

“Interland 2019”

On the 9th and 10th of March, I was lucky enough to be in the North-East of France Running for England in the Interland competition. I had a great time, meeting new people and (obviously) running in the Saint Michel forest.

At the truly wonderful time of quarter past six in the morning, the coach arrived at the meeting point on the (surprisingly clear) M25. We all set off in high spirits and a strong determination to win back that well deserved trophy. Soon after picking up a few more people, we were on our way over to France.

When we got to the training event, we were all raring to go and couldn't wait to get out into the forest. It was quite a nice venue (apart from the brambles) with a picturesque lake and interesting terrain. By the end, we knew what to expect on the big event and had quite a few scratches too. We then made our way back to the accommodation.

The accommodation was excellent and had a beautiful view onto the lake. The rooms were spacious and comfortable, with a very nice bathroom to go with it. It was right next to the night sprint area so we could get a good look at the terrain too.

Personally, my experience on the night sprint wasn't fantastic. After making a slight error in the first few legs, I couldn't make back that precious time and had a not so great placing. We did have some very fast people running however, who got a high placing and smashed the course completely. After a good serving of Bolognese back at the hotel, we were all ready to bed down and rest for the event the next day.

I was ready to go on my course and (using my French skills) managed to find my way to the start. It was a buzzing environment with people filming or warming up or taking action photos. Once the starting beep went, I was off like a rocket and (after picking up the wrong map and quickly realizing that I didn't want to run a fifty-year old's course) had a fantastic run! The terrain was brilliant, with open forest all around and a very runnable section of pine trees. There were two rivers, however, which were waist-deep and had a strong current. They were tough to cross but at least gave us some relief from the previous day's scratches.

Before we knew it, we were on our way home and had the cup in our hands! We were all so happy to have won back the cup and were sad to be coming home. Overall, I had a great time and would love to go back there to run again.

Dylan Kenny