

2013 Trip Blog. Everest Base Camp

David G. 31/1/2013. Final Proceedings



Ryan & Andrew. Training up north

This weekend we are out to the 1000 Steps for the last time, and the QLD boys (left) are now wrapping up their final slogs through the jungles and hills of QLD & NSW before their departure on Wed 13th. John (from Cairns) has already departed to India.

We will all meet in Kathmandu on Sun 17th. Then 2 1/2 days in Kat for sightseeing and to get our equipment, clothing & permits in order before flying into Lukla (ok, so it's not the safest airfield in the world...!) on Wed 20th.

Sue (Didi). 31/1/2013. 10.18pm

Aaahhhh Lukla. Is it possible to put in an order for the Chicken dish on our Lukla flight. Can I also request a seat towards the back of the plane as last time I was right next to the goats and donkey. Will there be in-flight entertainment?

David G. 1/2/2013. 5.05pm

So how much more entertainment to you want Didi? Coming into land on a ridiculously short runway, that is on a 12deg slope, has a cliff face at one end and a 1000ft drop off at the other, in a plane that is manufactured around the year I was born, and receives less corrective maintenance than I do...!!! I actually hear the locals now rate their donkeys and goats too high in value to fly them on the domestic planes..!

Peter G. 11/2/2012. 10.59am

Hi Dave. Only a few days to go. Too late for me to sign up? lol!!

Remember it's not a race, but don't let those young guys beat you up there! Hassle me for 2014. You never know!

David G. 11/2/2013. 6.52pm

I'm going to take you up on that Pete. Cheers

John B. 11/2/2013. 6.14pm

I am a veteran from the 2012 Adventure and wished I could join you all... I would like to wish you all the very best and if you have half the enjoyment i had you will have a ball.

A couple of tips for the newbies on this trip do not let David eat Dhal Batt around the Korean team as this could end all diplomatic relations.

A good tip is not to wear white thermals as the sweat makes them look pretty grubbie.

Didi will spread rumours and gossip of some of the 2012 exploits just take everything she says with a pinch of salt.

Good luck to 2013 team.

David G. 11/2/2013. 6.51pm

Hey John. Great post and good to hear from you mate. I'm sure Didi will also get a good laugh out of your comments and recommendations.

Mate, we'd love to have you on board again. Do you know that repeat clients get a 10% discount...?

Will be good to hear from you while we are slogging it.

Stay well and thanks

Didi. 11/2/2013. 11.14pm

Bloomfield.....It won't be the same. I'll have a wee tear in the eye walking through Phakding alas "****ding" as the Scotts say. Goal number one for me is to line up in the VIP/Diplomats queue and see if I make it through. Goal number two will take place in Namche.....I'll find them buddy and post them right back to you. They may not be white anymore.....Hang on.....That's the reason why you parted with them. Will miss the talks about Charcoal, Nepalese hats with tassels, peanut butter, Educating you on the fact that here in Australia we pronounce the letter "T" in out words, and everything else that made last years trip one to remember. Keep in contact Bloomfield. Didi

John B. 12/2/2013. 11.22am

Hi David,

With the experience last year I have no issues paying full price. Then again reading Didi's mail above the discount would go some way to paying for the counselling I'm still receiving.

It will be interesting to see who is scarred with this years experience. You can train for fitness, altitude and poor toilet conditions what you

cannot train for will soon be experienced by the 2013 team. Let me give the newbies a tip maybe worth carrying an Ipod with noise cancelling headphones to block out some of the verbal chit chat.
Please give my best regards to Ming Ma and the rest of the Porters!

Wayne (who do they call him Wine). 12/2/2013. 3.58pm

I am getting excited even though I am not going with you this year. Pulled up well after your last training session though and feel I could almost go further if I went this year. No I couldn't. I am only teasing Didi. Good luck to you all and enjoy the adventure. Say hi to Mingma. Looking forward to hearing what your approach was to Neema if he is at Lukla waiting for you, Dave. Maybe just offer him a bottle of the local brew and tell him to go home to his wife. Bit harsh I know but what else can you do.

David G. 12/2/2013. 8.43pm

Wine. I STILL think EBC is well within your reach. All the others agree. And good news, I checked with 1-Cover and they will insure trekkers up to 70 y/o..!!

As for Neema, I have no doubt we will run into him on our arrival into Lukla, and yes it will be a tough moment. I will be forced to do what any other responsible Trek Leader would do, and that is to delegate the responsibility of dealing with him to my 2IC. Didi?

John B. 13/2/2013. 5.11pm

Team 2013 can you send my your e-mail address to john.broadfield@yahoo.com.au, I had all your e-mail details in my old works outlook. That way I can get in touch through e-mail rather than clog up 2014 blog page. I need to get in touch with; why do they call him "WINE"

Anne G. 15/2/2013. 2.20pm

24 hours and you are off! Doesn't seem like 12 months ago I was reading the blogs. Dave, Bill & Sue - hope you have a fantastic trip. Would love to be a 'fly on the wall' listening to the banter between Sue & Bill - imagine they will give each other a run for their money. Take care & look forward to reading all about your adventures (well what can be written anyway)

Greg (Bill) (GB). 15/2/2013. 3.31pm

Sheersie

It's a no contest, I'm already struggling to keep up but like an old stayer I'll be there when the whips are cracking at the end. Last solid meal for a long while so I'm shouting myself a large juicy TBone & several glasses of red for dinner tonight.

David G. 15/2/2013. 8.49pm

Anne. The "banter" as you put it may be such that I may choose to sit outside the lodge and take my chances with the minus 20deg...!! Sue is very disappointed that Wayne or John B were not able to make the trip again this year, so I do genuinely feel for Bill who just may have become her 2013 target...!! Buckle up Bill, if you think the trek will be tough, wait til you experience 3 weeks of Didi..!

Ian Colling. 16/2/2013. 10.08am

Well here I go again, on the day of your departure, wishing you all a safe trip. Will follow your exploits with great anticipation. Stay safe all of you and enjoy the trip of a lifetime. Hey, if it's the trip of a lifetime and this will be Dave's 6th or 7th, then Dave you must be extremely OLD, you had better keep the young uns hand, just in case. :)

Michelle. 16/2/2013. 11.55am

good luck to you all will hear from you soon as you make your way to Nepal.

Hope the temperature on your arrival doesn't shock you dave as we are in for mid 30's here.in Melbourne.

Speak to you soon, the Winnings

Why do they call him Wine. 17/2/2013. 7.42am

Hope it was all smooth sailing yesterday. Bill, keep an eye out today as you fly over the Ganges delta. Quite spectacular.

David G. 17/2/2013. 12.13pm

Hi Wine and all

I'll try and do a new post tonight from Kathmandu. As I write this, we are in a monster queue at Bangkok check-in. You know the ones. They zig zag back and forward 10 times.

David G. 17/2/2013. Enroute to Nepal



Departure Bangkok to Nepal

Hi all. We have arrived in Nepal. Our flight yesterday from Melbourne to Bangkok was enjoyable, with some of the team members privileged to have watched four movies during the flight. I unfortunately was seated nearby one of the members who loves to chat (no names) so my movie count was one and a half..!!

A pleasant time spent on the rooftop of our Bangkok hotel last night before our bodies reminded us it was 4am (Melb Time).

We have already completed a familiarisation tour of Kathmandu, with most of the team already finding their own way around the incredible streets. There are planned Maoist rallies throughout the city on Tuesday, so we have been advised to remain within the Thamel area. Not uncommon and little risk to tourists.

We will finalise and pay for our Lukla tickets tomorrow morning, with the aim to fly in on Wednesday morning. Thanks to all who have joined our blog thus far.

Brian@Weeroona. 18/2/2013. 2.34am

Breakfast at the bakery in the morning?

Have a coffee for me. Ah, better make that two.

Shane. 18/2/2013. 7.34am

Hey Nicole - how awesome to drink Everest beer!! Is it served frosty cold? Ha ha

Shane

Nicole. 18/2/2013. 7.33pm

Yes and unlike Bangkok it stays cold like the mountain!!

