



Alyssa Sammons introduces Sweden's exchange student Sofia Berglund, who exchanged club banners with President Mike Hernandez

Not Just a Golf bag...

Have you ever had to pack all your belongings together? Maybe when you started college or moved to a new house? If you have, you know that it can take time because all your possessions carry a memory, a feeling. When you find something you haven't seen for a long time, it has a tendency to carry you back to the place you got it from or remind you of a lost friend who once gave it to you. This is the story of a possession that will always take me on such a journey, even when the possession itself is no longer with me.

The summer of 2009 is finally here and while all my school mates are talking about their to-be summer adventures, my big exchange year adventure is about to end. It started last summer when I was home in Sweden. With excitement I packed all my things together. It was hard to decide what would be important and useful. My luggage space was limited, but one thing

stood at attention by the door ready to leave with me, my golf bag. There was no doubt that it was coming with me to my temporary new home, America. It would be my silent companion through a year of friendship, exploring, and discovery of a different piece of myself. I won my bag in the prestigious Varberg Open golf tournament a couple of years ago, and its blue cover with orange accessories made it stand out of the bunch of bags outside my home clubhouse in Sweden. I loved my bag not only for its extraordinary style but because I was proud of it, proud of being a winner. The bag was a reason for me to brag about myself without sounding too self-assured. Like the blue, red and green hat symbolizes Bob Marley, I had my bag, and people from my club could spot my bright blue bag and know that that was me out there playing. When I look at the blue bag it brings me back. When I first got here to this new land it was only us. We stuck together before I adjusted. And if I had a tough time, I swung my bag over my shoulder and marched out to the course for some one-on-one time with myself. This habit changed. When I settled and started to mature with my new surroundings, I didn't need the bags healing powers as often. All the new loving people I met took over its place and the bag didn't have that kind of use anymore. With these changes the bright colors also started to fade and the orange accessories lightened so that they were barely noticeable anymore.

My companion became less and less essential to me. One day in October, as a stranger, I played for my new golf team, the Clear Creek team, in an important high school tournament at April Sound. I was keyed up and nervous. I knew that this was the finale for my bag and though nobody else had heard about its victorious background, it helped me. Somehow I had that same feeling of pride that I had had when I won the bag back home. I think it was a different kind of pride, a pride of getting to know myself and what I was capable of doing. Finding myself in a new society I didn't know existed before I arrived here, I was beginning to belong. When the final round of golf was over, that day, my bag couldn't stand the pressure, and its legs broke. I didn't feel remorse; its days were simply over. I was now living a different life and ready to find a new bag to share it with. It wasn't hard to pick out a replacement for my old bag. I just looked at the new me, a part of the Clear Creek Wildcats Girls Golf team and that was the kind of bag I wanted. I had some waiting time when I didn't have any bag at all. The new one was ordered, but I was empty handed, waiting, anticipating until it arrived. When it finally came, my Wildcat bag shocked me with its perfection. It is maroon with a big roaring Wildcat facing the front. On its side pocket, Sofia Berglund is scattered in with elegant and cursive lettering. All the girls on the team had one, and I was one of them now. I even put some maroon and white ribbons on its pocket zippers to prop up the team spirit. When you spot me and my bag out on the golf course now, the comment is not, "Who is that?" Instead it's, "That girl plays for Creek." And that always makes me grin.