

NWJS Norway Tour 2020, version 2022

Ben Todhunter, Cate and Alex Matthew, as well as coaches Sue & Martyn Roome, Julia Preston..and not forgetting Tom Matthew... made it out to the forests of Norway for the long-awaited North West Junior Squad tour!

Here, **M14 Tour Champion Ben** (a fact which he has modestly omitted from his report) gives us the low-down on his trip.

My time in Norway was one of the best experiences of my entire life. The memories and the friends I have made will never be forgotten. Before I left I was pretty nervous because I'd never spent much time with the people who were going (apart from the odd squad weekend) and wasn't sure how I'd feel spending ten days in a foreign country with them but by the end of it was a completely different story – I didn't want to leave I was having that much fun.



We all stayed in a beautiful ski hut surrounded by miles of gorgeous Scandinavian forests teamed with wildlife. All the forests we orienteered in throughout the ten days were beautiful with something unique and different about all of them. We also did a bunch of other exciting activities such as Roller skiing, and volleyball and met up with the local orienteering club FSK (Fredrikstad Skiklubb).

Overall, my favourite part was an orienteering course at a place called Viker we did where one of the legs you had to cross the sea onto an island where two controls sat. Because the Norwegian coastline has so many islands close to the mainland, we were able to cross at a shallow area where it only went up to our chests.

The rest of the terrain was all granite rock with occasional waist-height deep heather and 10ft deep chasms.

From my experiences in Norway, I can bring back improved orienteering skills, fitness and how to follow my compass right instead of going 45 degrees wrong. Apart from listening to Mr Brightside by The Killers on repeat, Norway was one of the best experiences in my life and the best 10 days ever.



Here are my Norway O -tips:

Understand their mapping styles – on the left is a 'Rocky Pit', usually what we would map as 2 small crags at 90 degree angle. Bare bedrock is often marked more like open yellow, and only grey if it has no vegetation on it. Paths crossing or coming off this can be tricky to spot in the terrain.

Norway uses EMIT. Whichever way you approach the control , you'll have your brick the wrong way round.