

-Danel Hach
EUROTOUR2018
081415



EUROTOUR 2018 RECAP

Where do I even start!

This NSA Europe trip was truly unforgettable. From the time when we all arrived and met up at SeaTac to when we came back three weeks later, too many memories were made to even count them all! At first I was a little scared for being basically an adult for three weeks, but the NSA staff and supportive parents helped me so much. Everyone always was there if I needed help or anything.

The sightseeing in Iceland was amazing. I've always wanted to see the Blue Lagoons and it was super fun to see what the landscape and views of Iceland looked like. One of my favorite memories from Iceland was how Morgan (and all the people in the back of the bus mainly) would always say something like, "That's in National Geographic!" Or when Sabrina or others would say, "A wild puffin" in an Australian accent. The bus ride was super fun too. Seeing the geyser was amazing. Even though it was really cold it was cool to see the fault line and the black sand. It was also cool to see huge glaciers of Greenland from an airplane view!

And then we arrived...Copenhagen... A long five hour bus ride was ahead of us. The bus was full of soccer players singing the most generic USA songs but it was hilarious especially while watching Sabrina rap the whole song "Baby" by Justin Bieber. About eight in the morning we finally got to the Dana Cup Training Center. I was so happy to actually have a real bed knowing what was coming ahead of us. After we slept our many days of soccer training and scrimmaging finally started. The training was challenging and it was great to learn from all different coaches. That was a big plus because I used the time to expand my play style and it taught me different ways to get out of high pressure situations. The speed of play was great and it was very nice to be able to play with many players with great skills.

On the first Friday we had a great time! We got to go to Farup Theme Park/Waterpark. I was with such a crazy group of girls and they were really fun to go on rides with. Mostly the rafting ride was the favorite. We went on that ride at least five times and we all became known by the workers and guests for going on it. I mean, if you see a group of girls wearing bright red and screaming from a tube what are you supposed to do. We walked across the bridge to get to the ride and another group of kids on the ride screamed "AYYYEEEEEE" at us and we screamed it back! That became our inside joke of the trip (obviously there were many more). It was so funny to see all of us trying to launch Coach Stig off the trampoline and going on all the roller coasters was pure insanity. Later we got to scrimmage the SIV teams and it was nice because we got some of their players to play with us in the Dana Cup during the last week. Kent (Roo's Dad) crashing the bike (oops) after training and all the food was really great. I thought it was such an accomplishment for us since we were new together being able to beat the Fortuna girls 1-0. Another good memory was everything that happened at the beanbag area and foosball. Soon the first week was complete and then it was off to Sweden!

We had a super fun ferry ride over to Sweden and it was nice because we got to see all the little islands and landscape near Sweden. We arrived at the Gothenberg ferry terminal and then we went to our school for the week. It was a relief that we were able to rest until the next day! Let the

games begin! On the second week (Monday) I played in our first official tournament game and we won 2-0!

The same night we all came together (60,000 people) and it was the opening ceremony. The opening ceremony was one of my favorite memories. All the bus rides and train rides during our travels around Gothenberg were a blast. The train ride especially on our way back from the opening ceremony was crazy. We were all very wet, because it started pouring rain and then we were on a packed full bus.

We also got to go to the skills center and also go to another amusement park while using some of our free activity time. Liseberg, the amusement park, luckily had a rafting ride and I guess you know what our group did on it! Repeat what we did at Farup, go on it over 5 times. Our team did very well as we made it into the top eight out of 97 teams! I am very proud of us still.

Another great memory is how all of us stocked up on food at the market and when we went on a walk through the Gothia Towers and went on the glass floor walk. It was also quite an experience walking through the main Gothia Cup area. The sightseeing was very pretty and we could see all of the city by foot and by a boat tour. Sadly we had to leave and go back to Denmark in such a short time.

Another ferry ride and we were back where we left off at Frederikshavn. We got to the next school at about one in the morning and everyone was super tired. Thankfully we were able to have a relaxing beach day. We got to play soccer, walk through and around the old bunkers, and go up the lighthouse near by. We had a "fun" walk through the city nearby trying to find food.

Week three began on Monday and it was our game and opening ceremony day in Hjørring, Denmark. The ceremonies were large because plus we got to walk in with the other USA teams so we really got a full USA experience. Our team did very well! We made it to third place out of 57 teams. We got a HUGE cup and had a presentation with photos on pitch. I really enjoyed getting to cheer for all the other NSA teams, especially the U12 girls. We were so hyped for them (like sisters) and we even made a pyramid.

Touring back in the city of Copenhagen was about five hours by bus and allowed us to wrap up our awesome times together. The city was very pretty so many bicycles. You can walk just about anywhere here.

The sad day came and we all went our separate ways.

I think one of my main favorite parts of the trip was the opportunity to play with people from all over the world and making friendships and memories I will never forget. I became friends with others that I would have never met any other way and I'm happy that this was the group of people I went with. Lastly my final favorite part was getting to see what true soccer is about. I truly loved how people came together just to play soccer. It didn't matter if they won or lost and we just had fun. I really hope we can bring more of that type feeling of play into the States.

Thanks to all players, coaches, and parents that made this trip so unforgettable.



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