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# Alive!

## AIRPORTS

# ON TOP OF EVEREST

Airport Police Officer  
Doug Scarborough more  
than 29,000 feet above  
sea level atop Mt. Everest.

Airport Police Officer Doug  
Scarborough reaches the  
top of Mt. Everest ...  
and brings *Alive!* with  
him! Read about his  
amazing return  
journey ... and the  
ultimate *Alive!*  
*Around the World.*

SEE PAGE 24



Photo by Phurba Sherpa, courtesy Officer Doug Scarborough.



City Employees Club of Los Angeles  
120 West 2nd Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RACE

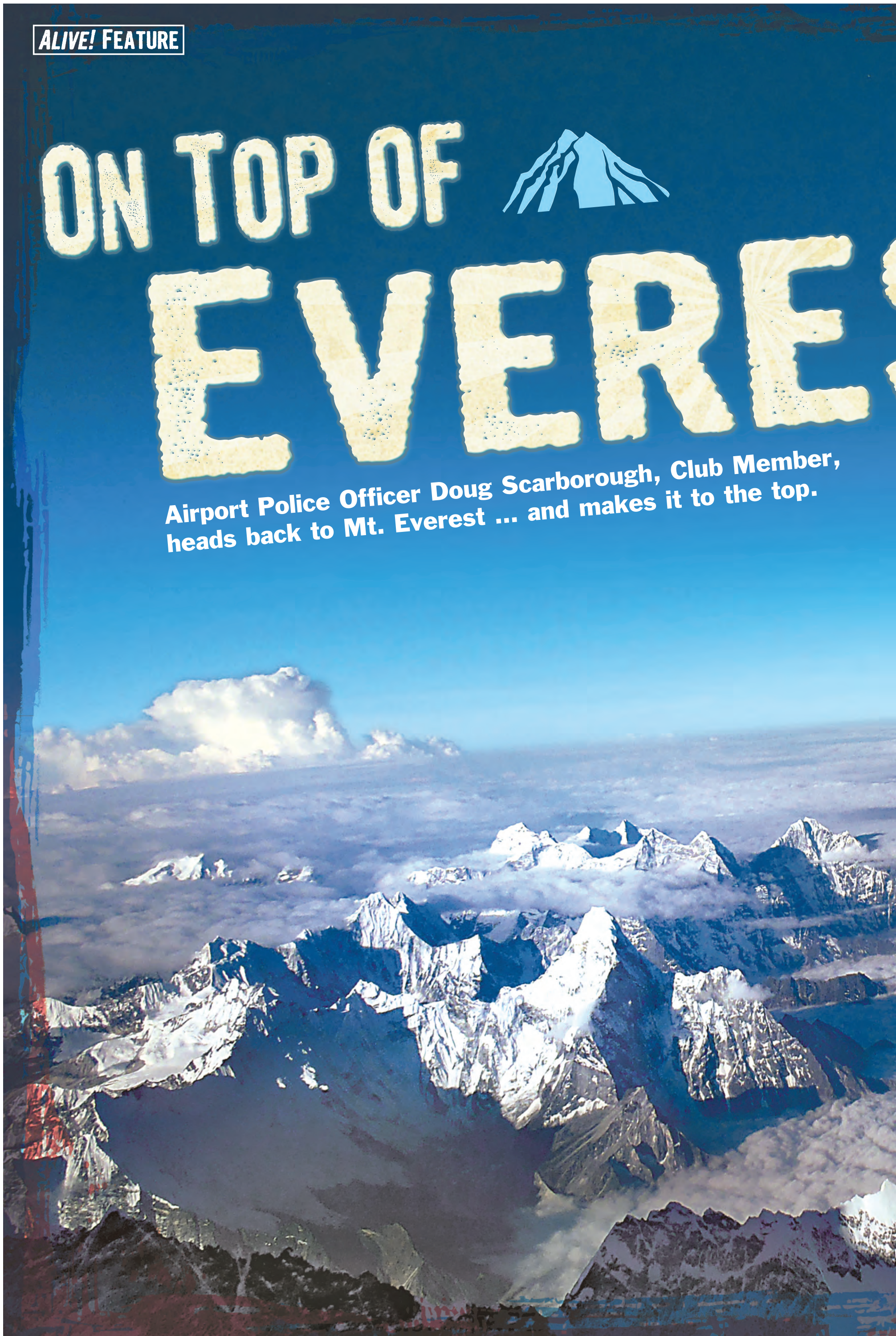
## Baker to Vegas: Great Results!

