

My Norwegian Adventure

Norway was definitely a life changing experience! I learned so much, and experienced so much, but the most important part for me was bringing those experiences and that knowledge home and using it to become the skier I dream to someday be.

August 5, 2014, I woke up in realization that only two days ago I was in Canada but on that wonderful day I was in the beautiful country of Norway. When we arrived the day before it was raining and by the time we got out of the airport it was dark out so I never got to see the beauty of the country until morning when I jumped out of bed to see a magnificent lake and many foothills near the campground we were staying at, it was called Bogstad campground.

After I was done being mesmerized, we went for a quick run and then ate some porridge for breakfast which was fantastic but I think that was simply because it was the first day in Norway and everything seemed fantastic! After breakfast we went on a roller ski for the first time in Norway on a road that went from our Campground away from the city into the country side for a long ways and the entire road had perfect pavement.

This was kind of a surprise to us because in a similarly large city like Edmonton in Canada it would be very difficult to find even comparable pavement anywhere much less a country road. At the time it was the roller ski of my life but I had no idea what kind of crazy unbelievable things I was going to see and experience. Looking back this roller ski and the ones that followed in the next couple days, before leaving the Bogstad campground to go to the actual training camp, I must say they were quite bland compared to the ones to come.

In the afternoon of that day we went on the transit system to explore downtown Oslo. Oslo is the capital city of Norway and the city that our campground was based. It was an amazing place with some fantastic architecture and many sites to see and also lots of street performers to watch. Compared to for example Edmonton it was an extremely clean place to walk around and I saw almost no litter walking around in the downtown area which is also next to the seaport.

After looking around for a little bit and seeing a small portion of what there was to see we were getting tired so we decided to head back to the cabin eat supper then went to sleep and that was our first day in Oslo, Norway.

The next day we ran and skied in the morning just like the day before the highlight of the day for me was going to Holmenkollen the home of the famous ski jump and roller ski tracks. We got to go to the ski museum and to the top of the Holmenkollen ski jump. So we went to the top and were able to see all of Oslo and the fjord from the top. We were very high up!

August 7, 2014, was the day we met up with the Norwegian Junior national girls team at Holmenkollen in the afternoon. We had some fun and interesting conversations and our first impression of Norwegian skiers.

August 9, 2014, was the first day of the camp when we did a 6 km uphill running test near the Holmenkollen ski jump. Later in the day while waiting to get inside for a strength session we played a game of soccer and I managed to score the first goal against a bunch of Europeans. Our strength session was taught by Astrid Jacobson Olympic cross-country skier from Norway who won a gold-medal in a sprint at the 2007 world championships. When Astrid talked to us after supper she talked about the problems with technique she had in the past seasons and told us about how she overcame them and then said “in order to be good cross-country skier you sometimes have to be patient.”

August 10, 2014, woke up in the hotel we stayed at that night and then drove for two hours then we got dropped off and roller skied for 40 km to the camp we would be staying at for the rest of the international camp. The meals we ate for the rest of the camp would've cost about \$40 Canadian for each meal.

August 11, 2014, we had some amazing Norwegian coaches like the Junior national team coach, the Norwegian ski Federation president, the U-23 national Coach and Eldar Ronning an Olympic cross-country skier from Norway who also has eight World Cup podiums, six World Cup wins and four world championship gold medals. When they were coaching us we were on a roller ski specific track that was extremely fun had banked corners and was very fast! When Eldar talked to us after supper he said that in order to become a great cross-country skier you have to “work hard and never give up!”

August 12, 2014, we woke up and ran to the bog or myr for some very difficult intervals. The myr made it very difficult to run fast because your feet sink in almost to your knees in very cold water and moss. Later that afternoon we went to the Lillehammer roller ski stadium where the 1994 winter Olympic Games was hosted. The entire stadium in Lillehammer was paved for roller skiing because it is so much more popular there than it is here in Canada. While we were roller skiing back to the camp I ended up talking to a 22-year-old from Czech Republic and befriended him, at the end of the camp he gave me a Czech Republic buff in return I gave him a Canadian flag sticker.

August 13, 2014, we went for a 5 and a half hour run through the Norwegian foothills and myr we got back from that very tired. That evening we played some “fun” games with all of the athletes that were there from all the different countries.

August 14, 2014, in the morning we did some roller ski sprints with everybody else and the only one of us from our group that did fairly well was Ian, our coach because he is a very fast skier and trains allot. I realized that I need to work on my starts that day. Before supper we did a collaborative strength session of all of the different strength workouts that all the different countries suggested.

August 15, 2014 we had a 15 km skate race 30 second interval starts, it was a very fun race because of the roller ski course being very fast, had lots of corners and lots of hills. Early afternoon after the race was finished we left for Stryn which is the town where the Skala Opp race is based from. That night we stayed in very nice cabins with a loft for the four of us athletes to stay in and we had a good time there.

August 16, 2014 In the morning we left for Skala Opp the 8 kilometer uphill run with an 1800 m altitude change from bottom to top which was quite tiring but definitely worth the view we saw from the top and all the way down. That evening was the first chance we had to just walk around and see all the sites that were presented to us, like the fjord right by our campground with a peninsula on it that we walked out onto and just walked around and saw the amazing things there were to see.

August 17th 2014, very long scenic drive through many fjords all the way back to the capital city of Oslo where we stayed in a hotel that night.

August 18, 2014 we drove to the airport and got on the plane, my exact quotation from my journal on our second flight a few hours before arriving in Edmonton is "very long day, missing Norway already, writing in the journal to try and stay awake."

Larkin