



World Scout Jamboree 2011 – Sweden

East Sussex 'Saxon' Unit



23rd WORLD SCOUT JAMBOREE SWEDEN 2011
UNITED KINGDOM

Welcome to the final Newsletter...sob!

Hej då

As you may have heard....we're back! What can I say? Fantastic, Amazing, Astounding, Incredible, Wonderful...yes all of these and more. Of course, to put me in with a chance of being selected for the next one, I should say, no it was rubbish, wouldn't recommend it to anyone, and wouldn't bother if I were you! But I can't. It was everything I thought it would be and so much more. I can't see why you wouldn't put in for it. It was Scouting at its very best; yes it was hard work, with very little sleep, days that began at 7am and finished at 11pm every night (sometimes later dependant on when the Scouts were returned by other Unit leaders - but more of that later). It was wet and windy, dry and sunny and everything in between...no not snow, but pretty chilly at times.

As with all of my previous newsletters I'll give you the news from around the different organisations, finishing off with more about our Unit at the end -

WSJ 2011 News



The Jamboree is over. Scouts from all over the world left for trips, short or long - some left for home and some for new adventures. In only a few hours most participants had left the camp. A green field dotted with remnants of tents was the only thing left.

Countless meetings have inspired friendship that will last a life time. Over the two weeks, more than 40 000 Scouts took part in the largest Jamboree to date.

For many participants and adults this Jamboree marked their first international Scouting experience. Others, however, have travelled to multiple Jamboree's, having had the opportunity to watch the Jamboree scene change, grow and expand.

We all expected the closing ceremony to be something, extraordinary. After a fantastic Jamboree with superb shows throughout, it just had to be! On the night of the 6th August the grand finale began, with the theme 'Solidarity' and plenty of rumours about what was to come. Situated at an all new stage with a view from every side, the conditions were set for a fantastic show. Sofi Hellborg and the Swedish comedian Johan Wester were introduced as the hosts, and dressed in the Swedish contingent jackets Swedens very own special guests, His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen of Sweden, were sat in the first row. The crowd was massive, cheers were heard all around and there was an amazing atmosphere! Suddenly, the rain began to fall. Did the show stop, of course not; the rain didn't stop a night packed with entertainment. The surprise last number was no less than eighties rockers Europe! The rain also didn't stop the King from performing his classic Rocket or the messengers of Peace from telling their story. The WOSM-flag was handed over to Japan and everyone united in the Spirit of 'Wa'. Just before it all ended, the sky was lit up by colourful fireworks that could be seen from miles away. A truly magical night, summing up the twelve days, and it will be a great story to tell to our friends who weren't there.



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Below is an aerial shot of the entire Jamboree site. Can you see us?



United Kingdom Contingent News

The 22nd World Scout Jamboree ended just how it began, with a downpour of rain and an outpouring of joy and friendship. The King of Sweden, Carl XVI Gustaf addressed the assembled throng saying 'I am very proud to be a Scout today'. He then led everyone in a mock rocket launch blast before the fireworks display. Japanese Scouts came on to stage to collect the Jamboree flag ahead of the next World Jamboree in 2015. They paid tribute to the Scouts who lost their lives in the earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan earlier this year and thanked Scouts all over the world for their messages of friendship and support. A moment of solemnity followed as everyone stood to renew their promise in five different languages. The evening drew to a close with a spectacular firework



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display, and a lightning storm. New friends huddled together to say goodbye and celebrate their experiences.

The first UK units departed the Jamboree site at 1am to embark on Home Hospitality across Europe. Scouts from nearly every country and territory gathered for the 22nd World Scout Jamboree in Rinkaby, Sweden. Some 4,000 came from the UK and joined 34,000 others for two weeks of activities, fun and making new friends in the most truly international event on the planet.

In addition to the Jamboree itself, all UK participants spent two to three days enjoying wonderful Copenhagen and between three and four days after the Jamboree staying with families spread across 18 different European countries. More details on that below.

Saxon Unit News

On the 25th July 2011 at 7.30am, we set off from Broadstone Warren car park (note to self; in future try and let the manager of BW have some advance notice - not the week before!), after saying goodbye to teary eyed Mums (and Dads), brothers and sisters and one CC and DC, we travelled to Heathrow. But wait a minute, one missing! One unit member had some car issues so we met them at the airport; thank goodness.



We arrived at Heathrow along with about 6 other units and after a short delay, which gave us time to introduce ourselves to an American International Service Team (IST) member, we were



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chaperoned onto our flight, arriving in Copenhagen later the same day. This is the time I think it really hit home that we were joining something pretty spectacular. As we arrived in the baggage reclaim area, there were Scout uniforms everywhere, and not just UK uniforms; Americans, Swiss, Italians, all trying to get their bags and head off to the awaiting coaches.