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**ALIVE! FEATURE**

# ON TOP OF EVEREST

**Airport Police Officer Doug Scarborough, Club Member, heads back to Mt. Everest ... and makes it to the top.**



Everest photos by Doug Scarborough and Phurba Sherpa. Interview photo by John Burnes, *Alive!* editor

**I**n 2011, Doug Scarborough's first attempt at climbing Mt. Everest came 900 feet short. Nevertheless, his spirit of incredible adventure landed him on the cover of *Alive!*  
He tried again.

Did he ever.

At 5:40 a.m. May 22 of this year, Airport Police Officer Doug Scarborough, Club Member, reached the top of Mt. Everest, something fewer than 700 Americans and 100 Australians have done. Doug, who is both American and Australian due to his parents, grew up in Sydney, Australia.

In this issue of *Alive!*, Doug tells the harrowing tale of summoning up his courage and his resources once again, and this time making it to the top.

In terms of dangers, there aren't many adventures more fraught with it. This time there was sickness; serious frostbite; nine deaths (one along the trail ahead of him before he summited; Doug had to climb around the body, which was frozen on the trail); missed phone connections; bad food; daunting weather; his body going "haywire," a climber who died in the tent next to Doug's at Camp IV; a marriage proposal (not Doug's); a Sherpa who, while indispensable, forgot to turn on Doug's oxygen during a critical part of the climb; nearly dead camera batteries at the top; the final triumph; and on and on. He has a lifetime of stories, and he shares them with fellow Club Members here.

The Club is astonished and delighted that Doug would have remembered to bring a copy of *Alive!* with him, handling it carefully during the two months it took to reach the summit, and then unfurling it proudly upon reaching the top. We thank him for sharing his unmatched experience on top of the world, and we salute him for his courage, his dedication, and his unflinching sense of adventure.

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A view of the world from atop Mt. Everest.



ALIVE! FEATURE ON TOP OF EVEREST

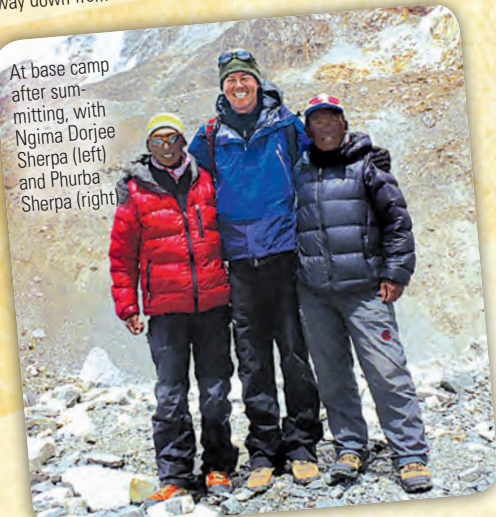
# UNBELIEV



Doug holds an Airport Police patch at the summit.



Doug holds his ice axe at Camp IV on the South trail, on his way down from summiting.



At base camp after summiting, with Ngima Dorjee Sherpa (left) and Phurba Sherpa (right).



BELOW: Club CEO John Hawkins (left) listens as Doug Scarborough recounts his successful climb of Mt. Everest.



Doug successfully traverses the famous and extremely harrowing Khumbu Icefall.

