



ENGLAND v DENMARK

INTERNATIONAL MATCH

8PM, WEDNESDAY 5 MARCH 2014

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STEVEN GERRARD AND
HIS ENGLAND TEAM-MATES
CONTINUE THEIR WORLD
CUP PREPARATIONS AS
THEY MEET DENMARK



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England had just seen their comfortable two-goal lead against Montenegro cut in half, and with the Wembley visitors desperate for a result, nerves may soon have taken hold.

Dejan Damjanovic had given his side a foothold in a game that looked to be slipping away from them after Wayne Rooney's header and an own goal from Branko Boskovic had handed Roy Hodgson's men the advantage.

Both nations needed to win to keep their World Cup qualification hopes in their own hands, but with the three previous meetings ending in draws, the outcome of this penultimate Group H fixture was in a precarious position.

Cue Andros Townsend, the Tottenham Hotspur winger who was making his first appearance for the Three Lions. He'd enjoyed a stunning debut up to that point as it was, providing a major threat on the right-hand side and helping put England in front with a driving run and cross that was finished off by Wayne Rooney.

Then, with 12 minutes left, the 22-year-old picked up the ball midway into Montenegro territory, wriggled away from Simon Vukčević and unleashed a powerful right-foot drive that flew past keeper Vukašin Poleksić, smashing in off the post.

"Normally I'd say that I knew it was going in as soon as it left my foot," says Townsend, "but I honestly thought it was going to hit the post. Luckily it clipped it and went in. It doesn't matter how it goes in."

It was a memorable goal, so much so that England fans voted it as their favourite in qualifying and one that Townsend's dad Troy recalls proudly.

"Once he put the ball in the back of the net it was a dream come true," says Townsend senior, who was named as one of The FA's 150 Grassroots Heroes just a few days earlier. "I never imagined it would go so well, but the big wide open spaces of Wembley are tailored to his game. I thought he was fantastic that day and I thought he was even better against Poland."

Andros himself continues: "You can't forget scoring on your England

debut, scoring in front of your own fans at Wembley. You go to bed as a school kid dreaming of those things.

"To be voted as the best goal was an honour, but the main thing was that it helped England get to the World Cup."

All England fans will know what happened after that. A Daniel Sturridge penalty in injury-time sealed victory, which was followed up four days later back at Wembley with a 2-0 win over Poland, and the Three Lions booked their trip to Brazil.

Townsend had almost immediately announced himself on the international stage, however his route to the top was less than instant.

As a youngster, Townsend started playing football in East London for Ridgeway Rovers, whose alumni include David Beckham and Harry Kane. And even then he demonstrated some of the traits he has become known for.

"Watching him play as a young lad, enjoying the game, playing with a lot of freedom, was nice because he was quick and scored lots of goals and that always catches the eye," says his dad.

The Spurs man adds: "When you start out you enjoy playing football. No one likes to lose, you always want to win, but at grassroots it's about having fun and honing your skills."

"I've always been a player who likes to dribble a lot, make stuff happen and get people off their feet."

At the age of eight, Townsend joined the Tottenham Academy and impressed enough to earn honours at international level. He made his first appearance in the Three Lions shirt for the U16s against Northern Ireland in November 2006.

While his appearance against Montenegro last year might be thought of as his first Wembley outing, he actually featured for the U16s under the Arch in April 2007. The Young Lions beat a talented Spain side 1-0, and Townsend came off the bench as Jack Rodwell scored the winner.

Troy was in the 28,000-strong crowd that day: "I knew it was the stage he wanted to be on. I kind of knew that day that if he ever got that chance again he was going to grab it with both hands."

Back at club level, Andros was 19 when he made his first-team debut, but it was out on loan at Yeovil Town, rather than his parent club. The time at Huish Park was the first of nine loan spells, during which time he also made his debut for Spurs in The FA Cup.

He scored the opener in a 3-0 Third Round win over Charlton Athletic, but was sent back out on loan by manager Harry Redknapp, with Watford his destination.

Andros Townsend had quite a memorable 2013. A loan spell at QPR thrust him into Tottenham's first team, then a chance in England's last two Qualifiers...

"I remember the day before [my Spurs debut] being told by Harry Redknapp that I was going to start in the game. I was very nervous, it was my first game for Spurs, at White Hart Lane."

"It was nerve-wracking the night before, but once the game got going it was just another football match. But to score on my debut for my club is something I will always remember."

"So it was great to go and play for Harry [at QPR]. From a personal level, it was a great loan for me."

"Loans in the lower leagues help you grow up. When you are at a big club like Spurs, you learn the technical side of the game, then you go to a League One side and it's a completely different kettle of fish."

