

# What's the Rush?

BY CHRIS "DOUGGS" MCDOUGALL



**t**he crazy hustle and bustle of modern society everyone seems to be in a rush to get things done, often with tunnel vision and forgetting to take a moment and a breath to enjoy the beauty of everything that surrounds them.

BASE jumping seems to be no exception. With the vast improvements in gear technology and open-book knowledge, the evolution of BASE jumping has moved in leaps and bounds in the last 10 years. But it seems the human element of BASE jumping is suffering in increasing de-evolution, with a new generation of jumpers coming through who have little regard for the underlying ethics that essentially built the sport of BASE jumping over the last 30 years.

It begs me to ask the question...What's the rush????

When I started BASE jumping it was simply the thrill of getting off an object, taking in as much as possible, opening the parachute, and landing safely. The basic act of jumping from an object and freefalling was the rush, and a big one at that!

There was no rush to do crazy aerobatics mimicked from other people. There was no rush to go to other people's countries and jump stuff beyond our limits, and there was no rush to go and fly the tightest lines with the biggest wingsuits (once they came out).

So what has changed? Is it YouTube? Is it the BASE courses that have taken over from the long-term mentorship or is it the fact that the cloak-and-dagger era of BASE jumping is mostly over? I think it is a mixture of everything and it is getting worse...

So what's the rush? Why is everyone super keen to throw a gainer just after they finish their U.S. BASE course? Why do people want to start out tracking ledges when they only learned to track during their Norwegian BASE course? Why do people want to jump the biggest wingsuit and fly the tightest line after only a handful of wingsuit skydives? Why are people in such a rush when they can simply go and enjoy the rush from the amazing act of doing a basic BASE jump from an object?

I know this isn't true for every single new BASE jumper, but I—and other people who have been in the sport for a while—see more and more people jumping well beyond their limits.

In places like Lauterbrunnen, Switzerland, at Twin Falls in the U.S., and at the KL Tower in Malaysia, there are more rescues and near misses than ever before and it is always due to jumpers' human error, lack of preparation, execution, and respect for themselves and the sport.

You ask, why I am ranting?

There is nothing worse than witnessing the death of a jumper and it's not much better watching someone get injured when it could have been



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easily prevented. It not only leaves emotional scars on the jumpers or whuffos at the scene who have to deal with it but it affects and traumatizes the family and friends forever of the jumper involved. And it affects BASE jumping worldwide in an era when it is slowly getting into the mainstream as an accepted sport. But it seems for every step forward there are two steps backward due to human error, lack of respect, and wanting so badly to be cool on the Internet.

So how can we fix this? Well, telling someone they can't do something won't work at all. I am a punk too and if someone tells me not to do something I will be the first to tell them to f@ck off and I will go and do it anyway!!

But I think as a whole, the BASE community can help spread the word to people coming in that there is no rush. Leave some jumps for the following year. Leave some skills for the following year so you can perfect the ones you have just learned. Aim for longevity in the sport and still aim for self-greatness but also remember...Rome wasn't built in a day and no one gives a f@ck about you after you're dead. Only your Facebook page will remain.

And most of all, instead of being in a rush... Enjoy the rush! Enjoy the rush of exiting an object and taking in all the beauty in front of you as well as the peripheral visuals. Enjoy being hypersensitive to each and every jump you do within your limits rather than the tunnel vision you will get by jumping beyond your limits just so you can look

cool on YouTube.

Doing a jump in a controlled and safe manner is very noticeable and you will gain much more respect from other jumpers around the world by acting responsibly and thus helping to grow the sport in a positive way in a time when we are about to experience some growing pains.

Remember this sport is a personal sport; you don't need to be as good or better than the top guys who make the things they do look easy. Ten years of preparation don't fit into a 10-minute YouTube video.

And most of all, keep skydiving! All the major aspects of BASE jumping come from skydiving. It is the safest way to practice all disciplines of BASE jumping and it is a hell of a lot of fun!

Jump for yourself and enjoy the rush because we are dead a long time! ☘

Shine on,  
Douggs

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

Chris "Douggs" McDougall is one of the most experienced, hard-core BASE jumpers on the planet, and the author of the book "Confessions of an Idiot: A Colourful Tale of a Life in Freefall." Douggs' BASE jumping, speedflying, paragliding, climbing and surfing missions have taken him around the world 100 times over...and it's all been captured on camera. Watch it all at [www.basedreams.com](http://www.basedreams.com).

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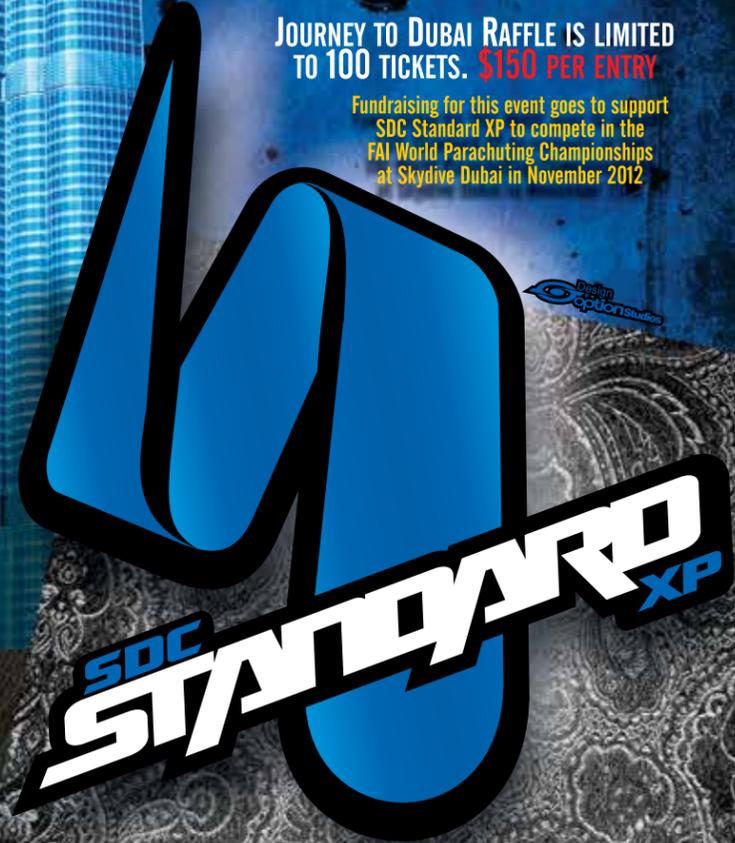
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