Barbara Brown. 18/2/2013. 7.35am

Hi Greg. Good photo, what was the view like. Keep out of trouble tomorrow????Mum

Greg B. 19/2/2013. 12.22am

Hi Mum. View on the plane very good. Great view of Everest flying in. Saw a lot of Kathmandu today. All well and having a good time.

Leigh. 18/2/2013. 9.22am

Great that you enjoyed flight. How does Kathmandu coffee compare with Sandhill Drive Coffee? Hope your next take off and land is safe. A sweltering 36-37 degrees here in Melb today.

David G. 19/2/2013. 12.28am

Hi Leigh. Coffee in Kathmandu has got very good over the years. The team are having a great time.

Pray for a good morning for us on Wed.

Why do they call him Wine. 18/2/2013. 10.30am

Dave, who picked you up at Kat Airport? Don't forget to buy my el cheapo walking poles please.

David G. 19/2/2013. 11.16am

Wayne. Laxman of course. He's a gem. Will get your poles on our return.

Brian@Weeroona. 18/2/2013. 10.21am

Keeping an eye on the weather for Lukla, especially for Wednesday. It looks like it might be cloudy with showers with Thursday forecast to have more cloud and showers.

For others who are interested, go to,

<http://www.accuweather.com/en/np/lukla/245361/weather-forecast/245361>

Mmm, -14 C in Namche Bazar this morning but don't worry, it will be warmer later in the week. You might have to all cuddle up together! :)

Rod B. 18/2/2013. 3.14pm

Good too hear all is going well hope your flight into Luckla looks as comfortable as the one in the photo!!!

David G. 19/2/2013. 12.18am

Rod. He probably won't, because they won't be serving up red wine.

Peter C. 19/2/2013. 9.20am

See where you got a window seat (as all the others). Bangkok is good place to drink Singha beer but sounds like you will need hot chocolate where you are going!!

Shane. 19/2/2013. 5.33pm

hey Nicole - can you post a piccie of Kathmandu?

What was the strike like?

shano

Michelle. 20/2/2013. 3.22pm

Hi Dave et all hope you are having a great time just looking at those gorgeous pictures of Nepal and I'm very jealous that I have to work and am missing out. Maybe 2014!

Good luck, keep safe and will speak to you soon.

Barbara. 21/2/2013. 5.12pm

Greg. Sorry I missed your call, hope you get away today, Keep on enjoying the challenge. How did the shopping go.?

Sarah F. 23/2/2013. 12.38pm

Hi uncle Greg! This trip looks awesome :) hope you're having fun!

David G. 19/2/2013. Life in Kathmandu. Tuesday 19th



Durbar Square with guide Toya

Hi all.

We met up with John from Cairns on Sunday night. A seasoned traveller with many a good story. It was pouring rain here on the night, so we were restricted to finding a restaurant nearby the Guest House to avoid getting drowned.

Yesterday the 6 of us visited some of the more popular sites of Kathmandu. It was a full day and ended with a splendid tour of incredible Durbar Square and seeing Kathmandu's real living goddess (a 7 year old girl) who makes a 10 second appearance every day at 4.30pm. This was an incredible experience for Greg, Ray and Nicole. Durbar Square is a must see for any visitor to Kat. The visit was made better by the decision to engage one of the squares guides "Toya". Very knowledgeable and passionate about his craft. Worthy of a good tip....

We had planned to complete our clothing and equipment hiring this morning (Tue) and were therefore horrified to learn as we hit the streets that the planned Maoist strike has extended across the entire city, including Thamel. ALL SHOPS CLOSED...!! Given we fly out at 6am in the morning, I am now dealing with a stressed team. We have found one shop willing to help us out and will be visiting him later this afternoon to hopefully complete our gear prep.

Ryan, Andrew and Carl finally arrived into Kathmandu last night from Pokhara. They had been stranded there 2 days due weather. Great blokes. The entire 2013 team were together for the first time and we celebrated with an enjoyable dinner at Rum Doodles. Oh, and great to see our 2012 Rum Doodle foot print still hanging from the roof.

Nicole is enjoying her first OS trip immensely. Greg and Ray being frequent travellers are also very impressed with their time in Nepal thus far. We are now just hoping that the weather clears in the morning for our departure into Lukla and the start of our trek.

Great responses to our Blog. Thanks all. Next update hopefully from the trails.

Vilma. 19/2/2013. 10.34

Sounds like yr all ready for a great adventure. Good luck, stay safe and most of all have fun.

David G. 20/2/2013. 3.26am

Hi Vilma

Yep having a good time. We have our alarms set for 4am for a hopeful 6.15am flight into Lukla. Weather has been patchy the last few days so several flight interruptions. Fingers crossed we get a departure tomorrow.

Wayne. 20/2/2013. 8.40am

Not good news with the shopping expedition. Hope the gods are with you this morning and the weather is clear both in Kat and Lukla so you can begin the real adventure. Dave, when you get to Paradise Lodge, Lukla, do me a favour. Find the visitors book, which has my comments as the first entry in the book.. Amend Didi to Dawa for me.

Peter C. 20/2/2013. 11.08am

G'day Ray, hope the flight to Lukla is not delayed. The good news is that the forecast for Lukla in coming days is for heaps of sunshine. A website called kiranc.com gives some amazing pictures of what is in store for you guys.

Ray L. 20/2/2013. 11.22am

Now at airport waiting for Lukla flight

Expected between half hour and two days from now

Peter C. 20/2/2013. 12.35pm

Bit early to start drinking mate! tell you what if you are still there at 5.00pm our time I will have an extra Crownie for you!!

John B. 20/2/2013. 1.49pm

Just remember there are two airlines fly in out of Lukla and you can run-around last minute and change flights. All adds to the excitement!

David G. 20/2/2013. 1.49pm

Hi John. Only 1 airline now. Just Tara. Agni looks to have gone belly up. Sitting at Kat airport right now. Beautiful morning here, but Lukla still currently closed. They are saying 1hr from now. Hoping....

Rhonda. 20/2/2013. 4.36pm

Hi Greg, hope you managed to obtain all your gear and that the weather cleared for you to leave today. Stay safe and have a ball!!!

Jeff. 21/2/2013. 11.57am

Hope you guys enjoy the first few days of the trek... Take in everything you see.. the culture the scenery. As dad will tell you, and me being his son we both carry a bias opinion but you are now in the most beautiful part of the world with the most beautiful people.

Each post that i read gives me the urge to pack and meet you guys there and i look forward to hearing the stories and seeing the many photos.

Aunty Sue i do recall i think it was your 3rd trip to the everest region when the boys back home were satisfied that 'mummy' was giving the people of Nepal a vegemite sandwich.

To the team i hope our family's passion and love for the country of Nepal gives you the experience of your life..

Stay safe and hope to hear from you soon.

Jeff

David G. 20/2/2013. Not today....



Nepal trekkers nightmare

So "it's an Adventure, not a holiday" right?

I love the Everest Base Camp trek, but boy...that Lukla continues to stress me.

We awoke this morning at 4am to a beautiful calm and cloudless Kathmandu morning sky. Our hopes were up as all 9 of us bundled into 3 taxis for our trip to the airport for our "scheduled" 6.15am flight. By 7am, the sun was up and burning off the little bit of haze around Kathmandu that had prevented our departure. We were happy to await the announcement of our boarding.

Regretfully we were still awaiting this announcement at 11.50am...!! We then got the announcement that all trekkers fear, "All flights to Lukla cancelled due weather". Team not happy. Long faces. Asking me if I have any influential contacts...! My answer of "no" is barely accepted. So a long and frustrating morning by all, and Kathmandu domestic airport lackswell.....just about everything...! While Kathmandu was blazed in Sunshine, Lukla was unfortunately hidden in cloud/fog.

Into the taxis and back into Thamel, re-check in to the Kathmandu Guest House and try to keep the spirits and confidence of the team high for our next opportunity tomorrow morning. We still have time up our sleeve so one or two (possibly even three) cancellations won't impact us. I've ran a few alternative treks by the team just in case we fail to get out, but they are insistent on Everest Base Camp. The Vic team have accepted that these things happen, and the QLDrs have experienced these frustrations many times throughout their travels.

The 4 QLDrs have opted to stay in a nearby lodge to save some money for the remainder of their ongoing travels throughout Asia (KGH is not the cheapest in the area). We will be catching up with them for dinner tonight. The 9 of us are getting along very well.

