

## Saxony Active Naturist Week 2018

This was the first time I participated in the Saxony event. Previously, although I had heard of it, I was under the impression that it was an exclusively German affair. After all, the international participants of NEWT did not go to Saxony after NEWT. But last year, John (of Dublin) and I discussed the prospect of attending this event this year and the thought that there would at least be one non German-speaking Irishman somehow emboldened me. And boy, am I glad I went!



First, many of the participants of the Saxony event were people I already knew and had met in the previous NEWT events. Even those who were new to me were friendly and warm as all naturists tend to be. There were people from other countries too, and at least two other persons (quite apart from John and me) who did not speak German. It may not have as large an international community as NEWT but it's getting there. And the activities are incredibly enjoyable and varied. After the gruelling hiking at NEWT which exhausted me quite a bit, I was relieved to see that the Saxony hiking wasn't so strenuous. The area is a huge national park with unique rock formations and the hike involved a lot of climbing up ladders, steps and rocks and squeezing through crevices in rocks and going into labyrinths of tunnels and meandering paths that nature has blessed this area with. It's for me very much like the Disneyland of nude hiking. Apart from hiking, we went boating in the river and yes, we cycled for 40km into the Czech Republic and we cycled the same distance back, all by the Elbe River.

Here are a selection of photos that show the unique landscape we got to see during our hiking. It's a national park and there were a lot of tourists, usually families with children.



There are numerous caves that we went into.



The view from the top is always magnificent.







A break after hours of strenuous rowing down the Elbe.





We left our boat on the bank of the Elbe and walked to a nearby town for ice-cream.



For one of our hikes, we took a steam engine train to the starting point of the hike.



The last pic above shows the inside of the steam engine room. Thanks to Pascal who got the driver's permission for us to go into the steam room to take photos.





A hiking report is never complete without a selfie taken with the species we all love best.





We conquered the Czech Republic on bicycles.



It was a rest day the day after our 80-km cycling. We met at a Chinese restaurant in Dresden for dinner. As is always the case in Europe, the 'Chinese' restaurant wasn't Chinese but probably Vietnamese. But I was there for the company and not the food and so it was OK. And getting a photo of our organiser and leader eating ice-cream with chopsticks was priceless! Without Martin and his iPad, this entire week would not have been possible.



The next day, we went to Schrammsteine where one wrong move is all it takes for you to enter the pages of history.







Sadly, my camera hasn't got the intelligence to spot that the branch was in the way.



The international crowd from NEWT should also attend the Saxony activities just as the Saxony folks should attend NEWT. If you get to know people better, you will find that there is so much you can talk about with people who speak a different language. I spent many a pleasant hour discussing English grammar with Horst and Rainer - something I could never do with English-speaking people who universally don't know much about grammar. There's something truly amazing about the German people that made me decide to learn the German tongue but sadly, I just gave it up after my first lesson. Some things are just impossible. Hope to see everyone again next year!

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