

= Stig Inge Bjørnebye =

Stig Inge Bjørnebye (born 11 December 1969) is a retired Norwegian footballer who played in Norway , England , and Denmark , most notably for Liverpool . His preferred position was left back , which he occupied for domestic clubs and the national team . Bjørnebye was appointed assistant manager of Norway in 2003 , relinquishing the role three years later to succeed Tom Nordlie as manager of IK Start .

For club and country , Bjørnebye was noted for his precise deliveries from the flanks . Described as a " solid , no @-@ nonsense full @-@ back " , Bjørnebye played competitive football for 16 years , and appeared in 194 Premier League matches , until injury compelled retirement in March 2003 . He represented the Norwegian national team in the 1994 and 1998 FIFA World Cup and the Euro 2000 and was capped 75 times , scoring once .

= = Club career = =

Stig Inge Bjørnebye was born in Elverum , the son of skier Jo Inge Bjørnebye , who competed in the 1968 and 1972 Winter Olympics . As a child , Bjørnebye exhibited an interest in emulating his father by becoming a ski jumper .

His footballing career began as a youth player with home club Elverum IL , before joining Strømmen IF in the late 1980s . He moved to Kongsvinger IL in 1989 , establishing himself as a first @-@ team regular in the Norwegian Premier League . After three seasons with Kongsvinger , he transferred to Rosenborg in 1992 , where he in his inaugural season won the Norwegian Premier League and Norwegian Cup , in the final of , which he scored the deciding goal against Lillestrøm SK .

His performances merited inclusion in the national team and attracted the attention of Liverpool 's manager Graeme Souness , who bought Bjørnebye for £ 600 @,@ 000 less than one year after moving to Rosenborg . Signed as a replacement for David Burrows , Bjørnebye debuted inauspiciously on 19 December 1992 in a 5 ? 1 defeat to Coventry City . Initial difficulties adapting to the Premier League caused many fans to question his displays on the pitch and he returned to Norway on loan to Rosenborg in 1994 .

Bjørnebye 's experiences as a Reds ' player in the 1994 ? 95 season under the management of Roy Evans , were markedly more successful than that of previous campaigns . He gained a regular place in the senior team , supplanting the left back position from Julian Dicks , and featured in the 2 ? 1 win against Bolton Wanderers in the final of the 1995 League Cup Final on 2 April 1995 . Subsequent injury , a broken leg sustained on 5 April 1995 in a 3 ? 1 win match against Southampton , terminated his season and he was replaced by Steve Harkness .

Unavailable for several months , Bjørnebye appeared just twice for Liverpool in the 1995 ? 96 season . Recovery and injuries to other left back candidates enabled Bjørnebye to reclaim his place the following season , in which he scored his first goal for Liverpool on 17 August 1996 in a 3 ? 3 draw against Middlesbrough . He contributed to the club 's most convincing title challenge since the inception of the Premier League by supplying club strikers Stan Collymore and Robbie Fowler with precise crosses . He was ultimately included in the PFA Team of the Year with Steve McManaman and Mark Wright . The acquisition of Steve Staunton and arrival of Gérard Houllier in the 1998 ? 99 season , limited Bjørnebye 's first @-@ team opportunities , leading to his effective marginalisation . Bjørnebye affirmed his recurring determination to stay at Liverpool that season , remarking " If I didn 't have any fight in my stomach I 'd have left Liverpool at least three times before " .

Unable to displace Staunton and Dominic Matteo , Bjørnebye agreed to a loan move to Danish side Brøndby IF in 2000 , who finished second in the Danish Superliga with Bjørnebye on the team . He decided to permanently leave Liverpool after returning from the European Championship , accepting a £ 300 @,@ 000 transfer to Blackburn Rovers that reunited him with former manager Graeme Souness . Promotion to the Premier League was achieved in his first year with Rovers , in the process , Bjørnebye scored his only goal for the club on 11 November 2000 , in a 2 ? 2 draw against Portsmouth . His final trophy was gained when Blackburn defeated Tottenham Hotspur 2 ? 1 in the 2002 League Cup Final . Successive injuries after the cup victory disrupted and eventually ended

his career as a footballer . While preparing for the 2002 ? 03 season , Bjørnebye fractured his eye socket in a training accident . He complained of double vision , underwent surgery , and was rendered unavailable for seven months . Further injury inflicted during a League Cup match on 17 December 2002 , in a 2 ? 0 win against Wigan Athletic escalated , while Bjørnebye was recovering in Norway , necessitating emergency surgery to avert the possibility of foot amputation . Bjørnebye announced his retirement on 11 March 2003 . Blackburn manager Graham Souness reacted to the decision with a statement :

