

EGMO 2014 Unofficial Student Report

Blah EGMO blah girls blah third blah Turkey.

Anyway.

We are the Egmoids of UNK:

- UNK1, Olivia Aaronson – now also known as Parrot Zombie no. 2
- UNK2, Katya Richards – even more confused at having now been promoted to UNK2
- UNK3, Eloise Thuey – never ever again to be referred to as ‘Eloise the negro cheese’
- UNK4, Kasia Warburton – spoon-diving champion.

We regret that UNK0 was unable to take up his customary position as emergency reserve due to his tragic failure to turn up to the Pregmo¹ camp. We do however have a new mascot, Joe ‘Josephine’ Benton, who we unfortunately left in Cambridge.

Day 1

5.30am – Eloise leaves the house

8.30am – Katya leaves the house

9.00am – Hannah leaves the house, in slight hysterics, after finding her keys

9.30am – Olivia leaves the house

11.00am – Kasia leaves the house (no smugness here at all)

11.30am – We meet up and check in

12.00pm – Jo arrives and checks in.

After a fairly uneventful flight (only one of us needs an oxygen mask, after all) accompanied by bonus children sound effects amplifier on slight time delay, we arrive in sunny Antalya.² We locate baggage, Geoffage, mini-Geoffages and transportage, and leave for one of 300.000 hotels mentioned in a Turkish advert. Katya declares that Turkish trees are weird.

¹Pre-EGMO.

²At night. But it was the thought that counted, oh weather gods.



At the hotel, we have to fight for keys, dinner and access to toilets, but they are all lovely when they arrive. A very impressive rucksack full of goodies makes up for this wait (Mugs! For tea!).

There is a single and a double bed in each room. We are too British and polite for anybody to claim either, so in the end UNKs 3 and 4 flip a coin while UNKs 1 and 2 decide to switch halfway. Despite being invited to the all-night disco,³ we go to sleep.

Day 2

Kasia awakes to find Eloise staring out of the window. “Are you awake?” Kasia asks. “Yes,” Eloise replies. We go downstairs to investigate breakfast. There is a bewildering array of food, but no tea, unless you count the unidentifiable herbal things.⁴ After Hannah leaves to do official stuff, a random American man comes up and starts to ask about EGMO. He informs us that there is no money in mathematics and that we all should all become engineers and physicists, before asking if Joseph and Dan Schwarz are our dates. We gently correct him on both counts. After breakfast we decide to investigate the hotel. . . .

³N.B.: ends at midnight.

⁴We do not. Jo’s turns out to be rosemary and Olivia’s jasmine.

On our hunt for the indoor swimming pool, we find this sign:



We decide to enter (leaving a more cautious Jo at the exit), and find a pitch black abandoned haunted bar, illuminated only by brief flashes from Olivia's camera,⁵ which led to some gorgeous photos. We find a hidden passage to a deserted dressing room, and a car in a corridor. Fearing that it would come at us, we flee, except Olivia, who valiantly remains in the name of investigative journalism.⁶ After being shouted at by some Turkish men she too flees.



With ten minutes before the opening ceremony, we decide to paint our nails to match our t-shirts. These are confusingly colour-coded to match those the deputy leaders have all been given. Hannah is told to change lest she be too well camouflaged and slip us the questions. Our GUNK⁷ is just confused – it turns out later that she and the other guides have spent the day puzzling over our clothing. There is an opening ceremony. It is nice. We get filmed laughing, which causes us to laugh harder. The cameras appear to be everywhere – this becomes a recurrent theme of our stay. Geoff makes a speech in which he declares the papers to be beautiful, so we conclude that they will be entirely geometry.⁸ There is much Turkish Irish men's can-can.

⁵Technically also Katya's phone torch.

⁶Aka photography for the student report.

⁷Guide UNK.

⁸This later turns out not to be entirely correct.



