

# BAKER TO VEGAS RUN 2010

## Results of t

# Baker to Vegas: A Race in the Desert



Club sponsors six City teams in annual Baker to Vegas Challenge Cup race.

Story by Arlene Herrero, Club Products Manager; Photos by Arlene Herrero and Fitz Mora

This amazing foot race is an annual event for public safety organizations throughout the world. The relay race is a 120-mile, 20-stage foot race between Baker, Calif., and Las Vegas and is considered the "Super Bowl" of law enforcement and the champions are the best, in terms of physical fitness and logistics the police world has to offer. The race was created by and is managed by the Los Angeles Police Rotary and Athletic Club, and the City Employees Club is grateful for their leadership.

In honor of the sixth year in which the Club has sponsored City of LA teams in the Baker to Vegas race, the Club sponsored six teams this year: LAPD Communications; Port Police; LAPD Rampart; LAPD Training Division; and two new teams, Transportation and LAPD Emergency Service Division (Air Support Division and Force Investigation Division).

Some 256 teams participated, including teams from Germany and Canada, which is a record," Sgt. Jim Katapodis, Co-Chair, indicated.

This year's weather by far had to be the most challenging I have seen from my years being out in the racecourse. At the start of the race, held April 16-18, the temperature at some start times was 91 degrees, with a blacktop temperature

approaching 110 degrees.

Team 140, Port Police, came home with their first mug. They took seventh place in their category, with no penalties incurred. Team 121, LAPD Training Team II, came in third in their Invitational Mix Category, despite suffering a 10-minute penalty. Team 202, LAPD Communications, came in 28th in their overall category of Invitational Mix, completing the race penalty-free in 19 hours, 15 minutes, 54 seconds. Team 171, Transportation, took 18th in their Invitation Category, completing the race in 17 hours, 59 minutes, 13 seconds, penalty-free. Team 135, LAPD Emergency Services/FID/ASD, finished the Mixed race at 17 hours, 56 minutes, 13 seconds. Despite a 10-minute penalty, they finished the race strong at 17th overall in their respective category. Team 38, LAPD Rampart, running under the Station Category, finished sixth in 16 hours, 12 minutes, 7 seconds, with no penalties. "We missed Mariana Vasquez this year out on the race course. We finished strong despite one of our runners needing medical assistance, and we still came home with a mug," said Det. Rick Ramos, Club Member, Rampart team captain.

"I would like to acknowledge those who made

this year's team a great success," said Milan Romero, captain of the Transportation team. "I applaud the tremendous effort and courage demonstrated by our men and woman who ran and volunteered their services for this arduous and challenging race. Through their valiant actions and never-ending work ethic, this year's team proved to be one of the best ever for D.O.T.!"

"We went to Vegas with 20 outstanding runners, and our goal was to improve our time from last year, sustain no injuries and to place in the top 50 percent in our category to obtain that coveted 'mug' award.

"I am proud to announce that D.O.T. Team 171 ... improved overall by 26 minutes, sustained no injuries and placed 18th in our category of 31 teams," Milan Romero continued. "In the overall picture, out of [all the] teams that came from numerous law enforcement agencies, we placed in 148th place! What an outstanding accomplishment by our runners and support staff. I am honored and privileged to have made these accomplishments and goals with this year's team and staff and look forward for next year's race. If you are interested in running B2V 2011, start training now!"

### Other City teams did well, too:

- LAPD Retired took fifth place in its category;
- City Attorney's Office took third in its 1800 category, and no penalties;
- LAPD Jail Division took 12th place in the Invitational Mix Category, with no penalty;
- LA Airport Police Team 130 took 13th in the Mixed Category despite incurring a five-minute penalty; they finished strong at 17 hours 26 minutes 24 seconds.

The cup's overall winner was L.A. Sheriff's Dept., finishing the race at 12 hours 53 min 2 seconds. Second place was CHP Sacramento. Third Place was FBI Los Angeles.

As always, the Club had a blast covering all these great City teams in the annual Baker to Vegas Challenge Cup Race. We congratulate all the runners and the support teams that helped them succeed, and we look forward to next year.

*Alive! thanks Anita Whited; Officer Alex Castillo; Det. Rick Ramos; Mariana Vasquez; Lt. Kettelkamp; Sgt. Korne; Lisa Pallares; Officer Tom Deluccia; Chuck Foote; Officer Tony Adler; and Milan Romero for their assistance in producing this article.*

## RUNNING RUNNING RUNNING



Leg 1 at the start line. On your mark ... Get set ... Go!