It 's a very sad day . As far as I am concerned it could hardly be worse for Stig is the consummate dedicated professional . He is as good a professional as any I have worked with , I couldn ' t name anybody better and he is [a] fine role model and a proper , proper human being . Stig has had a wonderful career , it 's a great shame that it has to end with a freak training @-@ ground accident as he felt , quite rightly , that he could have played longer .

= = International career = =

Bjørnebye was capped 75 times by Norway , scoring once ? an olympic goal in a 1 ? 0 friendly against the United States on 8 September 1993 . Having represented his country at youth , under @-@ 21 , and " B " level , Bjørnebye debuted for the senior team on 31 May 1989 against Austria . The majority of his caps were collected during Egil Olsen 's eight @-@ year tenure as manager of Norway . Under Olsen 's guidance , Norway employed a " long ball " policy that was contingent on the height of Olsen 's squad . The tactic of directing long passes to the tall winger Jostein Flo , principally delivered by Bjørnebye , became popularly referred to in Norway as the " Flo Pass " (Flo @-@ pasningen) . Although criticised for employing the long @-@ ball approach and maintaining a defensively @-@ orientated mentality , Olsen secured qualification for the World Cups of 1994 and 1998 . Bjørnebye participated in both tournaments ? seven matches in total .

He decided to retire from international football after the 1998 World Cup , intending to focus on his domestic career and family . Bjørnebye unexpectedly reversed his decision after Nils Johan Semb persuaded him to return to the squad for Euro 2000 . Unused in Norway 's 1 ? 0 win against Spain on 13 June 2000 , Bjørnebye was first introduced to the competition in the second match of the group stage , in a 0 ? 1 loss on 18 June 2000 against Yugoslavia , as a 35 @-@ minute substitute for his Liverpool colleague Vegard Heggem . He retained his place , featuring in the goalless draw against Slovenia on 21 June 2000 , which eliminated Norway from the tournament . His final international match was in a 1 ? 1 draw World Cup qualifier on 7 October 2000 against Wales , placing him ninth in the overall record of appearances for Norway as of 2007 .

= = Managerial career = =

Bjørnebye returned to football in a non @-@ playing capacity when he was selected by the Norwegian Football Association to replace Harald Aabrekk as Norway 's assistant manager , subordinate to the newly appointed Åge Hareide . Prior to the announcement , the media in England had reported that Bjørnebye was considering maintaining a relationship with Blackburn by becoming a scout for the club . He vacated his position in 2006 to succeed Tom Nordlie as manager of IK Start . Success was forthcoming in his first season ; the club competed in Europe and Bjørnebye was declared most profitable coach of the year , ahead of his predecessor Nordlie , with an income of almost seven million krone . His appointment lasted two seasons , ending with dismissal in September 2007 , after a series of poor results that placed the club in serious danger of being relegated from the Norwegian Premier League . He was replaced by Benny Lennartsson , who was unable to preserve the club 's premier league status ; Start were relegated to Norway 's second tier .

= = Personal life = =

Bjørnebye is married to the former Byåsen IL handball player Hege Frøseth , with whom he has

three children .

= = Career statistics = =

= = = International goal = = =

Scores and results list Norway 's goal tally first .

= = Managerial statistics = =

Source :

= = Honours = =

Rosenborg

Norwegian Premier League (2) : 1992 , 1994

Norwegian Football Cup (1) : 1992

Liverpool

Football League Cup (1) : 1994 ? 95

Blackburn Rovers

Football League Cup (1) : 2001 ? 02