

Tributes pour in for former Hibs player Sol Bamba who has died aged 39

Former Hibs player Sol Bamba has died aged 39.

The powerful defender overcame non-Hodgkin lymphoma in 2021 but died on Saturday in Turkey, where he was working for Adanaspor, after being admitted to hospital.

Turkish side Adanaspor broke the news in a statement released on X which read: "Our Technical Director Souleymane Bamba, who fell ill before the Manisa Football Club match played yesterday, was taken to Manisa Celal Bayar University Hospital and unfortunately lost his battle for life there. Our condolences to his family and our community.'

Tributes have been paid from throughout the football world including from ex team mate and current Hibs player Junior Hoilett who won promotion with Cardiff alongside Bamba, said: "RIP Big Bro. Love Always."

Hundreds of Hibs fans have also paid tribute to Bamba on social media.

Bamba joined Hibs from Dunfermline in 2008 under manager Mixu Paatelainen and made his debut on his debut against Dundee United.

In total he played 80 times for the club, scoring four goals and was a popular player amongst the supporters.

After leaving Hibs he played for a number of teams including Leicester City, Leeds, Cardiff City and Middlesbrough.

Since retiring in 2022, Bamba made the move into coaching, becoming an assistant manager for his former club Cardiff before joining Turkish side Adanaspor.

The 39-year-old had been working as the club's technical director since the summer until his untimely passing.

Bamba's wife Chloe made an emotional statement on social media.

"For the last few years I have watched Sol fight his cancer head on with an astounding mental and physical strength and stoicism," she wrote.

"Unfortunately, it was never a fair fight and just when things were looking up he took a downturn and finally succumbed on 31 August.

"These years have been indescribably difficult but we still managed to find joy and laughter in it. I've experienced my worst days but also some of my best.

"Sol accepted his fate as God's will and left this earth knowing, without a shadow of a doubt, that he was loved wholeheartedly. I made sure of that.

"It was an honour to have loved and been loved by Sol. I learnt so much from him. He is my hero. My heart is breaking. What a gift, what a gift, what a gift to have been loved by him."

Bamba first met wife Chloe when he was playing for Leicester in 2011 and the couple soon married.

They have three children called Roonea, Lily and Amy.

The Ivory Coast defender Sol Bamba won 46 international caps for Ivory Coast

Cardiff City, where Bamba made 118 appearances, said the

centre-back was a “hero” and described his impact at the club as “immeasurable”.

Leeds United, where Bamba played between 2015 and 2016, said he was “one of the nicest people in football”.

A Football Association of Wales statement read: “The FAW is devastated to hear the sad news of Sol Bamba’s passing.

“Sol obtained his coaching badges with the FAW and was currently studying for his Uefa pro licence, where everyone he worked with admired his positivity and his love for the game.

“Our thoughts and deepest condolences are with Sol’s family, friends and everyone that knew him during this difficult time.”