## Doug Says Thanks



I would sincerely like to thank my mum and dad, for their understanding and support throughout this journey; **John Hawkins** and **John Burnes** of *Alive!*, for their continued interest, encouragement and generosity; **Madeleine Flanagan** and **Sgt. William Handley** of the Airport Police Department, for their interest and keeping followers posted of my team's location; **Barnabas Borbely** and **Sahana Vajracharva**, for their friendship on the mountain and for all the laughs we had together (Barnabas, congrats on summiting and for your engagement; Sahana, thank you for allowing me to film an episode of your TV show, *Frame By Frame*); **Nisha Adhikari**, for being the first celebrity I've ever kissed (and congrats for being the first Nepalese actress to summit!); **Dawa Steven Sherpa**, for your friendship, your time and effort that you put into organizing this expedition and the tremendous amount of logistics that must have gone into it, and also for your translation skills when I needed to communicate vital plans with the Sherpas; **Ngima Dorjee Sherpa** and **Phurba Sherpa**, for doing an incredible job getting me to the summit and back and for finally following my plans to stay at Camp IV for two nights when most people won't even stay one night at that altitude; **Roger Denniston**, for lending me his PSP, which I used for maybe 10 minutes the entire trip; and of course **Aaron Shamblyn**, for being the most unreliable and useless friend that I have, especially after it was he who asked me to call him from the summit when I spoke to him the day before from Camp IV, way to go champ!

# ABLE'

— Doug Scarborough, Airport Police Officer

The famous prayer flags at the top of Mt. Everest.



## Doug Scarborough recalls his difficult, triumphant ascent to the top of Mt. Everest.

By Officer Doug Scarborough, Airport Police

Firstly, I'd like to thank everyone for their support and encouragement on this expedition. After I returned from Mt. Everest in 2011, I was not expecting so many people to be interested in my little journey, but I appreciated all the comments and interest that people took in my trip.

Just like my first attempt on Mt. Everest two years ago, I arrived in Kathmandu, Nepal, in early April to begin my two-month climb and acclimation. However, unlike the first time when I went up the north face in Tibet, I was now attempting the south face in Nepal. The south side of Everest was a completely different experience to what I had seen two years ago. This time, we flew in a small propeller airplane from Kathmandu to a tiny airport in the Himalayas called Lukla (which is also the world's most dangerous airport). Situated high in the mountains and on the edge of a cliff, Lukla was an exciting little place to land. Two years ago in Tibet, we were able to drive straight to base camp, stopping in villages to acclimate. This time, it would be a nine-day trek from Lukla till we finally reached EBC (Everest Base Camp) on the south side. As soon as we landed in Lukla, we began the more-than-week-long hike to EBC, which took us through the Sherpa villages of Phakding, Namche, Khumjung, Thyangboche, Dingboche and Lobuche.

Along the way, you get to know your expedition teammates pretty well, and by the end we were all close friends. A familiar face among our group was David Liano of Mexico. David climbed with me in 2011 but had to turn around at Advanced Base Camp when he became ill with a cerebral edema. He had been attempting a world record by climbing both the south and north side of Mt. Everest in one season. He had attempted this multiple times but something always caused him to turn around.

Another teammate was Barnabas Borbely of the UK, whose entire reason for climbing Everest was to propose to his girlfriend, Megan Wheeler, from the summit. Megan was waiting back in England clueless of his ambition. Other teammates in the group came from Argentina, Brazil, Canada, India, Poland and Austria.

We arrived at Everest Base Camp on April 12 and began the long and sometimes tedious work of getting in our rotations to acclimate our bodies to the altitude. The first rotation began with a climb through the Khumbu Icefall. This is a large glacier that sweeps down the Khumbu Valley from Camp I. It is a dangerous, foreboding place, and was the reason I chose to climb the north side in 2011. During each rotation, we would wake at 2 a.m. and prepare to climb through the Icefall in the dead of night as it is too dangerous during the day when the sun heats the ice, causing enormous blocks to crash down. To get through the Icefall, we had to cross at least 25 ladders that never looked in the best of shape. One section had three ladders tied haphazardly together, which caused everyone to rush because no one wanted to be stuck on it for much time.

Camp I was more like a rest stop at the top of the Khumbu Icefall and was used only on rare occasions when someone wasn't feeling well or couldn't continue on to Camp II. Once we reached Camp II, we stayed for two nights and then headed back to base camp. We had to do a total of three rotations before our bodies had adjusted enough to attempt a bid for the summit. Our last rotation had us climb the Lhotse Face to Camp III, where my Sherpa and I camped for one night with no oxygen.