The afternoon activities begin with air-rifling. Half the contestants turn up, and only one air-rifle, so due to our British inability to participate in disorderly queuing, we leave and do maths instead. Half an hour in, our GUNK rings to inform us that the volleyball match is cancelled. We are all inconsolable. Mathsing continues, although we do not get very far before we go mad,⁹ at which point we head to the lobby to play Rummikub. Katya is called over to teach the Polish team. Two of them are called Katarzyna, so we consider donating Kasia to them in exchange for one of the Annas. Hannah turns up with Jungle Speed. By the time someone (Eloise) wins and we are able to go to dinner, Katya is well on her way to acquiring most of the deck.

At dinner, Hannah and Jo provide a pep talk, and the GUNK turns up with the rules, in which she claims we must all wear our pink shirts. “I was going to wear it, but I don’t like being told what to do,” says Kasia. We decline the offer of ‘Life Music’ in the dungeon in favour of an early night. Katya and Olivia’s plans are almost thwarted by Olivia’s fascinating array of new compasses, but they too eventually get to sleep.

Day 3

Breakfast is uneventful. Clad in our compulsory pink, we go to the exam hall, and discover that only about half the contestants have obeyed this diktat. As revenge for last year, when Katya tried to compete for Ukraine, UKR3 attempts to sit in UNK3’s seat, with vigorous but ultimately unsuccessful lanyard wearing to insist she is right. UNK4 has to leave the room several times for a coughing fit. Nothing notable happens to UNKs 1 or 2, but nobody seems to have told the now ubiquitous cameramen this.

At lunch we discover the joys of Turkish flatbread. Jo is now torn, as she cannot marry both the flatbread man and the baklava man and take them home to cook for her. After lunch we head to the beach, and see a pair of turtles (probably tortoises).

(WARNING: The following section is not suitable for minors. Joe and Harvey, skip to the next paragraph.)

⁹Symptoms include playing Top Trumps and attempting inversion.

“Ooh! It looks like one of them’s giving the other a piggyback! . . . Oh. Right,” says Katya. One of the tortoises seems considerably more into these events than the other; Eloise spends a fair amount of time pointing out its rather dazed expression. Feeling quite bad about having done nothing but laugh and stare, we leave.

Hannah and Jo continue on to the beach, where they definitely do not paddle, while we get distracted by Frisbee. The winning tactic is ‘Don’t throw it where Jonathan is’, unless you are Katya, who is ordered to throw it at Jonathan in the certain knowledge that it will not get there. We are eventually tempted away by the idea of waterslides.¹⁰ While attempting to get towel cards from reception, a Turkish man comes up to us and informs us that Eloise should not go out in the sun, or else she will turn negro, and also that she is like cheese. We discover that Olivia’s multiplication is only accurate modulo factors of 50. The pool, which signs assure us has a lifeguard, is fun. When the slides turn off, we play tag with the Luxembourgish and French. When we try to leave, the towel bar is shut, and so we have an interesting game of charades with a (different) Turkish man. We eventually decide he means ‘Bring the towels back tomorrow’, but wonder where the mathematical pun is. Olivia suggests ‘Bring the pink tao theorem back tomorrow’, but we are unable to verify it.



At dinner, we are greeted by Chinese lanterns and two gentlemen in a tent cooking stir-fry. Also, more flatbread. It is very exciting. After a few rounds of Rummikub, we once again attempt to get an early night.¹¹ Olivia instead gets very excited about the power mean inequality, which is much cooler than sleep.

Day 4

This morning it is Katya’s turn to terrorise her roommate, who screams quite loudly and terrorises Katya as well. At breakfast Geoff yells “Power of a point!” at us. We wonder if he should be talking about maths with us, since he already gave the UK

¹⁰This halves one of the Frisbee teams and leads to the eventual demise of the game. Dear Irish team, we apologise sincerely.

¹¹So many discos we are missing! Our GUNK always displays her sadness at this at breakfast.

team too much knowledge about the paper in the opening ceremony. We shortly afterwards learn that it was acceptable since there is no geometry at all on Paper 2. When we emerge, distraught, we tell Geoff that since we were unable to use power of a point, we have all scored no marks. He seems quite concerned. Our leaders have left on an excursion, so we lunch alone, but this means more flatbread for us.