We were shuttled to our Hostel; which I must say was excellent. *If anyone is thinking of staying cheaply in Copenhagen, then I'd recommend the 'Wake-Up' Hostel...it was brilliant.* We didn't have much time as dinner was being served for all 3,500 of us in Tivoli Gardens. We then had the free run of the Gardens with roller coasters, train rides, candy floss and the build of excitement.

The day after, we walked to the sports centre where we took part in activities like power boating, climbing, free running, roller skating, zumba, human football and loads more, before breaking up for a massive bbq and party. Again, all 3,500 of the UK contingent gathered together and were entertained by jugglers, drummers and fire eaters, the 'Kings ov Leon' and 'Alphabeat' whilst we were supplied with free soft drinks and food. Then off to bed at 11.30 to get ready for the early departure to Sweden the following day.



On the 27th July 2011, we set off on the adventure of a lifetime. Off we went to the 22nd World Scout Jamboree in Sweden. We travelled by coach arriving in glorious sunshine to be taken (eventually) to our campsite. We collected our Jamboree scarves and welcome packs, pitched tents, put up the dining shelter and got cooking as time was getting on. After a brief explore, we settled in for the first night... a word of advice – take ear plugs; they really are needed!

The second day we started to really explore more and got a real sense of the size of the site, taking about 40 minutes to get from one side to the other. The site itself was split into 4 towns; Winter, Summer, Spring (adults only and where the IST were catered for) and Autumn. To give you an idea of the scale, we were in Autumn and I never got to Winter or Spring and the Jamboree site once



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built was the second largest town in Sweden! And there were scouts everywhere! We made our gateway, dug our wet pits and built the washing up stand, whilst taking breaks to explore the site before heading down to the Opening Ceremony.

We all congregated at our sub camp town centres and snaked our way through the site, collecting people as we went, singing the National Anthem at the top of our voices, interspersed with shouts of 'Chilli....baby back ribs' (I'm still not sure why?) and Oggy Oggy Oggy, and of course 'Living on a prayer!' We finished up at the opening ceremony in front of a massive stage in a sloping field, similar in shape and size to the Milton Keynes Bowl.

We were greeted by the rest of the 39,000 participants, flags waving, song singing, chants shouting, joined by the entrance of the flags of the world and then lots of fire eating, dancing and



singing. Oh, and then the rain started. This didn't dampen our spirits though as we sat in awe looking at the row upon row of scouts as they filtered in...and kept on coming! And

this is where we first started to hear the Jamboree song "Changing the World", a song I just cannot get out of my head and find myself humming at all times of day and night.

Straight after the closing ceremony, we went to the first of our module activities; 'DREAM'. This was a night time activity where we had to discover our inner selves. It was a chance for us to open our minds and eyes to see life from a new perspective. We definitely learnt a little bit more about ourselves.

Over the next 10 days we took part in the other module activities - 'QUEST', taking part in physical activities, an assault course and much more, puzzles and games to test our minds and loads of opportunities to meet other people. 'PEOPLE' was another module where we were greeted by a chap from Asia who taught us a new game to get us



mixing with people from other backgrounds. We learnt about different cultures and even had a go at meditation. The 'EARTH' module taught us about the planet we live on and we answered practical problems like irrigation, wind power and how to purify water. Again we were encouraged to think about what we could do to improve our own environment.



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Whilst on site, we had the opportunity to wander into the Global Development Village where we gathered to think globally and act locally to make a difference and create a better world. The areas covered were - Peace, Health, Human Rights, Entrepreneurship, Environment and Sustainability and Information and Technology. We thought about what was the most important to us, individually. At the beginning of August we packed up our back packs, collected our shopping and said goodbye to the Jamboree site. Off we went to our Camp-in-Camp experience. All 4 patrols split up on separate coaches and headed into the Swedish countryside. I can't tell you much about the other patrols but my patrol went off to Camp Aleback which was North of the Jamboree site, about 2 ½ hours by coach, away. As we arrived we were informed of the sleeping arrangements which were unusual but as we were there to experience a camp as per Swedish Scouts, we threw ourselves in to it. We were joining a group of Americans, Brazilians, Italians and French who either came with us or were on site already.



We had a wander through the Swedish forest trying out different challenges and then after cooking our dinner over open fires, we experienced a typical camp fire, with lots of yells and songs (including one man playing a saw!) and the occasional stunt...brilliant. The following day we got the chance to swim in a local lake which was magnificent; though a little orange (from the iron in the hills). After only 1

night away it was time to pack up and return to the main Jamboree site where we caught up with everyone else's stories and experiences. Some had been swimming in other lakes, like us and some had been canoeing, we all had a great time though and really experienced the way that the Swedish Scouts camp (not surprisingly, not that different to us).

