

Running the Wall non-stop for little Callum

Runners glad to finish their 84-mile trip

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TRIED but triumphant, runners Matt Atkinson and Phil Smith finally arrived at Wall-sender after running the length of Hadrian's Wall.

The pair set off on Saturday night to attempt the 84-mile non-stop slog from Bowness in Cumbria to North Tyneside.

And at the end of their feat they met the youngster who made it all worthwhile, Callum Brown.

Matt and Phil were raising money to help the disabled seven-year-old achieve his wish to walk.

Callum, of Seaton Sluice, Northumberland, is desperate to take his first

proper steps but as a diplegic cerebral palsy sufferer, his legs and hips have both been affected by the condition.

Determined to help their son, parents Sharon and Neil Brown have set about raising the £50,000 needed to take him to the US where medics can carry out the surgery needed to correct problems in his legs.

But they now estimate they'll need at least £70,000 to take into account all the post-op physiotherapy.

Callum's friend and fellow cerebral palsy sufferer Archie Anderson, six, has already had the procedure and is recovering well.

Matt, the director of Clear Data in Blyth, was inspired to attempt the challenge after speaking to Callum's grandmother Sue, who he works with.

"We wanted to do something different as we know how much money Callum needs," said the 41-year-old, who lives in Great Park, Newcastle, with wife Christine and daughter Millie, eight.

"I have a daughter of about the same age so I really felt for him.

"My nephew also has the same condition, although much less severe, and my father is disabled. I have grown up with understanding those limitations."

Matt and Phil, a 35-year-old father-of-two from Ashington who works as a physiotherapist, are both ex-military but still had to train hard.

"The only way you can do it is to concentrate on running the next 10 miles or so to the support car where there will be a drink and food," Matt said.

Also pushing himself to the limit for Callum yesterday was Newcastle United footballer Robbie Elliott.

The defender took part in the 200-mile Reason to Ride challenge with 15 others, cycling from Edinburgh to Newcastle in a day.

Organised by GB athlete Joanna Reed, a 37-year-old mum-of-three, of Gosforth, Newcastle, the cyclists set off at 4am yesterday to reach the finish line at the David Lloyd gym in South

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SUCCESS Callum with Phil Smith, Matt Atkinson and Lee Grant

FOOTBALL DAY

KIND hearted Newcastle fans have organised a charity football day in Callum's honour.

Callum's mum Sharon, a learning support assistant at Percy Hedley Foundation, said: "The fundraising is going really well and we've had some fantastic events."

"Callum is a massive football fan and wants to be a goalkeeper for Newcastle. That's all he wants to do."

"The Newcastle United fans from the Facebook banter page approached me to say they wanted to help Callum, which is great."

The fancy dress five-a-side football tournament and family fun day will be held on July 29 from 11am to 6pm at the Montagu Estate Residents' Association.

Organiser Gareth Harrison

said: "Everyone has been very supportive and we have some great prizes on offer."

"There is a meal for two, a bottle of wine and a £25 drinks voucher at the Prince of Wales pub, Sutherland's The Venue in Windy Nook has donated an overnight stay and a Sunday lunch for four and Hollywood Nails in the Metrocentre has donated two £25 vouchers."

Entry to the tournament is £20 per team, with a trophy and prize for the winners. All teams must have a fancy dress theme.

All money raised will go straight to Callum's Wish to Walk charity fund.

If any local businesses would like to contribute to the event, or host a stall to sell their goods, contact Gareth Harrison on 07800 552036.

Gosforth. There, they met up with Matt, Phil and Callum to celebrate their achievements. Callum's Wish To Walk total now stands at £49,000, but it should soar past that when the cyclists' and runners' sponsorship comes in.

As she set off, Joanna, a sports coach

who is part of the GB triathlon team, said: "I am really lucky to be able to do the things I can do and I thought if I can use my legs to help a little boy use his, then I will."

You can donate at www.justgiving.com/wall/bangers or www.justgiving.com/reasontoride