After lunch, we visit the slides some more, then join in with the pool games organised by the guides. Kasia wins the spoon-diving contest on behalf of the United Kingdom, narrowly beating the two other contestants in a very Norwegian-dominated final. The next game involves sucking on a straw to move a ping-pong ball between two glasses. We leave when the comments of the man running it get too creepy.¹² The omnipresent video-cameras are also making us feel quite uncomfortable.

Back at the slides once more, we squish several members of the Turkish team while trying to fit seven people down the rainbow slide.¹³ Definitely no sunbathing occurs. Definitely no paddling also occurs then we visit the beach with some Romanians and bury Kasia. We are very excited to discover that all-inclusive hotels include free ice-cream. While queuing, we meet Farida Flanelle. Hammocks provide entertainment until dinner.



In the evening, we play Jungle Speed with the Irish, who are actually very civilised and shockingly non-violent, given their Set techniques. Kasia ends up with most of the deck for repeatedly knocking over the totem. We also play French Mao, where our British inability to not say ‘Thank you’ when receiving cards puts us at a large disadvantage. We don’t really bother with the early night thing, in favour of UKMT gossip.

¹²“But girls should be better at this than boys”, “You’re quite good at this... do you have a boyfriend?”

¹³It had seven lanes. It was asking for it.

Day 5

“I had a dream where our guide rang us at midnight,” says Kasia. “So did I,” says Eloise. “Maybe she actually did.” Katya was nearly awake at midnight, and can confirm that this did indeed happen. We conclude that she was probably wondering why we weren’t at the disco. At 8am our guide rings us again, to check that we are awake.¹⁴

The excursion scheduled for the day is delayed a little. On the coach, which drives on the right, even without Hannah there to remind it that Turkish traffic does so, we see a military institution, and dutifully put away our cameras. The guard smiles and seems quite friendly. We eventually arrive at the ruins of a Roman bath house, which we are surprised to find we are allowed to climb on. Only the native English speakers can understand the tour guide, and even then only if we concentrate. Olivia manages to find mud in amongst the parched and dusty ruins.



We then travel to a waterfall, where we are given lunch, but told not to eat it. The waterfall is very pretty. Olivia is abducted by a man with a parrot (nominated creepy guy of the day), following which all that returns to us is a parrot zombie.¹⁵ While waiting for the coach back, we foolishly decide to sit in front of a boxing machine which plays¹⁶ the opening of ‘Eye of the Tiger’ every 45 seconds. Seeing that it is set to be a long wait, we buy some pomegranate flavour magnums, which taste very nice. Evidently having heard about our adventures with the hot chocolate prices last year, the vendor attempts to give us incorrect change, but we refuse to be fooled again. About an hour later, when people have finished their camel rides,¹⁷ we leave.

¹⁴We weren’t. We didn’t need to be. Then, suddenly, we were.

¹⁵Henceforth referred to as just ‘Olivia’, for simplicity.

¹⁶Well, attempts to play. Sadly, it could only hit one note.

¹⁷We passed these on the way in, and the baby camel was adorable.



At this point it dawns on us that there is a strange ambulance following us wherever we go. Comparing notes with our glorious leaders back at the hotel, it turns out they also went on the excursion the previous day, and are the same people we see regularly at meals who look to be playing dress-up.

Olivia and Kasia play Penguin Party with the Dutch, while Eloise and Katya lose horribly at Bang to the Americans and Irish, and go to dinner with them. A culturally edifying discussion of different history curricula turns into a very serious debate about the pros and cons of cannibalism. This was genuinely not any of the UNKs' fault. Later, we try to play English Mao with various other teams. But despite being obviously superior, it seems quite calm compared to French Mao. After a Hannah-hunt, in which we do not catch a big one, or even an average-sized one or an Olivia, which was our true aim, we go to bed.