"You're playing on Tuesday nights and have to get the flick-ons, things like that, and do the dirty side of the game. All my loans have made me the player I am today and helped me grow up quite a lot."

"It's a more progressed development now and you have to go and learn your trade. So when you get your chance at a Premier League club you are ready, as you might only get one opportunity."

His ability to take that opportunity alerted Roy Hodgson and has seen him gain full international honours.

Now, with the World Cup looming, he hopes his club form can help him to be involved this summer.

"It's fantastic for me to break through at international level, but I didn't think it would come as soon as it did. It's now down to me to keep my space in the Spurs team and win a place on the plane this summer."

"The first World Cup I can remember was probably 1998," he continues. "As a winger, David Beckham is someone I looked up to and tried to model my game on. There was also that goal from Michael Owen, how could you forget that?"

Townsend has played himself into a vital squad member



MATCH STATS

ANDROS TOWNSEND

Winger

■ AGE	22
■ DOB	16 JULY 1991
■ PLAYED	4
■ WON	2
■ DRAWN	0
■ LOST	2
■ GOALS	1
■ BOOKINGS	0
■ DISMISSALS	0

■ FIRST MATCH

v Montenegro, 11.10.2013

■ LAST MATCH

v Germany, 19.11.2013

Details correct to 28.02.2014



LIKE TO MAKE
STUFF HAPPEN"

"I HONESTLY THOUGHT IT
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CLIPPED IT AND WENT IN"

MANAGER MORTEN OLSEN

ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO TAKING ON ENGLAND?

It will be a very good test for us. There are two different motivations for the two teams involved tonight. England are preparing for the World Cup; we missed out on qualification and our minds are now starting to focus on getting to UEFA Euro 2016 in France.

IT IS OBVIOUSLY DISAPPOINTING FOR YOU TO BE MISSING OUT ON THE 2014 FIFA WORLD CUP. HOW DO YOU LOOK BACK ON YOUR SHOWINGS AT BOTH THE 2002 AND 2010 WORLD CUPS?

In 2002, we topped our group which contained three other talented nations in Senegal, Uruguay and France. Beating France, as reigning World Cup holders, 2-0 was a big moment. We had a lot of injuries going into the FIFA World Cup in 2010. We had a good chance of qualifying for the knock-out phases going into the last game against Japan, but that 3-1 defeat was very disappointing.

WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT YOUR 3-0 DEFEAT TO ENGLAND IN NIIGATA IN THE ROUND OF 16 AT THE 2002 WORLD CUP?

We were actually pretty pleased with our overall performance in the game,

but we weren't clinical enough in front of goal which is why England won. England had a fantastic team of attacking players, such as Paul Scholes, David Beckham and Michael Owen, but their team were perhaps playing too conservatively during the tournament.

WHAT OTHER MEMORIES SPRING TO MIND OF PLAYING AGAINST ENGLAND DURING YOUR CAREER?

We (Denmark) won a very important game against England in 1983 at the old Wembley Stadium (1-0 on 21 September 1983: see page 40 for more on that match) that saw us qualify for UEFA Euro '84 at England's expense. That was a big, big moment for everyone in Denmark, as it was only the second time the country had ever qualified for the UEFA European Championship.

FOR AN INTERNATIONAL PLAYER OR MANAGER, HOW SPECIAL IS IT TO MAKE AN APPEARANCE AT WEMBLEY STADIUM?

I played at the old Wembley Stadium and that was fantastic. The new ground still holds massive tradition and of course England is the home of football. So for this generation of Danish players, a match against England at Wembley Stadium is a very special and exciting thing.

YOU'VE MANAGED DENMARK IN FOUR MATCHES AGAINST ENGLAND SO FAR – A REAL HIGHLIGHT MUST BE YOUR 4-1 WIN IN COPENHAGEN IN 2005.

Yes, it was a good day for us and a bad day for England. The most pleasing thing about the win was that we beat a very good England team. Winning 3-2 at Old Trafford in 2003 is another good memory for me against England.

WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER OF THE MOST RECENT FRIENDLY BETWEEN ENGLAND AND DENMARK IN COPENHAGEN THREE YEARS AGO?

That was a pretty even match. It was disappointing to lose but it is always good experience for my players coming up against a top nation like England.

THERE ARE PLENTY OF DANISH INTERNATIONALS PLAYING IN THE PREMIER LEAGUE – DO YOU COME TO ENGLAND TO WATCH PREMIER LEAGUE FOOTBALL?

I don't come to England that often, because the Danish players that are playing in the Premier League are most established and I don't need to check their form as much as others. Also, I try to see ten matches plus during a week, but this is difficult if you are travelling all the time.