We have all taken a liking to Pumpernickel Bakery which is just 30mtrs from the Guest House. In fact, I fear some of that pre-departure training may just be starting to come apart..! We need to start the trek...!!!

As with last year, there are moments of gut splitting laughter within the team. Sue and Greg being the instigators. (What is the common link with this year and last year...?). Ok, time to leave this internet cafe and hunt them down to see what mischief they are up to. Wish us luck for our 2nd attempt tomorrow.

Brian@Weeroona. 20/2/2013. 9.09pm

Isn't that just typical, sunny in Kathmandu and cloudy in Lukla.

But the pressure is really piled on when you are stuck in Lukla and your international flight date is fast approaching.

Do they still use those antiquated Russian helicopters? Now they are an adventurous end to a trek!

The forecast is for warmer in Lukla tomorrow, which may mean less cloud clearing early. Clear skies for Kathmandu so it looks like a better chance tomorrow.

Peter C. 20/2/2013. 10.43pm

Definitely puts a stooged fishing trip into perspective Mr Latchford!! must be frustrating, still the weather report looks better for tomorrow and after that it is tipped to get even better. Good luck for tomorrow.

Leigh. 21/2/2013. 4.33am

Hmmm! Sounds like patience is being called for. It is also the key to golf and fishing. The recent fishing trip Dave was a howling (not crying) failure. Conversation great, fishing dismal (barely a bite - no fish) - flat sea no wind. Have a freezer full of bait. Hope you are able to fly out tomorrow and achieve what you have set out to do. Bakeries are a test for keeping the sense of smell in check. Stay encouraged

John B. 21/2/2013. 9.10am

Hope you manage to get a flight soon. You need a lucky Scott there to make things go to plan. I will send you some lucky Scotttish Heather to help get the Trekking gods on your side.
Good luck for tomorrow's flight!

Wayne. 21/2/2013. 10.12am

No problems. There is plenty to do at Kat airport while you are waiting. Watch other planes fly out, watch the people coming and going, watch planes fly in, watch people drinking that awful coffee, watch planes taxiing. Bill will be impressed. Did you pay your Nepal departure tax even though you are not leaving Nepal?

Rod B. 21/2/2013. 5.36pm

Sorry to hear the weather isn't playing it's part for you, hopefully you can fly out tomorrow or else you may have to start the trek from Kathmandu that would put a few miles in the legs. Best of luck and fingers crossed.

Barbara. 22/2/2013. 8.36am

Great news, hope all well

David G. 21/2/2013. Trek under way.



The team on board early morning flight to Lukla

Success. Into Lukla this morning. Commenced the trek at midday. All impressed with scenery, although they have seen nothing yet. Currently at TokTok 2,600mtrs and awaiting our first trek dinner. All going well.
Better update tomorrow from Namche.

Peter C. 22/2/2013. 7.58am

Well that is great news, no doubt the airport at Kathmandu was fascinating but another day there would have tested the patience a bit!! To the fishermen on the trek it has either been dead calm or blowing a screaming easterly here for days - not good and humid as well.

John B. 22/2/2013. 9.30am

I bet there are a few relieved trekkers. A little tip when you stop to suck in some air lift your head and look around and take in the surroundings. Its now that you realise all the hard work, stress and delays are worth it. If Didi goes looking for any packages in Namche just let her go and ignore what she tells you, the altitude plays havoc with her memory.

Wayne. 22/2/2013. 9.40am

Great news. Hope the flight into Lukla wasn't too rough. Dave, any sign of Neema? Sue (Didi), unfortunately you won't have the Scotsman in his kilt for amusement at Toctoc. Your first test today (22nd) with the long walk up to Namche. Hope you get to see Everest half way up.

Jeff. 22/2/2013. 1.30pm

fantastic guys hope the trip is amazing. Good luck

Rod B. 22/2/2013. 4.38pm

Great to hear you have all made it safely and can now start trekking which is what you have all been itching to do, so from now on the only way is up and up and up keep going guys and stay safe.

David G. 22/2/2013. Arrived at Namche 3,500mtrs



Morning departure TokTok

All. We had an enjoyable night in TokTok last night. The team liked their first lodge experience. The night wasn't cold, but we have quickly discovered that our so called Minus 20deg sleeping bags that we hiredare NOT minus20..!! Bit chilly and had to rely on some heavy blankets provided from the lodge. A challenge next week.

Today was our first of 4 big climbs, up to Namche at 3,500mtrs. Most of the team climbed very well, although some not as strong as others..!! Will need to monitor progress over the next few days.

Ray, Greg and John have been put into the "Old Codger Club" but they each climbed exceptionally well today. Young blokes from Gold Coast are pretty strong. Nicole set out at a slow but steady pace and with some good encouragement and was able to knock off her first big day. Think she will sleep very well tonight.

There is a lot of snow up here, which is the result of the poor weather experienced last week. Should make for some splendid views tomorrow when we spend our acclimatisation day climbing up to the Everest View Hotel at 3,800mtrs then back down to Namche to allow our red blood cells to do their thing.

Team getting along "reasonably" ok. Always different dynamics within a group of 10, so difference of opinions sometime out in the open.

Peter C, Wayne, John B. Amused at your responses. Have read them to targeted recipients. Laughs.

Thanks Jeff for lovely comments. Wish us luck as we start to do some hard work the day after tomorrow.

Cheers from the 2013 team.

Brian@Weeroona. 23/2/2013. 1.15am

The snow sounds interesting, as we know, it really gives one the feel of really being in the mountains.

Good on you Nicole, there's nothing wrong with being the tortoise, you will often see more of the finer detail than the hares who are often more knocked up than they will admit at the end of the day.

If you're starting to feel breathless and tired, don't stop but just slow down a little until you recover. That way you will continue to make good progress as it's often harder to get started again after stopping. Susan should be made to walk backwards if she starts to get too cocky, preferably at the end of the line.

David, consider coming back to Namche via the Everest trekking route. At the Hillary Khumjung school, turn to the East and walk. There is a track that leads down to a teahouse on the main route. If you can call up the satellite view on Google Earth of the area, you can see the track. It's the same track I walked up from Namche to Khumjung and Kunde Hospital. If you have the time, a walk up to the Kunde Hospital is worth the walk.

Wayne. 23/2/2013. 7.19am

Saturday is market day in Namche where Tibetans come over the pass (if open) and Nepalese climb up from the valleys to sell their goods. Your acclimatisation day in Namche is what David calls, a rest day. A casual walk up to Everest View Hotel. What he doesn't tell you is that it is hard yakka climbing out of Namche after the long walk up yesterday. My knee blew up on the descent last year. Keep plugging away Nicole. You have done the training. It is now all in the mind. Walk at your own pace. Keep drinking water. Bugger everyone else. You will make it.

Wayne. 23/2/2013. 12.42pm

Check out the supposed remains of a yeti at the museum in Khumjung if you get a chance and send a photo

Peter C. 23/2/2013. 9.26am

Great effort, walking uphill is never easy and considering the distances you guys are going it is amazing. The Everest View Hotel looks great but it could be a trap if you settle in for the afternoon !! it does sell beer doesn't it? maybe the markets will be a safer option. Still the same here, warm sunny days - good for the beach and drinking Coronas. Looking forward to getting your next report. Good luck.

Barbara. 23/2/2013. 9.49am

keep up the good work, the sleeping bags sound a challenge. Great getting the updates.

Shane. 23/2/2013. 11.00am

Hi Nicole - it's great to see the group photo - you all look pretty gun ho and raring to go!
I am proud to hear you did we'll on the first big climb - well done - I know you can do it!

David G. 25/2/2013. 5.24am

Shane. Nicole is slogging along ok. Like the other members, I think she has realised just how tough the EBC trek can be. Lots of encouragement and support within the group

Helen & Sib. 23/2/2013. 11.42am

We are full of admiration for you all. A bit worried about the dud sleeping bags though! Happy climbing everyone - Go The Old Codgers!!

Wayne. 23/2/2013. 12.40am

Check out the supposed yeti remains at the Khumjung museum if you get a chance and send a photo.

