

December 16-23, 2015 Northern Lights Amsterdam Trip

Day 1: Arrive in Amsterdam

Wednesday December 16 – Thursday Dec 17

Day 1 – USA to Amsterdam

By Maddy Bremer & Ellie Koontz

Northern Lights 16-1

We arrived at Amsterdam at 6:30 AM after a very long and sleepless plane ride. We got off the plane and immediately tried to get on the wifi. We got our bags, went through customs then got on a double decker train.

The train took us to Amsterdam Central. We walked to our Hotel. Maddy and McKenna were the first ones to almost get hit by a bike or car; they are all over the place. Got our rooms then went up to take showers/sleep. After an hour of sleep we got up to go explore. We walked around to around and were given money for lunch. Half of us had pizza while the other half had sandwiches. After lunch we walked around and saw all of the stores. There are some very weird things there that you will not find in Minnesota that's for sure. Amsterdam has a weird smell to it... Smells like stunk aka weed.

After walking around we got to go to the Anne Frank house. So glad we got to it was such an amazing learning experience. It was cool to be in the real house where they had to go into hiding it. We learned so much about what they had to go through. There was a gift shop there. Only bad thing about the Anne Frank house was that there was no bathroom available. You have to pay to pee here. It's horrible because people on our team have to pee a lot. They have super nice 4 stories high McDonalds here. They get their money from collecting pee dollars. After the Anne Frank house we got to go back to the hotel and got another hour to sleep.

After our short nap we went back outside. There was a Christmas concert in the middle of the city. It was huge. We watched practice of it. Then did some more shopping and found more weird stuff. Then we went to dinner and had AMAZING pancakes. Most of us had the Banana and Nutella pancakes. They were super good!

After dinner we went back to the Christmas concert and sang at the top of our lungs to "All I want for Christmas is you." Everyone there was plugging their

ears and videotaping us. It was such a fun first day in Amsterdam, we can't wait for more, and we can't wait to play some volleyball!

Hugs and kisses to everyone at home, can't wait for you to hear more about our Amsterdam trip!

Wednesday December 16 – Thursday Dec 17

Day 1 – USA to Amsterdam

By Emily Tran & Anna Erickson

Northern Lights 16-2

We arrived in Amsterdam at 6:30 in the morning. We were all very tired, yet excited to start the first day of our lives in Amsterdam. We went to the baggage claim after going through customs. Lizzy's bag took a while to come.

We took a train from the airport to the train station close to our hotel. It was very crowded and Emily almost wiped out, but thanks to Dee she lived to see another day. Then we walked outside with the biggest whiffs of weed and cigarettes we ever had. We noticed how cool the architecture was. Everyone had their phones out to take pictures immediately. We looked like true American tourists.

We walked to the hotel, which only took 10-15 minutes. Everyone was astonished at how many cyclists there were, most everyone almost clipped by a bike. We arrived at the hotel, which was beautiful. While we waited for our rooms, we enjoyed complimentary Dutch candies and played card games. We got to our rooms and organized everything, thinking we should be sleeping but had to get ready for a full day of adventures.

After getting ready, we walked to Dam Square, which was occupied due to a huge stage in the center. We all had 10 euros to spend for lunch. It took most people longer to figure out what they wanted to eat, than to actually eat their food. Emily, Ella, Kennedy, and Maddie had burger. We promised after the burger, to not have any American food from then on. Anna, Dee,, and ally calzones that we didn't enjoy so we got Nutella waffles instead. After, we arrived to the Anne Frank Haus, which was really cool and informative. We got to see the real bookshelf that they used to disguise the staircase that led up to the Secret Annex. We knew the steps were going to be steep but it was a lot harder than we thought. After the Haus, we got to have some time to sleep and rest our bodies before another adventure.