**GO!  
GO!  
GO!**



Team 202 LAPD Communication's follow vehicle. Driver is Cathy Sotos, Club Member; the others are Cathy Rennie, Club Member, and Scott Goldstein, alternate runner, Club Member.



Sr. PSR 1 Anita Whited, LAPD Communications, Club Member, has the form down for the baton handoff.



Team 135 LAPD Emergency Services Division.



Team LAPD Southwest.



Long Beach Police Department Chief Jim McDonnell, Club Member, and some of the Long Beach PD's Baker to Vegas teammates.



Team LAPD Southwest.



Georgina Griego, PSR III, Club Member, is all smiles on Leg 5.



Team 135 Officer Tom Deluccia, Club Member, as he waits for the baton handoff.



Team 133 LAPD Harbor Division.



Team 104 LAPD Mission runner as he waits on Leg 2.



Team 230 LAPD Juvenile Division.



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## the Big Race



The medical team at Stage 2.

Team 131 LAPD North Hollywood.

# OFF THEY GO!



From left: Sgt. Jim Katapodis, Baker to Vegas Race Director, Joy Matak; and Pete Demetriou, KNX 1070 reporter.



Team 104 LAPD Mission, Leg 1 runner, as she comes in the exchange chute.



Team 130 LA Airport Police.



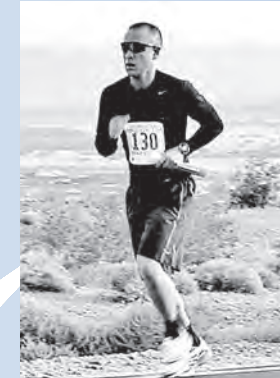
Team 130 LA Airport Police.



Team 140 Port Police Officer Byron Culbertson, Club Member.



Team 140 Port Police Officer Andrew Sklarsh, Club Member.



Team 130 LA Airport Police.



Team 261 LAPD West Valley Station.



Team 77 LAPD Central as he nears the chute.



Team 151 LAPD South West Area.



Team 135 LAPD ESD.



Team 104 LAPD Mission.



Team 133 LAPD Harbor Sharks.

# RUNNING RUNNING RUNNING



Team 195 LAPD West LA.



Team 197 LAPD Pacific Station's Leg 1 runner, running strong.



Team 140 Los Angeles Port Police.



Team 114 LAPD Metro Black.



Team 230 LAPD Juvenile Division.



Team 116 LAPD RHD/CCD.



Team 218 LAPD Valley Traffic.



Team 62 LAPD Retired member with her catcher and cheering crew.



Team 62 LAPD Retired "Old Blue."



Team 220 LA City Attorney.



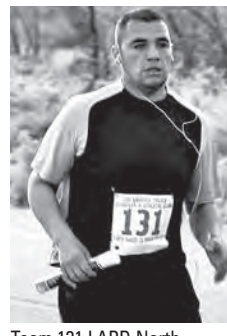
# THE HAND OFF



Team 202 PSR member Lourdes Varas, Club Member, on Leg 8, representing LAPD Communications.



Team 114 LAPD Metro Black.



Team 131 LAPD North Hollywood.



Team 195 LAPD West LA.

From left: Beth Hicks; Henri McKail; Jesse Alcaraz; Terry Price, Club Member; and Michelle Willis, Club Member.





# BAKER TO VEGAS RUN 2010



Team 267 LAPD South Traffic Division.



Team 156 LAPD Hollenbeck.

From left: Marc Hemsworth, P3, Club Member; Capt. Michelle Veenstra, Club Member; Sgt. Cristina Korne, Club Member; and Marlene Rafidi, sister of Capt. Michelle Veenstra.

## THE HOME STRETCH



Tracey and Capt. John Sherman, Topanga Station.



From left: Officer Vanessa Keortge, Club Member; Officer Cathy Meek; and Officer Norma Stang, Club Member.



Team 202 PSR Jesse Alcaraz on Leg 19.



LAPD Communications team members at the finish line.



Team 79 LAPD Northeast Area.



From left: Det. Il Blair Grabiak, Club Member, and P3 John Borquez, K9, Club Member.



From Team 135, from left: P3 Tom Davoren, Club Member, with his wife, Kelly.

# The Port Police's First Mug

Port Police recalls their thoughts running 120 miles through the desert heat.

Story by Arlene Herrero, Club Products Manager, and Tracey Zuliani, Port Police; Photos by Arlene Herrero



Port Police Sgt. Rosario Ferrara, Club Member, sets the pace for the Port Police.



Team 140 Port Police Capt. Al Rosario, Club Member, as he makes his way to the finish line.