Wayne. 25/2/2013. 5.20am

Wayne. We didn't get there. Long story

Carol. 23/2/2013. 12.46pm

Keep going the old codgers. Hope you had a spectacular view today. The photos look inspiring

David G. 24/2/2013. The "rest day"that isn't really a rest.



Greg, Ray, Andrew & Jane above Namche

How does one describe our "rest day" at Namche. A steep slog up to Everest View Hotel in deep snow and ice, a 90min wait for our lunch at a dodgy lodge in Kumjung....and.... no view of Everest when we got there due cloud. gggrrrr. We got back into Namche at 4pm, much later than previous rest days to Everest View.

The team is going well. Headaches are only minor and appetites are still fierce. Good humour amongst all. The QLD boys have some terrific stories of their travels, which keeps us amused at night. Jane from the UK has joined us on this leg of the trek and she too has some good stories of her own previous travels.

Our minus 20 sleeping bags held up last night but only with a thick blanket over the top. The trek leader has been accused of some serious snoring last night but is denying all accusations.

The members of the "Old Codger Club" are continuing to climb very well and are thus far showing no real signs of struggle, although the trek does start to get serious from tomorrow as we enter the 4000mtr zone. We are hoping the snow stays away and the tracks don't become too slippery (as they were today).

The nights are not yet too cold, but we all know what awaits higher up.

Oh, for the 2012 team, there was a very sad and somewhat unwell porter waiting at the airport the other day. Neema. Apparently has taken a bad fall and suffered some head damage. Very sad to see him in this state.

Updates from tomorrow are likely to be via good mate Brian in Melbourne from text messages, as internet starts to disappear for a while.

Good responses to the last blog entry. I will try to ensure all recipients read these.

Cheers. Luck and prayers for us as we do the tough yards from tomo

Brian@Weeroona. 24/2/2013. 1.00am

I received a quick phone call from David in Namche Bazar at 12:30 am Melbourne time. One surprise was that the entry fee to the Sagarmatha National Park has risen from Rs 1000 to Rs 3000!

The change apparently occurred on June 18th 2012 but this site,

[http://www.visitnepal.com/nepal_information/nepalparks.php#Sagarmatha\(Everest\)NationalPark](http://www.visitnepal.com/nepal_information/nepalparks.php#Sagarmatha(Everest)NationalPark)

still lists the entry charge as Rs 1000. There's a couple of other Nepal tourist sites still quoting the old charge and it isn't until you do a search via Google that you find the change.

David's blog entry and his phone call mentions that the weather wasn't so good there today and the weather report for tomorrow for their walk to Tengboche (or Thyangboche) suggests that it might snow a little, it going to be a cold day and a colder night but from Monday on it looks like they are in for sunny and warmer days with clear skies. Tengboche (or Thyangboche) weather forecast,

<http://www.accuweather.com/en/np/thyangboche/1227435/weather-forecast/1227435>

Brian@Weeroona. 24/2/2013. 1.15am

You may notice that the time that your comments were posted has changed. I've had to change the setting from UTC+10 hrs to UTC+11 hrs as the site has not taken into account our daylight saving.
It doesn't matter much I suppose but it's a little tidier I think.

Helen & Sib. 24/2/2013. 8.02am

Especially pleased that Old Codger Club are holding their own - well done lads. Good news re the weather for Monday onwards from Brian. Stay safe and have fun all...

John B. 24/2/2013. 8.37am

Good to hear you're all going well! When you start to struggle on the climbs just think how those Porters and locals carrying those huge loads feel, stop whinging and get on with it:-)
I am sure with Divaads encouragement and Didis constant barracking they will get you there. Good luck in the death zone!

Peter C. 24/2/2013. 8.46am

Wouldn't want to suffer from Acrophobia! I take my hat off to you guys, especially the "old codgers". If that is what it takes to get to the local there is a good case for becoming a teetotaler if residing in Namche. It certainly is an adventure isn't it? everything else will seem tame after this. Stay safe and good luck with the weather - I think it is about to improve soon going on the forecast for what that is worth.

Wayne. 24/2/2013. 9.24am

Great photo Dave. I remember that view very well. Obviously not too much has changed up at Everest View Hotel. Shame about the weather as the view from the hotel looking up the Khumbu valley with Everest, Lhotse and Ama Dablam is spectacular. Then again every view is spectacular. Sad to hear about Neema, then again, that is what too much alcohol does to you. Maybe his wife hit him.

Rod & Rhonda. 24/2/2013. 10.15am

Good to hear everyone is holding up well and the old codgers aren't lagging behind all the training must be paying off now. Hope no body is scared of heights going by the photo it looks beautiful. Fingers crossed the weather plays it's part for you stay safe and walk within your limits.

Joan & Jeff. 24/2/2013. 7.27pm

Hi to all the gang. The only thing that I envy you of is cool conditions while we are home sweltering. Hi David and Sue, have a good time and am thinking of you. love mum..

Hey dad and the team. We sit here at the computer each night anxiously awaiting the next update.. For photos of the team reach that high level of fitness that the everest work gives you.. Will look forward to the photo of the team on Kala Patter and good luck for all those big climbs ahead. Dad remember. Take it slow over those moraines that you got stuck on during our trip in 2007.. 6 years ago today we landed back home after a week of hell in Luckla.. I truly hope that you and team don't experience what we had to...

Aunty Sue, James sent nanna a text message saying the boys were having a great time snorkelling on the Great Barrier Reef.

Stay safe and hope to hear from you soon.

Day 1 of uni tomorrow dad so ill send you an email and let you know how it all went..

Love the Gaul/Putkunz

xx

David G. 24/2/2013. Into Deboche at 3,800mtrs

Update By Brian@Weeroona

Received from David via SMS at 9:51 pm

Left Namche this morning 8am. Heavy cloud and snowing. Snowed all day, fortunately not heavy.

Nicole found another gear and went well this morning. Climb to Tengboche 3800mtrs slowed the team down, particularly in deep snow and ice. Arrive in Deboche 4pm and zero deg.

Old Codgers still going very well, even getting cocky.

Up over the 4000mtrs mark tomorrow.

From Brian@Weeroona.

Google Maps are pretty hopeless for following the trek but this address,
<http://www.openstreetmap.org/?lat=27.852&lon=86.7934&zoom=13&layers=M>
will show the area in OpenStreetMap.

Walking up and over the Tengboche ridge is a hard day but the next couple of days will be a little easier for the team. There is still altitude gain to contend with but the weather should improve with clear sunny days ahead.

Leigh. 25/2/2013. 4.56amm

Enjoying you updates. Does the trek leader qualify as an old codger? If he does pleased to hear he is setting a good pace. Keep, keeping your feet guys. Envyng the 'snuggle' weather reports in our 34deg Melb day. You read like you are in another world not this one. Dave PA upgrade through - 25,000 allocated.

David G. 25/2/2013 5.09am

Leigh. I'm awake right now. It's 11.44pm. I've been in my sleeping bag since 8pm. The lure of our cosy bag gets the better of us all from around 7pm. Problem with that is that we sleep for 3-4 hrs then awaken. grrrrr..... I just turned my phone on and it showed a rare connection, hence I can see and respond to the blog from the middle of the Himalayas..

Entry age to the OCC is 55 so I'm glad I don't qualify...!! Lol. All trekking ok, although Greg now battling a pesty cold, and one or two other members experiencing dull headaches from altitude. I'm praying for good health and weather over the next few days. Good news on PA. Great that you're following our progress.

GB

Brian@Weeroona. 25/2/2013. 2.11pm

You might not make the OCC age requirement but I reckon you qualify for honorary membership by being in your sleeping bag by 8:00 pm! And I forgot to mention earlier, no, David doesn't snore, he just has this annoying habit of firing up and playing with a chainsaw at some ungodly hour of the night!

Get your backside outside, a bit of fresh air and a little exercise will help you sleep better at night.

David G. 25/2/2013. 6.31pm

Oh, now that's mean talk...! I've already been accused of rumbling the lodges. Denying it off course.

Barbara. 25/2/2013. 7.02am

Keep up the good work, glad the OCC are going so well.

David G. 25/2/2013. 11.22am

Hi Barbara

Refer below response to Wayne's entry regarding Greg.

