

Euro Roadtrip!

Text: Mikael Sandy

Photo: Christian Laurila, Nitro

In the beginning of January me and photographer Christian Laurila sat down in Sweden and talked about going down to France and Schweiz to take some pictures and do some competitions. Christian, who is a spontaneous guy, was up for the idea and brought his girlfriend to come on the trip with us. Two days before going we just realised that we had studs on our tires and that was not allowed outside Scandinavia. A couple of phone calls later we had some new tires that we got for an old board and a 100 euro's, everything works out if you try hard enough!

One small problem we had was that neither Christian nor his Girlfriend Karolyn had a license to drive the car. I learned a thing or two about stress and endurance during the 30 hour drive down. Christian and Karolyn also learned about stress when I, after 18 straight hours of driving, got lost in a small German city for over one hour. We came down okay anyway. Our first stop was Avoriaz in France. In Avoriaz we got great help from freestyle responsible Jean Noell who helped us out with commendation and lift passes for two weeks. The plan was to have Avoriaz as a base and go to Tignes to compete in the Tignes Airwaves the first week. We had a small problem though. As soon as we got to avoriaz we came down with the flu virus. I had 39 degrees fever and was shaking when i was supposed to compete. I and Christian got well the second week and woke up in a snow covered Avoriaz with sunny skies. We hooked up with French pro rider, for Rome snowboards, Jonatan Menton and built a small powder kick over a three. It was a lot of fun and we had some snap shots.

In the afternoon we hit the pipe. It was a really good pipe for this time of the year. Nice transitions and a backside wall that got really slushy in the afternoon alp sun.

One day we got to go to the stash park in Avoriaz. Avoriaz has together with Burton built a park in the woods with hidden jibb features. There is one in Europe and one in the states and there is a three year project running during which new hidden features will show up every now and then. Really cool and fun park that we hung in for a few days.

Halsiberg, Meiringen Schweiz. On the third week of our road trip we went to Schweiz and the Nitro house. When we got there we heard that it had rained for two days. Lucky for us it was sunny and slushy up at the top. Nitro riders Anton Gunnarsson, Mattias Nyberg and Patrik Huber was there among others. We did a bomb drop hit some kickers and the coner during the first day. The weather was really nice and sunny. On the second day some bad weather had come in and on Wednesday I and Christian had to go to Bardonecchia for world cup competitions.

Italy, Bardonecchia. Italy was nice and sunny during the afternoons but cold and icy during traning and competition. I took some hard slams during the training. Christian worked really hard during the competition and shot over 1400 pictures on 75 riders, that is alot! On the competition day I had some nice training runs but ended up falling on the last hit in the competition itself.

Back in Avoriaz. Monday after Bardonecchia I picked up Adam Martell on the airport in Geneva. Super happy to have another person with a drivers license in the road trip car! Christian had got a job to shot the world cup so he went to leysin for boardercross competitions. I and Adam went back to Avoriaz. We did a cliff drop and some hand plants in the pipe.

After some bad weather we had a cool powderday in Flain a resort just next to Tannings were we

stayed the last couple of days. Me and two Swedish girls, Jessica and Lina, did some drops and had some nice runs in the deep snow.

The trip was really cool and France, Schweiz and Italy were good trips. Worth it even though i have to spend 30 hours in the care to go back home again.. =)

Have a nice winter!

/Mikael Sandy, Nitro, Von Zipper, Acresent.se, boardstore.se, Kustom, Frankerhauser.