

# Soaked Abbott wins 50km trek

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MORE than 200 people, including Opposition leader Tony Abbott, got up before sunrise on Friday to do a gruelling 50km or 100km coastal trek for charity.

The walk, which started at Palm Beach and continued down the northern beaches and past Balmoral before ending at Coogee, was organised by Mosman-based adventure business Wild Women on Top (WWOT).

Teams were made up of four to six people and in the true spirit of WWOT, at least 50 per cent of teams were female.

Mr Abbott won the 50km trek with team members, Federal Member for Macarthur Pat Farmer MP, former member for Lindsay Jackie Clark, and Federal Member for Farrer Susan Ley.

"I'm buggered," Mr Abbott said when he crossed the 50km finish line

at Balmoral at 10hours11min9secs, soaked by the rain.

"It's been a hard day. I never thought it would take so long."

While Ms Clark had her blistered feet attended to by volunteers from St Luke's, Mr Farmer said the team would do the 100km trek next year.

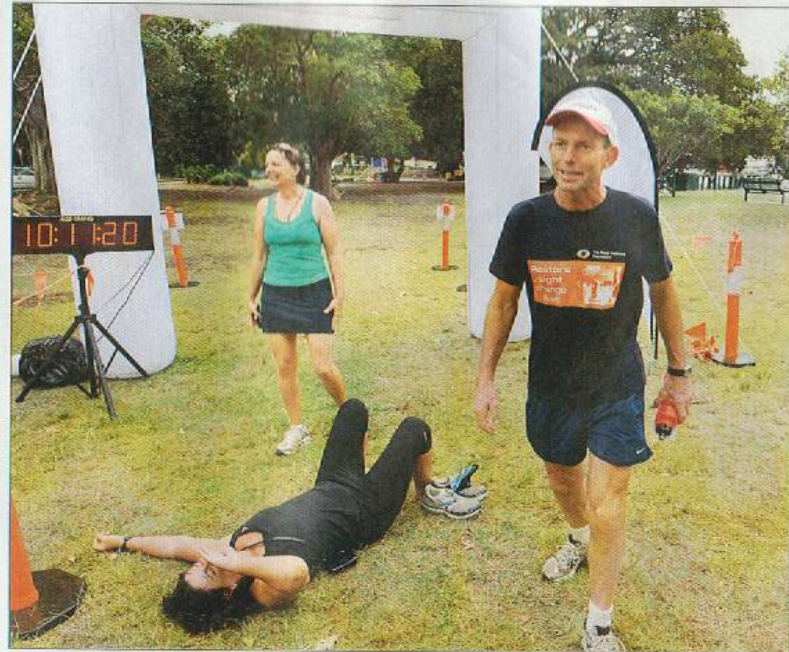
About \$180,000 was raised for the Fred Hollows Foundation, more than double the amount they had aimed for, according to WWOT managing director Diane Westaway.

"We were thrilled," she said.

Due to the rain, not all teams made it past the 100km finish line.

"The rain made it difficult and it was particularly hard for the teams from interstate to find their way to all the checkpoints in the dark," Ms Westaway said. "About 15 teams finished and the winning all-female team knew the route well."

The winning team arrived at Coogee at 2.15am on Saturday after a 20hour15min walk.



Tony Abbott and his political colleagues walked 50km from Palm Beach to Balmoral in support of the Fred Hollows Foundation.

Picture: Dave Swift -/AP/336