Peter C. 25/2/2013. 7.54am

Well I bet I know one of the members from the OCC that is getting cocky! he can get that way when he outfishes me. On that subject of the fishes you are missing nothing - too hot and humid still. Spare a thought for us mere mortals down here at sea level - sleep not that easy either! Seriously you are all going very well and having done a bit of research into it, I am in awe of your achievements especially given the weather. Good luck with the next stage.

David G. 25/2/2013. 11.27am

Hi Pete

Yes the oldest member of the OCC is going extremely well. Can't see anything stopping him at this stage. I just hope his efforts will be rewarded with a clear day when we are on KP.

Peter C. 25/2/2013. 2.08pm

He is a stalwart isn't he? might have trouble stopping him going further when you reach KP!!

Wayne. 25/2/2013. 9.12am

Sounds like a difficult slog although that must have been a great effort yesterday to get to Deboche. Glad to hear Greg is still performing although that cold he says he has is only a put on so he has an excuse if he doesn't make it. ha ha

David G. 25/2/2013. 11.31AM

Wayne. He's been tearing it to bits up until now, so I hope he doesn't suffer from his cold. We're pumping lemon and honey teas into him, as well as garlic soups, strepsils and anything else we can find.

Wayne. 25/2/2013. 3.25pm

I did forget to mention to the group that young David has been known to go for some bladder relief during the night and forget where he is, so make sure you keep your doors locked. That would be a good story for Greg to tell but as Dave will be monitoring the blogs, Team 2013 will not find out until it is too late.

David G. 26/2/2013. Tough slog to Dingboche



Well earned tea break at 4000mtrs.

Hi all. Just when I had conceded Dingboche had no wifi, I've found this little lodge that has an old dial up modem!!

We have all made it to Dingboche 4,400mtrs. The team have been incredibly strong given the condition of the track over the last 3 days. Either deep snow or ice, very slippery and lots of slips and falls. My boots (their 4th Nepal trek) have let me down badly. No tread and Gortex failed. I've had numerous slips off the track into the deep snow, which amuses Ray.

Today was a very tough climb to 4800mtrs and back for acclimatization. The team are well and truly spent as I write this.

OCC climbing well. John doing it easy and Greg and Ray slip into 4 wheel drive mode. Nicole now departs earlier than us each day so she is not in too late in the afternoon. Like others in the team, she is feeling the altitude.

A few of the team are battling mild headache and a few also have stomach bugs. All still keen for tomorrow's climb to Lobouche at 4,900mtrs. Going to be tough in the ice, snow and altitude.

Not bitterly cold yet. Minus 6 at Deboche 2 days ago. So called minus20 sleeping bags just getting us by.

Next update hopefully from Lobouche.

Peter C. 26/2/2013. 10.11pm

Looks like you have all come in from the ski fields and are enjoying a gluhwein or two!! picture looks very attractive but imagine being the brickie who built the joint! Get a few gluhweins or the local version of Boags Premium into Ray and you will get the last laugh watching him slide all over the place Dave! sounds like you are all making great progress - nothing much to report here, bucketed down today but humid again now. Good luck with the next stage.

Brian@Weeroona. 26/2/2013. 10.38pm

I told you that those cheap boots wouldn't hold up. And Goretex lined? Hah! On the next trip, perhaps you should consider adding crampons to the equipment list. Or, learn to watch where you are putting your feet!

I know it makes for a harder walk but I think you are really fortunate to have that snow and ice around. I think that it really adds to the feel of being in the high mountains and as long as the wind doesn't come up, the daily walk is just that bit more spectacular.

The weather forecast for Thyangboche indicates fine weather for the next 3 days but it might become cloudy with a little rain/snow on Saturday. It looks like you might get a clear day for your Kall Pattar day if you don't hang around.

Wayne. 27/2/2013. 9.01am

Good strong effort guys. No news is good news re Greg's sniffles earlier in the week.

John B. 27/2/2013. 9.30am

Great effort folks, I hope the weather stays good for your summit to KP! It will all be worthwhile when you get there.

Divaad its about now when the team are feeling a little tired that you tell them about the surprise that awaits "the young Swedish nymphs that will be there waiting to greet the team" Have you met TK 5 yet?

Helen& Sib. 27/2/2013. 10.59am

Looks like a luxury resort! Are you sure you haven't taken a detour to Aspen? Well done to OCC and others... Hope that blue sky lasts.

Brian@Weeroona. 27/2/2013. 12.10pm

To look at the Kalla Pattar/Loubouche area, copy and paste these numbers into the location box in Google Maps, 27.988225,86.835251

The green arrow shows the location allowing users to flip to satellite view. The track to follow from Dinboche can be seen and followed on the satellite view.

Rod B. 27/2/2013. 3.49

Great to hear everyone is coping well and are in good spirits keep it going. Dave is that mt everest in the background?

Brian@Weeroona. 27/2/2013. 4.55pm

Rod B,

That's Ama Dablam in the photo.

Click on this link, it will show Dingboche and Ama Dablam in the Google Maps satellite view.

<http://maps.google.com/?ll=27.876866,86.866665&spn=0.063883,0.072699&t=h&z=14>

I'm not sure if David will have Internet connectivity to see and answer your question, I hope you don't mind me answering.

Rod B. 28/2/2013. 3.38pm

Not at all Brian thanks very much will jump on to the link.

Shane. 27/2/2013. 5.08pm

hey Nicole! you are looking good! one question? is that beer or yak pee you were drinking??

shano

Barbara. 27/2/2013. 6.06pm

You are all doing a great job. Looks a lovely spot to relax. Keep up the good work

S. 28/2/2013. 3.44pm

Looks cold but sounds an incredible adventure! Certainly beats work, I'm very envious! Hope you're all having a fabulous time.

Trek on trekkers!!

And lots of love to my dear little brother Carlos, and Ryan and Andrew

David G. 28/2/2013 Lobouche 4,900mtrs

To all our wonderful followers. We have all made it to Lobouche at 4,900mtrs. A terrific effort given the state of the tracks, some pesty stomach complaints and a few altitude headaches. We are right now finishing off our breakfast and will shortly head off for our short but challenging stroll to Ghorak Shep 5,100mtrs where we will relax for the afternoon in prep for our attack on Kalar Pattar in the morning.

We are then looking forward to our descent back down to friendlier altitude. Hardly any of us slept last night, so I think the challenge of altitude, ice, snow and slush has pushed some of us to our limits. Hasn't been too cold though, so that's been a bonus.

Hopefully will get a connection later this arvo from GS and will confirm our safe arrival.

Thanks all. Will pass on your messages to the team.

Rod B. 28/2/2013. 3.47pm

Go guys you are nearly there you will be able to catch up on your beauty sleep on the way home knowing you accomplished what you all set out to do so hang in there and it will all be worth it.

David G. 28/2/2013. 6.38pm

Hi Rod. David here. I mentioned to Greg that he had a response from you but he had just arrived into the lodge and was sucking air....! He's going alright, but I think he is looking forward to getting down

Brian@Weeroona. 28/2/2013. 3.53pm

I'm really looking forward to seeing all the pictures that you are taking. I'm quite intrigued by your description of the conditions.

The weather, at least at Tyangboche is for a warm 9 deg C and clear skies for tomorrow so your timing for Kalla Pattar couldn't be better. Saturday and Sunday a bit cloudier with possible showers.

Stay away from the caffeine tonight, hot chocolate drinks before hitting the sleeping bags might be the best bet for a bit of sleep.

David G. 28/2/2013 6.43pm

Brian, the weather has been absolutely brilliant since our snow the other day, but boy they've had a massive dump prior to us getting here. Haven't seen this much snow in previous trips.

Peter C. 28/2/2013. 6.23pm

Terrific effort. Judging by what some intrepid adventurers that have gone before you have said, it is not that unusual to not get much sleep at Lobouche or for that matter Gorak Shep - Sounds like the weather has not been too bad. Should be great taking it all in on top of Kalar Pattar in the morning. Looking forward to seeing the photos Ray.

David G. 28/2/2013. 6.46pm

Hi Pete. Ray's still going good. Weather has been very good since our snow the other day. Tracks still in a bad way, but the scenery is brilliant.

