

After loyally following Ipswich Town Football Club around the country in their bid to get promoted to the Premier League, there was no way I was going to miss the opportunity to see them play at Wembley. But...the band trip to Holland had already been booked and paid for on the same weekend so I came up with a crazy plan to do both!

The plan was to travel to Holland with the rest of the band, spend Friday evening, the whole of Saturday and Sunday morning, and then travel back by myself on Sunday afternoon via the fast cat ferry between the Hook of Holland to Harwich. I would be back in Suffolk by early evening ready to travel to London and the football match on the bank holiday Monday.

Best laid plans and all that!

We left Ipswich in good time on Friday lunchtime but as far as I can remember, less than a mile down the road, the one way system was absolutely gridlocked. The weather was awful and there had been a lot of flooding on the roads. It took absolutely ages just to get out of Ipswich.

I don't remember anything about the rest of the journey, probably because I don't travel well on coaches and I expect I was dosed up on Kwells! I just remember it being a very long journey down to Kent, through the tunnel, through Belgium and onwards to Holland.

We arrived in the early hours of Saturday morning, met by Andrew Farthing, who had travelled ahead, and he directed us all to our chalets. I shared a room with Lucy Ball and also in our chalet was Heather and David Ferguson, Katherine Doyle and Natasha Free. Heather was pregnant at the time and she was really suffering with her morning sickness.

My memories of Saturday are vague although I do remember the band playing outside at the Arnhem war museum and visiting the Arnhem Oosterbeek War Cemetery. It was a very wet and windy weekend so we must have got lucky with the weather on Saturday seeing the sunshine in the photos.

On Saturday evening we headed off to a Chinese restaurant and as I recall this was a really delicious meal, apart from the hot and sour soup, which I am not a fan of! I also remember sitting on large round tables, with Lucy, the Wilsons and a couple of other people. I'm sure there is a photo of us at that table somewhere but I can't find it anywhere so it must belong to someone else.

We had a leisurely breakfast on Sunday morning and that was where I left the group to travel back to Suffolk. I said my goodbyes and I got a taxi to Arnhem station. From here I had to get a train to Rotterdam, then another train from Rotterdam to the Hook of Holland.

I was 23 at the time and I had never really travelled by myself in another country so I was a little nervous but very proud that I got to the Hook of Holland all by myself. It was a really windy day and I remember getting blown from the station to the ticket office for the fast cat ferry back to

Harwich. Windy is an understatement, the winds were actually of galeforce proportions so when I tried to book my ticket I was told that the fast cat ferry was not sailing today, or any ferries for that matter. I wanted to cry although I don't think I did. I had no idea what to do next and the ticket office was not particularly helpful. I guess this was before I owned a smartphone!

Anyway, it turned out that I needed to get back to Rotterdam, take a train to Antwerp and from there a train to Brussels and then get the Eurostar to London. All was well, until a tree down on the line between Rotterdam and Antwerp meant that I had a good hour or two stuck on a stationary train before being re-routed, changed to another train and then onwards to Antwerp.

I arrived in the Brussels Eurostar station about 3 minutes before the last train back to London was leaving. I was kind of an emotional wreck by this point and I hadn't eaten all day because of the quick changeovers. I remember chatting to a couple on the train who gave me some awful peanut butter chocolate things...it's funny what you remember.

I finally arrived back in London and had to get from Waterloo to Liverpool Street on the tube. I vividly remember sprinting across Liverpool Street station to make sure I caught the last train back to Ipswich. I remember getting into my bed at about 1am.

5 hours later I was up getting ready to catch the train back to London to head to Wembley...crazy right?!

Due to traffic jams and bad weather I ended up being in Holland with the band for just 32 hours that weekend. 24 hours and about 15 trains later I had travelled home from Holland and back to London and Wembley to watch Ipswich Town win the Championship Play Off Final.

A truly memorable and epic weekend.