Day 6

Breakfast becomes an organised mass smuggling operation of pastries into our bags for the next day. Some of us are more subtle than others. The morning is spent swimming with our favourite Romanian, who had lost her team.¹⁸ With the aid of a Turkish girl, we discover that 5 or 6 is the optimum number of people to have on the rainbow slide. We also learn that the blue slide is faster than the multi-coloured enclosed slide. Many repeats are required to adequately test this hypothesis. There is once again definitely no sunbathing.

The closing ceremony is very dramatic. Katya is glad that she forgot to pack smart shoes, as this greatly facilitates running back to fetch the flag. Dramatic music is played for the medal presentations, including Pirates of the Caribbean, which has several teams in hysterics. The Irish team win the competition by adopting almost every contestant, in particular Eloise with her ginger hair and green dress. They present us with the UNK voting lollipop, coated in Irish flags and stickers. In revenge, we photobomb many of their photos with Union Jack ribbon.

After Jo changes into her third then fourth outfit of the day, we begin the very slow transfer to the boat trip. Olivia¹⁹ is kidnapped by another parrot man and replaced with parrot zombie no. 2.²⁰ Seduced by the idea of the gay farmer, we convince

¹⁸Who we also quite like.

¹⁹Aka parrot zombie no. 1.

²⁰Henceforth also referred to as Olivia.

several other countries to play English Mafia, but only two days in it is time for dinner.

Food is followed by dancing. We continue the venerable EGMO tradition of hijacking the sound system (in this case a live jazz band) and convincing all the contestants to dance the Macarena. The dancing continues for several hours, with very enthusiastic mini-Geoffages, until, exhausted, we retire to play Penguin Party. After many more teams filter downstairs to join us, a slightly forlorn looking guide comes down, trying to persuade us back into the party, but our feet hurt, and we are exhausted, so we decline. Since we are on a boat in the middle of a bay, we are unable to sneak off to bed, but we are sorely tempted to join the various people passed out on tables.²¹ We drink coffee instead, as there is no tea.

Day 7

0.30am – We arrive back at the hotel. Now we have to pack.

1.30am – We eventually go to sleep.

5.45am – We have to get up again.

Having got through security no. 1 at airport no. 1 in Antalya, we break out the stolen pastries and have breakfast no. 1. The queue for bag drop seems to be a lot slower than the queue for check in and bag drop. At gate no. 1 (after security no. 2), we see a family who appear to have been sponsored by Converse. There is some confusion, as, having been convinced that Hannah is not sitting in their seats, they sit down in a random other person's seats. Plane no. 1 is a very pleasant journey, on which we are served breakfast no. 2. At border control no. 1 (now at airport no. 2, in Istanbul) Katya has a fascinating conversation consisting entirely of the word 'Visa' being yelled more and more forcefully. Eventually the man gives up and just stamps her passport. At gate no. 2 (after security no. 3), we sit down for a picnic breakfast no. 3. Plane no. 2 is also very nice, and includes the poshest aeroplane meal any of us have ever seen. We call this lunch. Somewhere over Brussels, we are informed that we have 5km to go until airport no. 3 (London Gatwick). We are slightly sceptical. After an incredibly fast baggage reclaim, we pass through border control no. 2, who are very proud of our achievements. And then it is time to say goodbye.

Conclusion

We should probably thank everyone involved at this point. As indeed we will, as it is well deserved. Thank you to Hannah and Jo for being kind, patient, organised and helpful, thank you Geoff for the small amount of lecturing about geometry over breakfast, thank you to the entirety of UKMT for being awesome, especially Bev, thank you to everyone who has trained us over the past few years, thank you to the Turkish organisers for choosing somewhere with such nice weather, thank you lots and lots, with hugs and autograph requests, Joseph for typesetting this report and definitely not taking this as an opportunity to insert a more over the top thanks section, thank

²¹One person is passed out, surrounded by the strange ambulance people, with an IV drip in his arm. We do not wish to join him.

you other UNKs for being great company, thank you Joe for agreeing so explicitly to be our mascot, thank you flatbread man for feeding us for the duration of the trip, thank you anyone we've missed out, thank you anyone we haven't missed out but wants to be thanked twice, and goodnight, Nightvale, goodnight.