After a good rest, we walked to the Flower Market, which had a lot of cool souvenir shops, Christmas stores, and tulip markets. Emily got weed socks. A lot of the girls got prints, beautiful ornaments, and comfy sweatshirts. Then we hiked all the way to the Pancake Bakery with empty stomachs for 7 hours. The restaurant was a mile away, everyone wasn't prepared. Curt paid for the entire meal, which was very generous. Dee got a Nutella pancake that looked like poop. The pancakes were basically crepes. Everyone enjoyed the great meal.

After that we traveled back to Dam Square, where we started. We had an hour to go shopping, where everyone went crazy. There was a Christmas show going in the center of Dam Square. They sang many Dutch songs, but when "All I Want For Christmas is You" played in English we all started obnoxiously singing. We sang so loud that the people on the stage started to look at us, as well as the people around us. They also started to take videos of us, which was cool.

We left after the song because they started to sing Dutch songs again. Then we all went back to the hotel and went to sleep right away. We all were so tired, but it was definitely worth the lack of sleep due to the great adventures we had.

Day 2: Amsterdam

Friday December 18

Day 2 – Amsterdam

By Camden Schank & Dee Pioske

Northern Lights 16-2

Day 2 of our Amsterdam adventure was a success! First we got to sleep in some, since we had been up for more than 30 hours yesterday after our long flight. We had a good breakfast, which consisted of very fresh orange juice and a "runny boiled egg" that I don't think was actually boiled... Then it was time to leave to go get on the bus that took us to the Windmill Village.

We played some intense games of "Heads Up" on the way there. When we got there we all rushed off the bus and were hit with a big whiff of cheese, chocolate, and animals.... Not very pleasant...(I think Emily threw up). Later we found out the smell was actually a food producing factory a little ways away, but I'm sure the animals were part of it too. We all ran around exploring

and chasing geese and then decided to explore the Kat Windmill. After climbing up the very very steep ladder, we stepped out on the platform of the windmill. Most of us were scared by the fast blades swishing by us literally two feet away. In fact, Kennedy started crying. For about 5 min, the wind really picked up, and almost blew most of us off the windmill. I'm not actually sure if we were all more scared of the windmill, or of Emily's screams because of the windmill. Andy claims that people from Amsterdam could probably hear us.

We left the very scary windmill, and explored the rest of the little shops and houses in the village. One building was the clog making building where a huge sparkle clog was on display. The worker told us that the clogs were actually quite comfy, we didn't believe him. We also enjoyed taking pictures in the giant clogs, (we were 10 peas in a Clog). We had talked our way into 45 extra minutes, so it was then time to leave.

We returned to the hotel and had some free time to eat and walk around Amsterdam by ourselves. Our whole team spent the time eating at a nice Italian restaurant and went shopping afterwards. Then we returned to our hotel, played a quick game of "donkey" (taught by Camden), and went out to dinner. Some of us were ambitious and decided to try the Veal (even Ella!!!). We had some quality conversations and a couple good games of "Telephone", before it was time to leave. We returned to the hotel ready to conquer our next adventure filled day tomorrow in Alkmaar!

Knuffels en kusjes ("Hugs and Kisses" in Dutch),
Dee and Camden

Friday December 18
Day 2 – Amsterdam
By McKenna Melville & Brynne Gray
Northern Lights 16-1

Today was the second day in Amsterdam it was beautiful today, but a little windy. We went to the Windmill Village and walked around for about 3 hours. There were little shops in the village with souvenirs in them. The smell was not the best, it smelled like rotting hot chocolate!! The view was amazing, with a lot of huge windmills. There was a canal on one side of the village with houses on the other side. There was one spot on the dock where you could get a picture of both the river and the windmills.

After touring the Village we took off for the hotel. We were then "set free" and left to see the shops and town. We (Brynne and McKenna) ate lunch at a pizza

place that made the food right in front of you! The pizza was delicious. Our whole team each bought our own pizza and ate the whole thing! The other team went to a different pizza place and shared a pizza saving enough money to get some ice cream. We then looked around the Dam Square and went into different shops. There are all types of shops... Clothing, food and weed.