DENMARK'S CHOSEN ONE

As a player, Morten Olsen made over 100 appearances for Denmark and as manager he's guided them to four major tournaments in 14 years



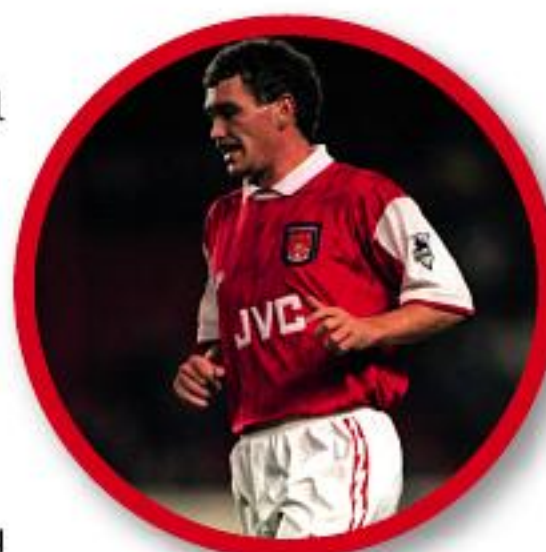
DANES IN ENGLAND

SWAP SHOP

Commemorative t-shirts, a banker and a cult... Denmark have given us many players, while World Cup winner Bobby Moore is among those who have travelled across the North Sea

JOHN JENSEN

Scorer of a superb opening goal in Denmark's surprising 2-0 Euro '92 Final triumph, the midfielder subsequently joined Arsenal from Brøndby the same summer. Famously it then took him nearly 100 games to find the net for the Gunners, prompting fans to create t-shirts commemorating the event. More recently had a short-lived spell as assistant manager to Steve Kean at Blackburn.



MIKKEL BECK

During spells with Middlesbrough and Derby County the striker – a member of the Dane's Euro '96 squad – was memorable for his flowing blonde locks as well as his net-finding abilities.



NICLAS JENSEN

Another who has become an agent, the full-back enjoyed two spells in English football during the noughties, first with Manchester City and then Fulham.



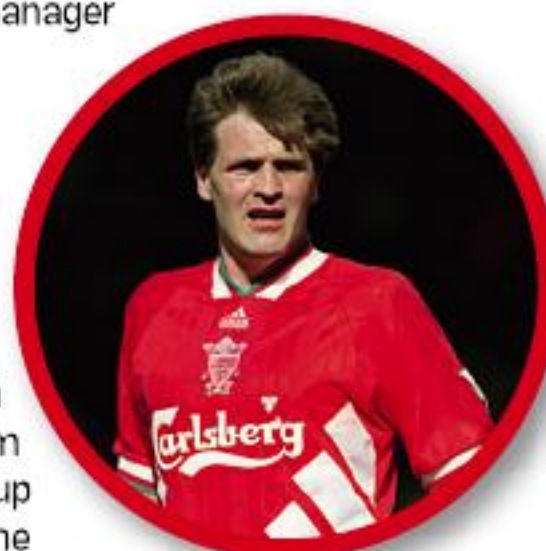
PETER SCHMEICHEL

One of Alex Ferguson's most astute signings, the 'keeper's ability to spread himself in a star shape – picked up from his days playing handball – thwarted many Premier League forwards. A huge part of numerous successes at Old Trafford, including two Doubles and a Treble, he also featured for Aston Villa and Man City and is now a pundit.



JAN MOLBY

"Jan deprived an awful lot of people of an awful lot of enjoyment by not being able to stay in shape," Kenny Dalglish once remarked. Despite being a major part of the Liverpool team that claimed the League and Cup Double in 1986, many believe the midfielder with the stupendous range could have achieved even more. Possessing tremendous shooting power, he converted 42 of 45 penalties while at Anfield.



LARS ELSTRUP

Famous for quitting the game to join a cult, he moved from Odense to Kenilworth Road in 1989 and his 18 goals kept Luton Town up in 1990-91.



NILS MIDDELBOE

Chelsea's first foreigner and also a banker, the scorer of Denmark's maiden international goal at the 1908 Olympics was inevitably nicknamed the 'Great Dane'.



ALLAN NIELSEN

Now an agent, the midfielder netted the only goal in Tottenham's League Cup Final win over Leicester in 1999.



MICHAEL STENSGAARD

Guaranteed to forever feature in lists of football's weirdest injuries, while at Liverpool the goalkeeper reportedly dislocated his shoulder assembling an ironing

Brits in Denmark

Charles Williams

A goalkeeper with Arsenal, he went on to coach the Danes at the 1908 Olympics. He also managed in Brazilian football where, more recently, one of his relatives Seth Burkett has also played.