Carol. 28/2/2013. 8.56pm

Glad to hear everyone doing well. Keep sucking in the air Greg it is quieter than blowing it out! Except that is for your snoring! Glad to see the weather improved. Beautiful photos.

Carol. 28/2/2013. 8.58pm

Keep sucking it in Greg - it would be quieter than you blowing it out, except the person sharing your tent with the snoring may not agree. Take care and lots of photos. Glad the weather has improved. Keep up the good work everyone.

Kuranda Trekkers. 28/2/2013. 9.47pm

Congratulations Team 13! We are so proud of you (especially our family members John, Ryan & Carl). Hope John isn't driving you all too crazy. Thank you for being such a fantastic team leader David. We are nominating you in the TTA Trekking Tourism Awards for your brilliant leadership and organisational skills. Sending you all warm hugs and TEB's - telepathic energy boosters.

Good luck everyone from the Kuranda Trekkers Club xxx

Helen & Sib. 28/2/2013. 10.43pm

Yay! Almost there. Received txt from Ray from Gorak Shep. Apparently Ray is channelling the inner yak - slow and steady. Sounds like a good strategy...well done all!

Updated by Brian@Weeroona. 1/3/2013. Exhausted at Gorak Shep 5,100mtrs

Received via SMS from David at 12:26 am 1/3/12

Arrived Gorak Shep 5,100mtrs around 1:30 pm. Terrific effort to get all 9.5 of us here (Jane is the .5). All exhausted.

Anticipating minus 10 to minus 15 deg. tonight. Early start in the morning to tackle Kalar Pattar, hopefully on a sunny day. Then it will be a scramble down to lower altitude. We will aim for Pheriche at around 4,200mtrs, but this is a big day and will depend on our stamina after our morning climb. As I write this I'm battling a headache and light headedness..! I'm hoping it's a bit of dehydration and will calm after more water (although I just love the 3am pee at minus 15). At least a third of the team now battling a stomach bug, which is making for tough days. So tomorrow is what it is all about for us. Unfortunately with our staggered trekking speeds, it is unlikely we will get a group photo from the top as the group will be spread.

Wish us the best for the morning.

Brian@Weeroona. 1/3/2013 2.33am

Headache? Light headedness? To much Chaang with dinner?

Weather is forecast to be sunny and clear with 9 deg C so the views will be worth the climb.

It's a big day back to Pheriche, you are ambitious but at least it's all downhill. Be careful on that downhill to Dughla, as I remember it was steep and loose footing. Take it easy, icy tracks, tiredness and more people hurt themselves going downhill rather than going uphill.

David G. 1/3/2013 5.21am

Yes, it is a big day. We discussed as a group around the heater last night if we want to stick with our 3 day return to Lukla to keep with our Monday morning flight ticket, or extend to a 4 day return. The group decided to aim for 3 days but re visit the discussion in Periche. On dry tracks its achievable.

Barbara. 1/3/2013. 3.42am

Keep up the good work, best wishes to you all. Good luck.

David G. 1/3/2013 5.22am

Thanks Barbara

Leigh. 1/3/2013. 6.13am

Brr, Brrhhh, sound cold to me. Does a warm Sealy innerspring enter into your thoughts at night? Sorry to hear of the stomach bugs. What are you eating? One foot after the other makes for a good walk. Keep going - you are nearer to the end than when you started.

Peter C. 1/3/2013. 8.05am

I am full of admiration in all of you - especially the older ones. Dehydration (and beer) will give you a headache but I can see why you don't want to drink too much water before going to bed Dave - I don't like getting up in the middle of the night and it certainly isn't cold here. Makes one wonder about those individuals who try and summit Everest! You have done a great job Dave - congratulations to all of you and I hope the views from KP are fantastic.

John B. 1/3/2013. 9.17am

Team 2013, Fantastic effort to make it this far and one final push and you will have a memory that will last for a lifetime. Try remember this is what you put that training in for, then you are on the way back and hopefully the sore heads will start to go away.

I remember it well and only wish I was there with my Kilt to share this wonderful experience you will get on KP.

Good luck on the final push. The lucky Scottttt

Wayne. 1/3/2013. 10.24am

When the going gets tough, the tough get going and this appears to be what you are all doing. It's great to hear that you are all going to try for Kala Pathar. Stomach bugs, headaches and all. Hope those boots of yours hold out Dave. Good luck and looking forward to seeing photos from the top in your next blog.

Fordy. 1/3/2013. 10.47am

Well done Team 13

Sounds like tough going but important thing is you all made it this far

Look forward to seeing the picks from the top.

Cheers

David G. 1/3/2013. Success on Kalar Pattar



All 10 of us on Kalar Pattar. Everest in the background. Incredible effort by all.

Success. I wouldn't have dreamed it, but just 2 hrs ago, all 10 of us stood on top Kalar Pattar on a beautiful morning. The views as expected were mind blowing.

Nicole set off at 6am and the rest of us 7am. We managed to get to the top within 20min of each other. Lots of photos, although being a precarious spot it's not easy to get 10 huddled together.

I'm so rapt to get the entire team onto KP. It's something you dream about as a trek leader, and given the fatigue, conditions of the tracks, headaches, stomach conditions, I never anticipated we would go so well. A credit to the entire team.

We are now ordering a bite to eat at Gorak Shep before trying to get down to a lower altitude.

Peter C. 1/3/2013. 5.23pm

Let me be one of the first to congratulate you all, amazing sight and so lucky with the weather - brilliant sunshine and no doubt simply breathtaking to behold. I presume that is Everest in the top right hand corner of the photo. No doubt you will all want to get down to a lower altitude as soon as possible. Bet you will tuck into a steak and few beers at the earliest opportunity Ray!!

David G. 2/3/2013. 10.22pm

Thanks Pete

Barbara. 1/3/2013. 5.53pm

Fantastic news, congratulations to you all. You did yourselves proud. Safe trip down.

Rod B. 1/3/2013. 6.06pm

Well done everyone dreams do come true. Well done David in putting it all together and getting everyone up their safely just take care in coming down . Enjoy those beers when you get the chance.

Leanne, Tim & Laura. 1/3/2013. 6.06pm

Congratulations to you all! Glad that you have made it all safely. What a view - spectacular!!! Take care on the descent. Photoshop is really good - hope you are enjoying the hotel in Bangkok!!!!!!!

David G. 2/3/2013. 10.24pm

No Photoshop Tim. Doing it hard. Been a tough one this year with the ice and snow.

Brian Noble. 1/3/2013. 8.23pm

Well done Greg and friends. Bit like getting a hole in one Greg. Safe trip back down. Beautiful scenery, what an experience.

Helen C. 1/3/2013. 11.21PM

Woo hoo!... Beautiful shot of all you champions! Congrats. Hello blue sky. What a perfect day. Take it easy going down and enjoy the rest of the journey.

J.Lo 2/3/2013. 8.30am

Congrats to you all. Sitting here nursing half a hangover and feeling rather inadequate after what you have achieved. Will buy Ray an oldy on his return in celebration. Fantastic effort y'all.

Wayne. 2/3/2013. 11.37am

Top effort guys. I knew you would lead the team to victory Dave. Be proud of your achievement. Good luck on journey down and have a beer for me at paradise Lodge, if not before. Didi looks like she could use a shave at KGH.

Glen & Shan. 2/3/2013. 1.28pm

Well done everyone, especially the QLD boys!! Hope the stomach's start to feel better soon! Enjoy the beer, it's all downhill from now on... mostly!

Leigh. 2/3/2013. 9.03pm

Well done, Dave and team. I can sense the excitement in your report. You must be stoked. Yet another accomplishment. Keep the concentration going on the descent.

David G. 2/3/2013. 10.23pm

Tough coming down thus far Leigh. Long days/distances. Big gap between the fastest and slowest members of the team.

David G. 2/3/2013. 9.58pm

Thanks all. Trip not over yet. A challenging return to Lukla

Peter & Robyn. 2/3/2013. 10.33pm

All

Well done ,the hero shot looks fantastic. The achievement and effort is something you will remember for the rest of your life. Stay safe and have a relaxing drink and shower at Paradise Lodge. Hopefully no longer than the 2012 crew had the pleasure of Dave and Jeff in 2008

Cheers
P+R

John G. 3/3/2013. 1.25pm

Congratulations Dave and the all team on reaching the trip's pinnacle at Kalar Pattar. A fitting reward for a lot of planning and training. Safe travelling for the remainder of the trek and journey home.