We got back to the hotel around 6pm and got ready to eat dinner. We walked to the dinner at 7:45. We ate at an Italian Dine that Curt found while “making his way down town walking fast faces pass and he’s home bound”. The food was amazing as we got a choice between, chicken, veal, or pasta. We ate rather quickly and made it back to the hotel without getting hit by a bike or tram! We packed our bags in record breaking time and made our way to Curt’s hotel room to write this.

See you and miss you all!

Day 3: Alkmaar

Saturday December 19

Day 3 – Alkmaar

By: Kayla Bair, Grace Persson

Northern Lights 16-1

This morning we took a 45 minute train ride to Alkmaar. We had a “3/4 mile walk”, which was really 7 miles. Once we arrived at the Bed and Breakfast we put our stuff in the 16-2’s room, which was camping theme. There are camping trailers all around the room with beds to sleep in. We had a lot of fun dressing up in the old fashion Dutch costumes, we walked around outside by the canal in front of our bed and breakfast for everyone to see our new outfits.

After getting settled in we went out to explore the new city. We all walked down to the church by the end of the canal and shopped, ate lunch, and met beck up with Curt to get some Dutch bakery treats. After that we went back to the hotel to get ready for practice. When we arrived at the training facility we met a super cute Dutch boy named Joris (Yoshi). After an hour and a half of practice we went back to the Hotel for dinner. We had chicken, potatoes. Salad, bread, and ICE CREAM.

The drivers picked us up and we went to the opening ceremony where we met all the other teams. It was fun talking to them and learning their

languages. We got introduced as team “USA” and went up on stage to get our picture taken. Then we went back to the hotel and got ready for bed.

Saturday December 19

Day 3 – Alkmaar

By Ally and Lizzy

Northern Lights 16-2

Today we took a train from Amsterdam to Alkmaar. The train was 40 minutes long and we passed many small villages that had sheep and animals.

When we got there we were amazed how much smaller and it was than Amsterdam and how many less people there were. After we got to Alkmaar we walked from the train station to the Bed and Breakfast $\frac{3}{4}$ miles.

The Bed and Breakfast was very interesting. It had 3 campers in it and it was much bigger than a normal hotel room. It has 2 bathrooms and 3 showers. It also had turf floors and a fake tree.

After we got situated, we walked around Alkmaar and there was a market where we ate lunch. It had a lot of organic local food. There were many shops and weird smells. We passed a store that sold raw fish and it smelled gross.

After we got back to the Bed and Breakfast, we played this card game called Donkey. We then went to the school and we met all the teams in the tournament. Later that night when we were trying to go to bed, we spent 30 minutes trying to figure out how to turn off the lights. We ended up just unscrewing the lightbulbs. Overall, it was a fun and new experiences and it was cool meeting people from all over the world that all speak different languages.

Merry Christmas! Miss you all! <3

Day 4: Alkmaar

Sunday December 20

Day 4 – Alkmaar

By: Mary Campbell and Anne Wong

Northern Lights 16-1

Today is our second day in Alkmaar. This morning we had the opportunity to wake up later because our first match was at 10. We woke up and headed down the breakfast area of the bed and breakfast and had a traditional breakfast of bread, meat, cheese, and hard boiled eggs.

Next, we walked down to the sports center to support the end of the 2's match and get ready for our own. We shared a USA locker room with the 2's. Our first match was against a Germany team. The girls on the Germany team ranged from 12 to 15. When we started our warm up we were both confused on the way it was run. Even though warmups were rough we ended up winning 25-3 and 25-0 with Brynne serving the entire set.

We took a small break in between matches and we got to visit with Joris again and we nicknamed him Yoshi. We met some other Dutch boys and talked with them also. Then we got back into gear to play our next match. We played Dinto, a local team from Alkmaar who let us practice in their gym the night before. We proceeded to win the first set 25-11 and the in the second it was closer and we won 25-23. It was a fun match and afterwards we took a picture with Dinto.

