

September 2011

International Mounted Games Exchange 2011

Hello my name is Jordan Cornish and I am from East Maple Ridge Pony Club in the BCLM Region. I was selected to represent Canada in the 2011 International Mounted Games Exchange held in Lexington Kentucky. The tour was from July 6th through July 23rd and we visited Ontario, Washington DC, Virginia, and Kentucky. The team with 3 members from Alberta, one from Ontario and of course myself, arrived in Ontario on July 6 2011 and it was great to see everyone again. In the matter of a few days it felt like we were family. We were hosted by the Radcliffe's. Their family made us feel right at home.

The practices were fun and helped us bond as a team. We tried to have one practice a day. We also had a practice with the Guelph Pony Club which was also a great experience.

We did a lot of fun stuff together as a team. We went to a Brad Paisley concert in Toronto, went to the Grand River raceway, then tubing down a gorge. My favourite part of being in Ontario is when our coach took us boating at Bellwood Lake. Our team participated in the WOR regional competition. I was amazed on how big the event actually was. There were 8 lanes of riders, and overall way to many riders for me to count. Our last day in Ontario was our laundry and packing day getting ready to fly to the U.S.

When we arrived in Dulles airport in Washington DC we met up with Australia and Great Britain right away. I was amazed on how fast we all became friends. No matter where we went everyone we talked to was so nice and polite. We did a lot of fun things together like a trail ride in a thunder/hail storm at Marriott Ranch, we had a games day, we did an adventure climb, and we even went shopping. The host families were great; they made us feel right at home and showed us a great time. The tours on the trip were absolutely amazing. We did 4 tours; we toured Charlestown Raceway which is thoroughbred racing, Williamsburg, which was a whole city that acted like they were in the 1800's, Washington D.C which was amazing to see all the neat buildings and memorials, and lastly my favourite tour, the naval base tour. I liked driving through looking at all the battleships and destroyers.

Kentucky Horse Park, wow, that's all that comes to mind. It was incredible. I didn't realize that it would be that massive. We stayed at Georgetown College in the dorm rooms. It was really nice there and we had our own little condos for each team. The competition went well and it was fun just to get out and ride with everyone. In the end Great Britain came first, Australia second, United States third, and Canada fourth. After the competition we went back to Georgetown College and had one last party before we flew out.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone who made this trip possible. With a special thanks to the Radcliffe family for hosting us in Ontario, Sandra Radcliffe for chaperoning us on tour, Dylan McPhail our team coach, and to everyone who made the trip to Kentucky to cheer us on. Overall this was a trip of a lifetime, and I feel very fortunate to have experienced it. I met so many great people and made some great friends.

With thanks, Jordan Cornish