The day after we got back, we were all told to dress in traditional dress. Now what is the traditional dress of an Englishman? The Scots and Irish have kilts, the Austrians have Lederhosen, and the Dutch all wore orange. Well, we'd (I'd) decided that we'd go as the 'Brit abroad'. We all took knotted hankies for our heads, string vests and union jack shorts; all finished off with socks and sandals. Not many of the other countries got our sense of humour, and the Germans who were camped next to us didn't appreciate us laying our towels out before 8am,





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but we had a laugh. We even served everyone tea and Digestive biscuits. The day was glorious, the sun shone and we had the opportunity to wander round other sites to sample different foods and watch traditional aspects to their camps. After we'd stuffed our faces, we all gathered again to snake our way down to the main arena for the Mid Event. All of our hosts from the Camp-in-Camp came to the Jamboree site and joined us together for a huge ceremony looking at Nature in Sweden.



This was the largest arena event and we had 48,000 scouts all in one place. And yes, you've guessed it; more renditions of 'Changing the World!'. We had parachutists coming in from all angles and a helicopter repeatedly flying over to record the event for Swedish National TV. There were motorcycle and

pedal bike stunts using the stage as a platform for jumps, and lots of singing and dancing. The ceremony went on till about 11pm and when we got back to the camp site, we tucked into a feast of bolognaise and rolls...delicious.

The next few days were spent finishing our modules and taking in some of the spontaneous activities like water Zorbing, ice skating (yes they'd even built an artificial ice rink in the Winter camp), backwoods cooking and spoon making, surfing and badge swapping. One day they even sampled some of the leaders cooking. The little darlings then took the micky out of one of the leaders by feigning immediate food poisoning and running to the wet pit (yes that is a wet pit, not a trench). As the weather was supposed to close in on the final day, (and boy did it) we decided to take down the majority of the tents the day of the closing ceremony. Most of this day was taken up by trying to find lost passports, packing bags, and striking tents, oh and cook dinner and get ready for the closing ceremony.





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The second to last day of the jamboree, we all got out England flags on, painted our faces and put union jack transfers everywhere and headed off for the last time to the arena for the closing ceremony.



The organisers had built an entirely new arena which meant we could gather around a massive stage. The King and Queen of Sweden came along and there was a sobering period of reflection when we all stood in silence and remembered the 30,000 that had died during the 2011 Japanese Tsunami and Earthquake. We then all renewed our promises, sang along to 'Changing the World' followed by Europe playing 'The Final Countdown' and then watched in awe over a magnificent firework display. Not even the torrential rain damped our spirits.





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After a very wet and uncomfortable night (it's amazing how many you can get in a 4 person Jamboree tent), where everyone got soaked and had very little sleep, even after abandoning ship and retreating to a nearby marquee, we packed our tents away, got on the coach and waved a weary goodbye to the experience of a lifetime.

But before it all finished....we were off to Amsterdam, where we were lucky enough to be locally hosted by Dutch families in towns across the north of the Netherlands. We spent 3 whole days with our families who looked after us and treated us like their own. Some went into Germany, some went canoeing and swimming, we all went cycling and some of us made it into Amsterdam. Some of us were accommodated inside their homes in lovely comfortable beds, some were in tepee's in the garden and two of us slept in a shed (Graeme and I). All in all though, it was a brilliant wind down after the noise of the jamboree, spent with some fantastic, friendly, generous families.

On the 12th August we all met up again for the final leg home. I will never forget the feeling of seeing everyone again after being apart for only 4 days; it was another one of the 'special' moments that I think we all experienced throughout the Jamboree. The sight of some of the unit in clogs, walking through Amsterdam airport, was brilliant.





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We arrived back at Broadstone Warren on time to be met by our families (and Ian), all eager to see us and share in our adventure. After many hugs, handshakes and kisses, we all said goodbye to each other. That was a difficult time. We'd spent the last 18 months or so, building into a very close knit team, sharing in ups and downs (of which there were only a few) and then experiencing together the unique adventure that was - attending the 22nd World Scout Jamboree. We made many friends that we'll keep for ever and I'm sure this won't be the last time the East Sussex Saxons all get together!

All I can say now is a massive thank you to East Sussex County Scouts, particularly Ian, Mark and Tony who have been really supportive throughout. A big thanks to Graeme, Louise and Kate too, without you we couldn't have done it. Last but by no means least, massive thanks to the Saxon Unit Explorers who surpassed all expectations and were an absolute pleasure to know and lead.



As a note to anyone who is thinking of putting yourself forward to volunteer to attend the 23rd World Scout Jamboree in Japan in 2015, either as a unit leader, assistant unit leader or IST; go for it. The experience is something that everyone involved in Scouting should try and obtain. I feel richer for being surrounded by so many like minded and friendly people, all with a common purpose.

It reminded me of why I am involved in Scouting, if only the rest of the World was like us!

Thank you for taking the time to read these. I hope that you felt part of our adventure.

John

John Easton
East Sussex 'Saxons' Unit Leader
22nd World Scout Jamboree