In 2007 , BG paid NOK 3 @.@ 4 million in compensation to Ham @-@ Kam for lost ticket sales during the construction time and for the club house , which would be demolished .

In 2008 , Ham @-@ Kam tried to sell the naming rights of the stadium for between NOK 5 and 8 million per year , but neither of their main sponsors , Eidsiva Energi and Sparebanken Hedmark , were interested . The first stage of the stadium opened on 10 August 2008 , after which further construction was terminated . Stage one cost NOK 92 @.@ 5 million to build and NOK 19 million for purchase of real estate . By April 2010 , BG had combined negative assets , debt and received grants of NOK 240 million . Of this , NOK 78 million was written @-@ off bad debts to BE1 and NOK 19 million was purchase of lots . On 25 September 2009 , Hamar Municipality bought HSA , BG , BIP and BE1 for NOK 73 @,@ 000 . In December 2009 , the municipality increased the share capital in BG with NOK 16 million and in BE1 with NOK 32 million .

With then opening of the venue , Ham @-@ Kam rented 2 @,@ 000 square meters (22 @,@ 000 sq ft) , consisting of 1 @,@ 300 square meters (14 @,@ 000 sq ft) of lounges and 700 square meters (7 @,@ 500 sq ft) for its offices , for which the team played NOK 2 to 3 million per year . In the 2010 season , Ham @-@ Kam played in the Second Division , resulting in the entire VIP area remaining unused . Artificial turf was laid on the stadium in August 2011 .

In August 2011 , an investigation of the HSA affair was initiated by the municipality , with the investigation costing NOK 7 million . The report concluded that a large number of illegal action had been taken in the process : HSA had used money reserved for sport for commercial development ; irregular executive work in HEH and lack of correction were conducted after errors were discovered in 2007 ; important instructions from the municipal council were not followed ; illegal executive work was undertaken in the holding companies ; BE1 did not file for bankruptcy after it had lost its equity ; the use of an unnecessarily complex company structure ; violation on the laws of public sector procurements ; violation on European Economic Area law on public grants ; expensive consulting contracts , without tender , which gave the consultants too much influence on the process ; and that the board composition in the companies was in violation with good corporate governance practices .

= = Facilities = =

The new section of Briskeby has the same style and building materials as the two other main sports venues in Hamar , Vikingskipet and Hamar Olympic Amphitheatre , which were built for the 1994 Winter Olympics . The venue has capacity for 8 @,@ 068 spectators and has club seating 600 people . The pitch is 105 by 68 meters (344 by 223 ft) artificial turf . Around the pitch are 180 digital advertising board . There are two 40 @-@ square @-@ meter (430 sq ft) scoreboard screens .

The stands have 13 concession stands , all which are built to allow a view of the pitch while standing in a queue .

= = Events = =

The venue was home ground for Briskebyen from its opening . In its inaugural season , the club was newly relegated to Class B , as most of the club 's effort had gone to building the venue . From 1937 the club again played in Class A. The venue was also used for matches where a mixed Briskebyen and Hamar IL played friendlies against foreign teams . No official matches were played during the Second World War . In April 1946 , Briskebyen FL merged with Hamar AIL to create Hamarkameratene .

Ham @-@ Kam remained at lower levels in the league system until the 1960s , when it was promoted to the Second Division (then the second tier) after the 1967 season . Ham @-@ Kam was promoted to the First Division (then the top tier) ahead of the 1970 season . They have since played in the top league in the periods 1970 ? 74 , 1976 ? 77 , 1979 , 1981 ? 84 , 1986 ? 87 , 1992 ? 95 , 2004 ? 06 and 2008 . The club 's eight relegation from the top league is a Norwegian record . After the 2009 season , the club was further relegated to the Second Division , but returned to the First Division (now the second tier) in 2011 . For a Ham @-@ Kam match , the record attendance is 11 @, @ 500 , which dates from the 27 May 1976 league match against Lillestrøm .

The venue hosted the 1938 Norwegian Football Cup Final on 16 October 1938 , where Fredrikstad beat Mjøndalen 3 ? 2 . The match attracted 14 @, @ 500 spectators , which still stands as Briskeby 's record attendance . Briskeby has hosted five Norway national under @-@ 21 football team matches , having played 0 ? 0 against Poland on 28 August 1984 , 3 ? 0 against Switzerland on 2 June 1992 , 2 ? 1 against Switzerland on 16 August 2005 , 2 ? 1 against Hungary on 28 May 2010 and 1 ? 4 against Sweden on 2 June 2011 .