From Left: Port Police Capt. Al Rosario, Club Member; Port Police Chief Ronald Boyd, Club Member; and Port Police Capt. Tracy.



Port Police team members at the finish line.

The Club has sponsored the Port Police's Baker to Vegas team for four years, owing to the large number of Club Members on the team. This year, the team won its first mug, a "trophy" of achievement in the race.

Congratulations to the Port Police team for placing seventh in their category to secure a mug after only its fourth year participating in this event. Their team rank goes from 140 to 132 out of 250 teams for next year.

### Here's a list of the team members:

- Runners: Rosario Ferrara, Joseph Keen, Andrew Sklarsh, Alex Castillo, Byron Culbertson, Victor Fernandez, Brandyn Anderson, Jonathan Oceau, Michael Chen, Charles Sanderson, Jose Magana, Ismael Flores, Carlo Oliveri, Arthur Kurkowski, Brandon Hamasaki, Ryan Mullany, Miguele Fagins, Francisco Nunez, Phillip Heem and Al Rosario.
- Alternate runners: Glenn Twardy, Mark Pagliuca, Logan Braun, John Legaspi and Tou Moua.
- Support staff: Michael Kettelkamp, Rudy Meza, Jessica Bautista, Tracey Zuliani, Robin Jackson, Danny Rodriguez, Jose Alvarez, Mimi Gutierrez, Alberto Alvarado, Lawrence "Russ" Russell, William Paxson, Mike Capodanno, Karin Capodanno, Micaela Mowrer, Dave Yocham, Bonnie Soong, Kenneth Huerta, Ralph Tracy, Maria Alva, Mike Alva, Mary Ramos, Christine Pina, Vanessa Guillen and Renee Decker.

### Here's a recounting of the experience:

"It's hot out here, the kind of heat that scorches the landscape, splits the earth until only clay cracks remain underfoot, and sends all living creatures underground. The sun bakes the sole highway connecting this desolate wasteland to Sin City and sets the scene for the annual law enforcement Baker to Vegas Championship Cup, a 120-mile relay race through the unforgiving Death Valley desert. The runners participate for camaraderie, for recruitment, and also for glory. Some runners won't make it; they will fall from extreme weather conditions and have to be airlifted to the nearest hospital. But the call to go beyond one's limits, like these men and women of law enforcement do every day, is too strong to resist, so they run. The Los Angeles Port Police hears this call.

"It is high noon on April 16, and the Master of Ceremonies announces the start of the race. Officer Ferrara begins with the shot of a gun; his pace will set the momentum for the rest of his team. His 5.4-mile

leg is not the hardest, but none of the distances can be categorized as easy. Ferrara strides to make his time.

"Each consecutive runner has a personal goal, whether it is to beat their best time, to overtake a runner on an opposing team, or just complete their leg. Unfortunately, the odds are stacked against them, the terrain is difficult, and the asphalt sizzles with every step. A slight breeze, once desired, is quickly rejected because its hot gusts carry dust and particulate matter choking and blinding the runners. From the steep inclines to knee-crushing downhill and insufferable heat to agonizing cold, how does one prime himself to perform under such adverse conditions?

"Understanding and accepting these conditions, Officer Keen, adorned in hot pink running shorts (a payment owed), waits in anticipation at the second leg, mentally and physically preparing himself for what is the longest and most difficult distance of the race. Some hype themselves up with fast-paced music, others require small shouts of encouragement or chant a mantra repeatedly to themselves, and still others want complete quiet as to be alone with their thoughts and the sounds of the rhythmic pounding of feet and violent movements of breath. The officer flawlessly takes the baton from his teammate to begin his steady 8.2-mile incline, his thoughts focused only on completing his mission.

"The race continues. The horizon never gets closer. The heat of the day is unbearable, but night falls quickly and with it, the temperature. This new challenge only makes our runners more resilient.

"Although each runner faces their own challenges, they all have a common experience. The runners have made sacrifices to participate in this event. They have trained hard, but preparation and stamina are not the only characteristics that will get you through this grueling course. You need heart, like Capt. Rosario, who as the most senior runner on the team averaged one of the fastest times and past another team to clinch a mug placement by eight seconds. You need determination like Officer Alex Castillo, who ran his six-mile leg with a torn Achilles tendon in his right leg and still managed to overtake another team. And you need discipline like Officer Carlo Oliveri, who overcame the past year's logistical issues and was able to participate in this year's event. All of these characteristics and the unique characteristics of everyone who participated made for a winning team."

*Thanks to Officer Alex Castillo, Lt. Mike Kettelkamp Tracy Zuliani and Rudy Meza for their assistance.*



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## RUNNING RUNNING



Hello to the LAPD Communications follow vehicle.