Bad weather was forecast the day my Sherpa and I decided to climb up to Camp III, so we were prepared to hunker down and spend an uncomfortable night in windy conditions. When we arrived at Camp III, we were a little nervous to see that we were the only people there. During the afternoon the winds picked up and my Sherpa started grabbing his emulates that the Dalai Lama had given him, and he soon began chanting. After a while he started scratching his head, and then took his shirt off and began picking lice off himself and throwing them out of the tent. My skin had never crawled so badly, and I just covered my head with my sleeping bag and thought about something else.

After finishing all the rotations and returning back to base camp, we prepared to make the summit push. My Sherpas and I arrived at Camp II May 18, where we rested for a day and then headed up the Lhotse Face yet again. From there, we needed to wear oxygen 24 hours a day. We arrived at Camp IV on the South Col on May 21, and spent the night in the extremely thin air. The following evening at 7 p.m., my Sherpas and I left Camp IV and headed for the summit. The weather was bad; snow was coming down hard and it was very windy, making visibility nonexistent. As we trudged through the snow, a fresh dead body appeared right in front of us. The body was no more than a day old, and it gave us quite a scare, especially the look on the deceased climber's face. Sherpas are extremely superstitious, and I was nervous this might cause them to turn around. We all unclipped and sidestepped around the body and continued up toward the Balcony and the South Summit.

Because we had left on such a dismal night, we had the mountain to ourselves. I had always read about long lines at the South Summit and the infamous Hillary Step, but we were the only ones there. By 1 a.m., the weather had cleared up and it became a perfect night. The stars were the brightest and clearest I had seen them, and I saw the best shooting star of my life. One of the Sherpas pointed across to the Northeast Ridge, and I could see headlamps of climbers coming up the north side. It was a surreal moment as I realized that almost two years to the very day I had been on that ridge climbing when we were told to turn around before reaching the summit.

The moonlight was so powerful that we could see everything around us, and the views were unbelievable. By 4 a.m., the moon had gone and it was pitch black again. As the Sherpa in front of me blazed the trail, I looked up to the horizon and through the black. I saw a beam of light cross the entire sky. It was the sun's first light hitting the edge of the earth in some far-off land thousands of miles from where we were standing. It was unbelievable.

By 5 a.m., we reached the Hillary Step, where we stopped to change out our oxygen tanks. The Hillary Step is a large rock that protrudes out of the mountain, and at any lower altitude it wouldn't be very hard to climb at all. But the altitude plays havoc on the body and by the time I had climbed to the top, my heart and respiration rate were going crazy. From here, it was only a short distance to the summit, and I could already see the prayer flags adorning the mountain tip.

We reached the summit at 5:40 a.m. May 22. The feeling was incredible. My good friend and co-worker, Aaron Shamblin, had asked me to call him from the summit, so I pulled out my satellite phone and made the call. He didn't answer. I called again, with no answer. I



At the summit, Doug called his Airport Police partner, Aaron Shamblin, twice, and he failed to pick up... twice! Right: Ngima Dorjee Sherpa. Photo by Phurba Sherpa.

think he got the highest cuss-out left on his voicemail. Then one of the Sherpas pulled out my camera and realized that the freezing air had drained the battery, and it was now saying "battery empty." He placed the camera up to his skin and was soon able to get the camera working again. We quickly took all the photos we had wanted to take, and just like that it was time to go. We spent a total of maybe 20 minutes on the summit, but to stay longer would have been risky.

Over the next few days we made our way down to base camp, where I learned that David Liano had successfully summited both sides of Everest, earning him a spot in the Guinness Book of Records. My other teammate had successfully proposed to his girlfriend from the summit, and luckily she said yes. I was only at base camp for an hour to pack my things and then a helicopter came to pick us up and take us back to Lukla. The following day I was back in Kathmandu and immediately thrust back into the real world.

Since I have been home, I have never eaten or slept so much in my life. It's a great feeling to have this goal accomplished. Again, thank you all for your support and for following my story. Now, onto the next challenge.