Jeff. 7/3/2013. 9.17am

congrats to the team..

A fantastic effort. Dad you've made it both attempts of Kala pattr since our trek so i think we organise to get that photo of us we wanted in '07

David G. 2/3/2013. A struggle to Namche



Above. More shots from our Kalar Pattar morning.

We all agreed the other night that we would commit to a 3 day return from Kalar Pattar to Lukla so as to keep our firm airfares from Lukla to Kathmandu on Monday 4th. If we put these flights back, we no longer have firm seats and instead go into a stand-by on the day we choose, which in Lukla can spell trouble...!! Now a 3 day return is a hard 3 days and some of the team are struggling. One came into Perishe at 8.45pm last night under head torch...!! Not ideal, although thankfully not that cold and had our chief guide and porter with them.

We will meet again tonight and see if we are still happy to push on to Lukla tomorrow (approx 18klms of continued ups and downs). Most of the team are keen to fly out on Monday.

The Kalar Pattar success has really slowed down some of the members. Ray, Greg and Nicole finding the last few days very hard. Trekking slowly and finding both the ups and downs a little harder than last week.

Scenery still incredible. Been a tough but terrific trip.

Thanks for support.

Helen & Sib. 2/3/2013. 10.45pm

Good luck with the descent. Stay safe . You've all done SO WELL. Awesome in every respect!

Wayne. 3/3/2013. 6.55am

Sounds like it is still tough out there. Keep plodding away and stay safe. Photos coming through are great.

Peter C. 3/3/2013. 8.36am

Seems incredible that a fly out of Lukla tomorrow is achievable so soon after reaching Kalar Pattar. Hope the three Melbournians rally to the occasion ! Good luck.

Patti

You guys are amazing, keep up the great work, you are nearly there. Your efforts are awesome, I take my hat off to you.....hmmmm, actually maybe not just at the moment!

Barbara. 3/3/2013. 2.30pm

Come on Greg, you are " n e a r l y" there. Keep up the good work.

Anne. 3/3/2013. 6.49pm

Wow haven't read the blogs for a few days - sounds as though you guys have had it tough but so good to hear of the success. Fantastic effort, well done - such a sense of satisfaction (& relief) must be being felt by all but yes, I know, not over yet, still slogging away. Keep the spirits up & enjoy!

Carol. 3/3/2013. 6.49pm

To Ray , Greg and Nicole, really well done. To the rest also well done. You should all be very proud of yourselves. Enjoy the downhill and the rest.

David. G. 4/3/2013. Safely back in Lukla



Relaxation & celebration at Paradise Lodge, Lukla

All 9 of us safely back to Lukla. Update from Kathmandu later.....

David. 4/3/2013. Lukla to Kathmandu



Somewhere in Nepal...

I just love Lukla....! Last night we bid farewell to our support crew. All our Porters and head Guide were paid up and tipped accordingly. There was significant gratitude and even some emotion as each Porter made a special effort to warmly hug each and every one of us. What a great support team to work with. Always smiling, dragging our bags to 5,545mtrs and staying with and assisting some of our slower team members into camp each night (11.30pm one night) under headlight. I truly LOVE the Nepalese..!

Then a wonderful night sleeping in Lukla under sheets and not sleeping bags, and a wonderful flushing toilet and boiling hot shower.

We awoke to a lovely morning and were promptly marched over to the Lukla airport terminal ("terminal" perhaps a little complimentary ..!)

Our plane arrived and we all buckled in for the classic Lukla "slingshot" departure, with the plane using every inch of the short runway. (Don't blame us, we have all lost weight..!!).

25min later we touched down.....but NOT in Kathmandu..!! As we descended, we anticipated the city and the bitumen runway of Kathmandu International, instead we saw paddocks, cows and a bumpy gravel potholed runway...!! Apparently Kathmandu airport was closed sometime after our Lukla departure and our plane was requested to make a diversion and wait at a small precautionary landing strip half way..! What a buzz. We hopped off the plane and watched 3 other Lukla flights make the same landing to await the fog to clear in Kat.

30min later, we were in the air again and finished the trip to Kathmandu with no further delays.

A quick shower at the Kathmandu Guest House and a much needed shave. Cut-throat blade and 15min head massage forA\$1.50. How good is that?. Then a desperate race to Pumpernickel Bakery for a well earned Yak Cheese Roll and Flat White coffee (....and Apple Pie).

We are heading to Pokhara tomorrow for a few days R&R. We feel we have earn't it with what we achieved just 4 days ago...! Then back to Kat on Thursday. We have tried to change our ticket to fly out of Nepal on Friday so as to spend a full day in Bangkok before flying home on Sunday, but it appears that there are no available seats on Friday's Kathmandu to Bangkok flight, so our Saturday departure may need to remain. I'm not fussed. It's never easy to leave this wonderful country.

The team have been great to trek with.

- The Old Codgers were truly inspiring. John trekked steady and strong throughout and often amused us with his travels and experiences, I've requested he write a book called "Travelling the World....on a Dime". I will be the first to buy a copy. Greg and Ray paced each other for the entire trip, pushing each other along superbly. Whether it be the tougher slower days or the*I was going to say "easier days", but there weren't any*, they were inseparable and drew from each others encouragement.
- The 3 young guys from QLD (Ryan, Carl and Andrew) were an inspiration in how important it is to get along with and support each other. It's no wonder they too have terrific stories of their own travels together. Good friendship is the key to good travel experiences, and these guys have that. I'm wrapped to have met them.
- How does one describe Nicole? Determined, Stubborn, Tenacious....!! There were days were we thought Nicole was going to turn around and head back. Perhaps there were days when she should have...!Yet just 4 days ago she stood on Kalar Pattar, and that is an achievement that is not handed out to just anyone..! Yesterday when we asked her to commit to a massive 20klm of consistent hills and steps, she delivered, even surprising the entire team with just how well she did. There's no stopping Nicole..!
- Sue? Well Sue is Sue. She amuses everyone, she encourages the team, and she's a great help to me. Given the team were often up to 5klm apart during any given day, she was always offering to lead the front runners, or stay back with the snail pacers. And she has the strength, speed and patience to do both. Can't imaging a group trek in Nepal without Sue. Thanks Sis'

This trip to Everest Base Camp and Kalar Pattar has been one of the toughest I have done to date. Mainly due to the unexpected amount of snow and ice that we encountered and had to contend with, but also the significant gap between the quicker trekkers and those slower. But the reward of seeing everyone of them standing on the magnificent Kalar Pattar was such a personal sense of satisfaction. It somewhat fuels the desire to continue offering

these group treks.

So the trek blog is over for another year. It's been fun (if not sometimes challenging) to update it each day/night. But it's always worth it when we get great and encouraging responses from those who followed us. Thanks, from ALL of us. It honestly gives us strength and encouragement when we are dealing with challenges up high.

And thanks to Brian@Weeroona who was always on standby to post an entry when I couldn't .

I'll continue to post a few updates in our last week of R&R for those interested in following our winding down from our big trek.

2013 Everest Base Camp trek. It's certainly been an **Adventure**...not a Holiday...!!



Above. To the Kalar Pattar victors go the spoils.....

Anne. 4/3/2013. 10.18pm

Ah I can finally breathe a sigh of relief - feel as though I've earned some r&r just reading your blogs Dave - was really feeling for you guys. So, might head off the w/e with some other chicks! Seriously, well done to all of you - mammoth effort. Enjoy your well earned r&r & safe trip back. Give yourself a pat on the back b.....

David G. 6/3/2013. 12.13am

Hi Anne. Thanks mate. Great words. I think "Bill" has really enjoyed the experience.

Helen & Sib. 4/3/2013. 10.28pm

Thanks for the blog, it's made great reading and has given us back in sunny Melbourne a sense of your efforts and achievements. Well done and enjoy your r n r.

Brian@Weeroona. 5/3/2013. 1.21am

It reads as an epic walk, snow and ice, altitude and attitude.

Tenacity with a capital "T" with the one who walked in at 11:30 pm, who probably felt like saying, "leave me here till morning on the side of the track".