We had tomato soup and sandwiches for lunch with the other teams. Then we had time to rest before we watched the 2's at their 3:00 match. Later tonight we are going to a body drum event with the other teams. Then afterward we can look forward to Chef Curt's surprise dinner (spaghetti, he can boil water! Go Curt!). He also mentioned that there will be a surprise side and dessert. Can't wait!

Sunday December 20

Day 3 – Alkmaar

By Ella Ratzloff & Arianna Barrett

Northern Lights 16-2

Hello from across the Atlantic Ocean. Today we woke up at 6:50 to an ice cold bitter freezing room. Every step we took chilled every bone in our bodies and I didn't want to leave the warmth of my bed in the camper. Then we got ready and went to breakfast. For breakfast we had bread. And more bread. Oh and also more bread. Addition to the more bread we had hard boiled eggs and chocolate sprinkles. *Arianna Talking in her British accent* "It's difficult to poop when all this bread has backed my bowels up."

We walked about ten minutes to the gym and went into our locker room to get ready. (btw locker room has great wifi!!!). We played our first two matches

against Alkmaar teams and won. After our first two games we had lunch and guess what....more bread. They served sandwiches and tomato soup. We finished our lunch and warmed up for our next game. We played Switzerland and lost in two. Then we went back to the bed and breakfast.

When we got back we drew names for who would shower first and who would stay in the other room. In the middle of Ella's shower the power went out and water went cold. She took a cold and dark shower until Curt saved the day. He called the owners to come and fix the lights. After all the chaos, we headed to dinner at Curt's house. He made us spaghetti, salad, fruit and GUESS WHAT..... MORE BREAD!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! After dinner Curt gave us a surprise of Magnum ice cream bars. They were delicious.

After dinner we headed over to the school of athletics to "Body Drum" with all the other teams. Body drumming is when you snap, clap, and make cool rhythms with your body. To cool off after all the body drumming we got glasses of water and hung out with Alkmaar team that we played against early today. We taught them how to whip and nae nae. We went back home and played some card games as a team and then went to bed. The people who had the new room couldn't figure how to use the key so they had to get Andy. We all bundled into our beds and dreamed of volleyball and Bread.

Love you mom and dad. Miss you! Hope Santa is nice to me when I get home;) -Arianna
Rt^-Ella <3

Day 5: Alkmaar

Monday December 21

Day 5 – Alkmaar

By: Tara Lee & N'kai Cannata

Northern Lights 16-1

When we woke up on this beautiful morning we ate bread and Nutella, again. We also ate eggs, again. We walked over to the facility where we play. We played a total of 4 games today and we went undefeated. We ate lunch at the facility and we explained to other teams how the Warehouse works and showed them photos. They also told us about their facilities and told us how their training works. We met and talked with many cool players and coaches and agreed that we will trade jerseys with them tomorrow.

After we were done playing, we went back to our apartments and showered and went to dinner. We went to dinner at an Italian restaurant where we ate pizza and pasta and again more bread. When we finished our dinner we walked back to our apartments where our drivers picked us up to bring us to the bowling alley. While we were at bowling many of the other teams were there so we got to talk to them again. It took a long time for us to get a lane because we had to wait until other teams were done. After bowling we had to say goodbye to our new friend Joris, or as we called him Yoshi because he will not be watching us tomorrow because he will be training with the national team.

We are 6-0 so far in the tournament and if we win our first match tomorrow we will be in the championship. We are very excited to possibly be playing in an international championship. Overall it was a very good day and we are having lots of fun. Europe is very beautiful and very different than America. Although Europe is wonderful, we cannot wait to be back at home with our families because we miss them very much.

Signing off,
TT and Kiki

Day 6: Alkmaar – Finals Day

No Journal Entry