

# Bush runners 'win'

A GUTSY team from Berowra has overcome illness and fatigue to win the 2004 Oxfam Trailwalker Sydney.

The Berowra Bush Runners - Ted West, David Cannings, Chris Graham and Richard Green - completed the 100km gruelling event in 15 hours and 17 minutes, just 11 minutes ahead of the second-placed team.

At 54, Mr West is the oldest member of the team and he courageously competed while suffering from physical illness as a result of the run.

In the second half of the event he went without food or drinks because he couldn't keep anything down.

"I was running on empty from about Crosslands to Manly," he said.

"We all did it tough except for Richard this year."

Not surprisingly getting to the finish line was a big relief.

"You get so much emotion going," Mr West said. "You are happy, you are excited and you are buggered."

Mr West and Mr Cannings have been competing in the event since it started six years ago and their previous best result was second place.

"We have all been friends for quite a while," Mr West said.

"We have run together for years and we just love running and we love running in the bush."

Mr West's wife Joy and another supporter met the team every 5km to provide them with vital supplies, from drinks to bandages.

"Without them we couldn't do it," Mr West said.

Mr Cannings had only re-

turned from a trip to the United States 48 hours before the start of the event.

"It was draining on me quite physically," Mr Cannings said. "After about two hours I was feeling the heat."

"It's the spirit of comradeship that just picks you up so much and just drives you along."

Over 380 teams of four left the grounds of Hunters Hill High School in two staggered starts on Friday morning. All had the goal of completing the event within 48 hours.

They experienced warm and humid conditions as they trekked through some of Sydney's most challenging and beautiful bushland - including Crosslands Reserve, Bobbin Head, Mt Kuring-gai and St Ives.

The event raises funds for Oxfam Community Aid Abroad.