Well done everybody, particularly David who herded all those "cats". Susan, nobody pushed you off a cliff? Yes I know, you were using reverse psychology.

Wayne. 5/3/2013. 7.14am

I looked forward to all your blogs and followed you all the way, as you knew I would Dave. Sounds like you have led Team 2013 well considering you had your own boot problems. Enjoy your r & r and look forward to hearing your stories and looking at your photos when you return. Well done all.

David G. 6/3/2013. 12.15am

Hi Wayne. Thanks mate. Yes looking forward to catching up

Peter C. 5/3/2013. 8.38am

Really enjoyed the Blog Dave - very well communicated and it gave an image of just how difficult the trek was. Memories that will last forever and for the fishes perfect timing as it has been so bad here since their departure.

David G. 6/3/2013. 12.17am

Thanks Pete. It's been good having you on board. Enjoyed your prompt responses.
Cheers

Brian@Weeroona. 5/3/2013. 10.40am

Where are you staying in Pokhara?

David G. 6/3/2013. 12.31am

Hi B. staying at Hotel Mera, half way along lakeside drive.

Brian@Weeroona. 6/3/2103 1.54pm

I see it. Dal Bhat in the Gurkha Restaurant? Good fuel for a bit of a walk around some of the local ,tracks. Well, you wouldn't want to be just sitting around, you must all be jumping out of your skins with your new found walking fitness!

David G. 6/3/2013 3.49pm

Brian. As it turns out, today is a national strike so nearly all shops closed. Unable to hire motorbikes, gggrrrr.
Will still try to do a paraglide later, if not then pure relaxation

Brad & Liam. 5/3/2013. 12.49pm

Hey good effort you guys,

Hope you all find a car wash in Kathmandu before you come back, what a dirty looking bunch.

Mum bet you were looking forward to a nice meal after getting back to Kathmandu, we are looking forward to you getting home, we are over Dad's cooking.

Love

Brad & Liam

XXXX

David G. 6/3/2013. 2.50am

Hi Brad and Liam. We have all showered now and smell quite nice.

Shane. 5/3/2013. 2.50pm

wow Nicole! you did it! I was so proud of you when I saw you standing on the mountain top of Kalar Pattar.

You and your team look pretty tough n rugged in the photo of you all by the plane.

Very inspiring. Mom has been excited to hear all your news when I passed it on and is proud of you also!

Give a big thnx to your team leader from me - I really appreciated the blogs and being able to be part of your exciting adventure!

shano

Rod B. 5/3/2013 3.49pm

What's this the trekking has ended what am i too read now i enjoyed your blogs (oh well all good things come to an end). Well done Dave on getting a great adventure together and pulling it off successfully and everyone in your team unknown to each other before this pull together and achieve their dreams. Go and enjoy your RnR you have all earned it.

Leanne. 7/3/2013. 12.06am

Enjoy your R & R, glad that you all made it back down safely.

Looking forward to your stories & pictures when you get back.

Amazing!!!! What an adventure - again! Take care.

David G. 7/3/2013. 3.58am

Hi

This Leanne J? Thanks mate. Lets do a catch-up when we get back.

Leanne. 8/3/2013. 1.54pm

No, Leanne K (Tim's better half!!) - gee the altitude must have gotten to you. Hope you recover from your throat infection as we all need to be able to hear how it all went. Rest up!!!

David. 7/3/2013. R&R in Pokhara

Ok, so I'm hearing some of you are asking where we are and what we've been doing.

Sorry for going quite...!!

After our successful return to Kathmandu from Lukla, we quickly organised an escape to lovely Pokhara (Nepal's 2nd largest city) for some well earned R&R&R (recovery from illness). Only the 5 of us Vic's as the QLD lads had spent some days down there before the trek. We booked a van to drive us down there and set off last Tuesday for the 5 1/2hr drive through the real country of Nepal.

By now, we had all come down with the chest and throat infection that young Andrew had been battling throughout the trek. We decided to buy some no brand cough syrup and pumped some double dose into each of us for the drive down. Result? Greg, Ray and I almost knocked out cold for much of the drive...! No warnings on the syrup, but we suspect it may have been one of those night time formulas that put you to sleep.

The next day I had totally lost my voice (more humour for Ray). Greg and Ray perhaps not quite as bad. Nicole still battling a bad cough, and Sue at this stage spared of any symptoms.

All 5 of us had a terrific paraglide yesterday afternoon from one of the high peaks above Pokhara. Brilliant. Due to ongoing Maoist strikes throughout the country, most main roads were blocked and closed yesterday, so the paragliding company had to drive us to the top of the mountain via an alternative "secret" track. We were seated in one 4 wheel drive with an all up 16 on board...! Yep, 6 in the dual cab, 6 in the rear ute, 2 hanging from the back and 2 from the sides, all edging the vehicle on and climbing steeply on switchbacks for 45min....! Wow...! Finally we got to the top, met our pilots, buckled in and commenced our 30-40min flying like a bird back down. All of us loved it.

We flew back to Kat this morning (30min flight) only to find another political party had called its own strike in Kathmandu...! Again, no shops open and limited taxi services. This makes a total of 3 days of crippling strikes since we have been here. Lucky we hadn't planned to do much today anyway.

We again tried to bring forward our departure from Saturday to tomorrow but still no available seats, so further rest and recovery tomorrow.

Hoping we can continue to gain some strength and recovery overnight.

Brian@Weeroona. 7/3/2013. 3.42am

Fancy sleeping on that trip to Pokhara and missing all that scenery. A mix of cough mixture and simple tiredness sounds like a potent mix to overcome insomnia!

And it's a shame that you have visited when there have been so many strikes but it sounds like it's not an uncommon occurrence these days. For a day with a difference, have you considered going to the Tibetan Refugee Camp? I went there twice to visit the Jawalakhel Handicrafts

Ekantakuna Road Patan 44700, Nepal

Google maps link,

<http://goo.gl/maps/CenUZ>

I bought my carpets from them and they shipped them home for me.

The Zoo is on the same road but it was a very sad place when I saw it and I don't think it would have improved, not a place that I would recommend to visit.

Anyway, I hope you recover sufficiently to make the most of your last day in Kathmandu.

Peter C. 8/3/2013. 8.24am

Have really enjoyed following your adventures - paragliding now, is there no end to what 60 plus seniors will get up to!! Don't think I will ever hang it on Ray again!! Have your swimmers handy when you hit Melbourne town as it is going to be 36 degrees on Monday. Fishing still crap (too hot) and by the way we have a new Premier - Dr Dennis Napthine. Big Ted chucked it in (long story). Hope you are all starting to feel better soon - sounds like Sue is super fit.

Wayne. 8/3/2013. 10.26am

I am picturing 16 in a vehicle. Lucky no one threw up, eh Bill!! Hope you recover from your illnesses before you get home so you don't bring mad yak disease into Australia. Catch up shortly.

David. 10/3/2013. Back in Bangkok



Sue with our favourite driver & great mate Laxman. Last night in Kat.

Always (ALWAYS) a sad farewell to Nepal, particularly for those who have grown to Love her.

Last night, we offered to take our favourite driver Laxman out for dinner. His choice for restaurant. He selected a traditional Nepalese restaurant outside the Thamel area. Nice night.

Laxman drove us to airport today and it was a sad farewell before departing for Bangkok. We were anticipating a few fun hours in Bangkok and a bit of sleep before awakening and departing on our 8.15am Melbourne flight in the morning, but I guess you can get jet lagged after a 3hr flight because most of the team were too tired to do anything when we got here....! A quick walk up and down one of the night markets and that was it...! Perhaps not a bad thing given our alarms are set for 4.45am.

Illness report.

Greg. Almost recovered

Me. Slowly recovering

Nicole. Gone backwards a few notches..!

Wayne. 10/3/2013

I noticed there was no mention of Ray on the illness list. Says something for home brew.

David G. 12/3/2013. 2013 trip blog completed



David.
Melbourne

"Team 13"



John.
Cairns.



Carl.
Gold Coast



Greg.
Melbourne.



Andrew.
Gold Coast



Ryan.
Gold Coast



Nicole.
Melbourne



Ray.
Melbourne



Sue.
Bairnsdale