



Sam came along to navigate through the Polderoute rally notes



MiniWorld's Sputnik on the Dover to Calais ferry



With a few hours to spare, we explored the beach at Dunkirk



Attaching the Polderoute run plaque at Sint



Anja and Wesley's Moke



A lunch stop at Café de Griete in Holland was a good chance to check out the Minis



The youngest participants received special T-shirts



Every participant received a prize, such as this bag of tasty pears!



Arne Verkeyn's 1970 Mini Van, complete with whitewall tyres



Katrien and Ronald's 1966 Austin Countryman won the Best Mini award and was also the oldest Mini of the event

"100 miles of Mini driving lay ahead"

Polderroute Part 5

Words and photos: Stephen Colbran

As first time entrants to the Belgian Minis on Tour's Polderroute, a navigational rally on the Belgian-Dutch border, we couldn't have asked for a warmer welcome. Organisers Anja and Wesley had translated all of the road books and entry forms into English, printed individual covers on the road books with a picture of each team's Mini and even researched a list of local hotels for us.

Unsure of exactly what to expect from the event, we headed across the channel on a mildly warm September Saturday in MiniWorld's Sputnik. A relaxed two hour drive east from Calais and we had arrived at Sint Laurens, Belgium. It was an effortless journey and the day couldn't have ended better, with the hotel owner showing off her fine selection of Belgian beers at the bar and leaving us to help ourselves – talk about trusting!

The following day and we met at the breakfast point with 54 other Minis, mainly from Belgium and Holland but with three other UK Minis and a handful of French and German cars for good measure. Around 100 miles of Mini driving

lay ahead, taking in some fantastic country roads, windmills, traditional villages and scenery of the Belgian and Dutch polders.

There were two classes in the navigational rally: Touristic and the incredibly complicated Sport class. Thankfully, we'd opted for the Touristic Class, following tulip-style navigational notes and stopping en route at roadside marker boards and checkpoints. The boards displayed cryptic pictorial clues for names of famous bands and musicians, and put simply, the team with the most correct answers would win. I guess we must have missed quite a few clues, finishing 22nd in class...

There was a lunch stop at midday and a tasty chicken and chips dinner on return to Sint Laurens in the evening. On top of this, every team received a prize of some sort. The rally winners were delighted to win a monster sack of potatoes! Somehow BMOT had managed to organise all of this for €45 per team, definitely money well spent. We left for an overnight stop in nearby Bruges for some more local beers and slowly made our way back the following day. It was perfectly organised Mini weekender on the continent and I'd highly recommend the Polderroute Part 6 on 18 September. See: www.belgianminisonstour.be.

Miniworld would like to thank: P&O Ferries for supporting our trip.



Classic 1960s-style Van leads the way



Sputnik gets lost, again...



Jansy likes to use his Mini as a picnic table



Sputnik in a scenic Dutch village



Fat 10-inch alloys and Italian Job spots



With bvery fewhills, it's no wonder cycling is so popular in the region



54 Minis gather at the lunch stop, minus a couple who'd taken a few wrong turns