Team 220 LA City Attorney's Office.



From left: Lt. Darryl Ito, Club Member; and Sgt. Fred Alexander, South East.



Team 133 LAPD Harbor Sharks member waves and flashes a smile as he runs in the desert heat.



Team 230 LAPD Juv Division looks to meditate and run to keep his cool.



Sgt. II Dave Wright, Leg 1, LAPD Training Division.



Team 38 Rampart members at the finish line.



PSR Adam Timm, LAPD Communications, starts of Leg 1 of the race.



From left: Officer Joseph Keen, Club Member; Officer Rudy Meza, Club Member; Lt. Mike Kettelkamp, Club Member; Tracy Zuliani; Sgt. Rosario Ferrara, Club Member, and his wife, Jessica; and Jessica Bautista, Management Aid, Club Member.



Team 171 Transportation at the finish line.



From left: Team 202 LAPD Communications -- Scott Goldstein, Club Member; Carlos Mejia, PSR II, Club Member; and Quincy Mirage, PSR II, Club Member.



From left: Cindy and LAPD Chief Charlie Beck; and Lt. Elaine Morales, CRD, Club Member, with her son, Adam.



From left: Team 171 Transportation Traffic Officer II Jorge Trego, Club Member; and Traffic Officer II Troy Bregel, Club Member.



Sr. PSR I Berta Ugas, Club Member, assists Sr. PSR I Anita Whited, Club Member, off the side of the road to safety after a hard run.



Team 220 LA City Attorney's Office.



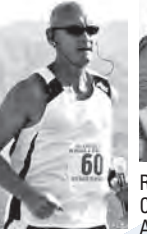
From left: PSR II Gloria Martinez, Club Member; PSR II Yvette Salazar, Club Member; PSR II and BFF Norma Montano, Club Member; and PSR II Lupe Rojas.



From left: Caroline Shahin, Volunteer; Olga Duran, Volunteer; Chuck Foote, race co-founder.



Team 201, from left: Marlene Swancy, Sr. PSR I, Club Member; PSR Scott Goldstein, Club Member; Shaton Brown, Sr. PSR I, Club Member; Carlos Mejia, PSR II, Club Member; Norma Chacon, guest; Sandy Rennie, Retired, Club Member; and Quincy Mirage, PSR II, Club Member. Front: Sr. PSR I Cathy Sotos, Club Member.



Team 60 LAPD Commander Andrew Smith, Club Member.



Representing Team 135 ESD-FID-ASD, from left: P3 John Borquez, Club Member; D3 Greg McKnight, Club Member; D2 Meghan Aguilar, Club Member; P3 John Long, Club Member; P3 Vanessa Keortge, Club Member; P3 Emily Tomlin, Civilian Support; Ed Borquez; and D2 Peter Stone, Team Leader, Club Member.

### FINISH LINE



Team 146 LAPD Wilshire.



Congratulations to LAPD Jail Division on their second consecutive mug!



From left: Commander Andrew Smith, Operations-West Bureau, Club Member; and Lt. Jeff Bert, Van Nuys Gang.



Congratulations to LAPD Rampart on coming in third in their overall category -- another mug secured!



Team 115 LAPD Jail Division.

## Running for Tommy

Airport Police team runs in memory of Tommy Scott, who died in the line of duty.

Story and photos provided by Sgt. Belinda Nettles, Airport Police, Club Member

The Airport Police participated in the annual Baker to Vegas Challenge Cup Relay.

There are 12 different categories, of which Airport Police entered in the "Mixed" category, which consists of five women and 15 men. The Airport Police team placed 13 out of 23 teams in its category, with a time of 17 hours 26 minutes and 24 seconds. Overall, the Airport Police team ranked 120 out of a total of 250 teams.

The team runs each year in honor of Officer Tommy Scott, who was killed in the line of duty several years ago.

Congratulations to the Airport Police team for another strong showing.



Airport Police Officer Greg Iwamiya, Club Member, crosses the finish line.



Back, from left: Airport Police Officer Ray Woods; Airport Police Officer Lagos; Los Angeles Airport Police Chief George R. Centeno; Airport Police Officer Greg Iwamiya, Club Member; Richard Flores; Starla Reader; and James Bow. Front: Airport Police Officer Mark Corral, Club Member, and Rosie Olquin.



Airport Police Office Rodney Rouzan starts the race on Leg 1.



Airport Police Officer Lagos accepts the Baker to Vegas Mixed Category plaque on behalf of Los Angeles Airport Police team.

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