Colin Todd

Winner of 27 caps with England, the former defender's managerial CV includes spells at Bolton Wanderers, Swindon Town and Derby County. Now in charge of Danish Superliga side Randers FC.

Adam Eekersley

Rates David Beckham better than Cristiano Ronaldo, the full-back worked with both during a Manchester United career that earned him one appearance in the League Cup. Now with AGF Aarhus.

Bobby Moore

A dozen years after lifting the Jules Rimet trophy Moore joined Herning Fremad in the Danish third division. Aged 37 at the time, his signing was a successful publicity stunt.





The World Cup is still three months away, but for Roy Hodgson the plans we are well under way

PREPARATION, PREPARATION

A boat ride down the Amazon River started an important period of preparation for Roy Hodgson as he was given his first taste of Manaus, where England will face Italy in their opening match of the 2014 FIFA World Cup.

For managers and coaches of any sport, preparation is key, and at international level that is magnified with less time on the training pitch and more time thinking about the next game.

No sooner had England qualified for Brazil, Hodgson and The FA were plotting their path to Brazil and their Group D encounters with Italy, Uruguay and Costa Rica.

Friendly games in November against Chile and Germany, two World Cup hopefuls, followed by tonight's meeting with Denmark have set England on their way.

But before the squad meets up again in May, the former West Bromwich Albion and Fulham boss will need to have submitted to FIFA his 30-strong provisional squad. So the three most recent fixtures are all he has to get a clear picture in his mind of who will be accompanying him on the plane in June.

After picking the long-squad, the Three Lions will spend four days training in Portugal before taking on Peru in their last game at Wembley Stadium and then flying to Miami

when Hodgson has to settle on his final 23-man squad.

Ecuador and Honduras, both at Miami's Sunlife Stadium – home of the NFL's Miami Dolphins, will provide the opposition as Hodgson, Ray Lewington and Gary Neville put the finishing touches on their plans for the World Cup.

"I'm delighted with the games we have been able to secure and the programme running up to the World Cup in general," said Hodgson.

"I was clear to those responsible at The FA that I was looking for Central and South American opposition ahead of the Finals tournament and that is exactly what has been delivered."

He continued: "Portugal will be a four-day training camp whereby we won't necessarily have to concentrate too much on the finer tactical points. We'll be making certain we get our fitness levels up so when we do go to Miami for the final part of our preparation we are ready."

"Portugal is where we can lay down the tenets that we want to follow over the following weeks. Then we come back to St. George's Park for the build-up to the farewell game at Wembley against Peru."

"We'll be working a bit harder tactically and technically than we are sometimes able to do because, on this occasion, we'll have the



Roy Hodgson visited the Arena da Amazonia and sailed down the Amazon on his trip to Manaus

RATION, PREPARATION

players to ourselves, just like you would if you were a club team.

"The day following the game, after doing our recovery session, we go to Miami and will very much be in World Cup mode.

"The climate in Miami is ideal, in order to prepare us for the heat and humidity we'll need to get used to."

The team will head directly from Miami to Rio de Janeiro, where they will be based during the tournament, with the intention of travelling to Manaus, venue of their opener against the Azzurri, two days prior to the game on Saturday 14 June.

Hodgson's visit to the Amazon a fortnight ago was a vital part in his preparations. There he got a real taste

of what England can expect when they arrive as he took a close look at the 46,000-seater Arena da Amazonia stadium, the training ground and also some of the sights, such as the world famous river.

"It is hot, but World Cups are played in the summer," Hodgson said, "It was hot in South Africa and it was very hot in America in '94.

"It will be hot and that is something you have to come to terms with."

Of course, this is not the first World Cup Hodgson has had to build for. Twenty years ago he was in charge of Switzerland as they qualified for USA '94.

Much has changed since those

days, and one thing Hodgson highlights as a major difference is the analysis of opposition.

"It was much more 'word of mouth' and written reports," he said. "But now we have power points, videos, images; a wealth of information that is collated and edited so we have the right messages to give to the players.

"It's usually a ten-minute video that we'll work around for a game, showing what in our opinion the opposition are like, what we have to watch out for in their play and what we've got to make certain we do in our play to counter what they are going to come with."

"In terms of man-hours, it takes

days and days to produce evidence from a large number of games. In the past we didn't have that much access to material on teams like Colombia, or even Romania, who we [the Swiss] played at the World Cup.

"I went to see Romania play in two friendlies, that's what you based it on then. Now you've got all of that, all the scouting reports and on top of that we have all of this new information, so we're awash with data.

"We then have to try and package that all in a way for the players to get the most important messages loud and clear so they are under no illusions whatsoever what they are going to come up against."



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