

ON RUN FOR CHARITY

By chief reporter COREENA FORD

● coreena.ford@ncjmedia.co.uk
Telephone: 0191 201 6331

TELLY presenter Ben Shephard is bracing himself for blisters as he and his best friends run FIVE marathons for charity.

The former GMTV host set off from Whitehaven in Cumbria yesterday on the first of five mammoth runs which will see the trio of friends cover 145 miles before arriving in Tynemouth, North Tyneside, on Wednesday.

He is taking part in the gruelling Coast to Coast crossing to raise funds for the two charities which gave unwavering support to his best friends when their sons needed it . . . and the pals – Ivan Hollingsworth and Andrew Roberts – will be running alongside him too.

Ben, 35, said: "Whitehaven to Tynemouth, west coast to east coast, 145 miles in five days, is quite possibly the most ridiculous and most painful thing I have ever tried to do."

The presenter, who left GMTV last Friday, will raise money for the Cystic Fibrosis Trust to help children like pal Andrew Roberts' son Ethan, three, who suffers from the illness.

He will also be fundraising for the Children's Heart Fund Unit at Newcastle's Freeman Hospital, where his

Star joins pal to raise vital cash

friend Ivan's son Seb needed a life-saving operation.

Seb, now 18 months old, was diagnosed with a major congenital heart condition soon after he was born last year and just under four months later needed open heart surgery.

Ivan, 35, is a former competitive athlete of some standing, so he has thrown himself into fundraising campaigns and this year alone plans to complete the Great North Run after the Coast to Coast, having already completed the London Marathon.

Ben will do well to keep pace with Ivan, of Whitley Bay, North Tyneside, who used to compete for Wallsend and Morpeth Harriers. Ivan scored many successes at the half marathon and was the leading North East finisher in the 2002 Great North Run, coming home in 21st place.

His other pal Andrew, of Chester-le-Street, County Durham, will be joined on the run by wife Catherine.

Ben said: "Why am I doing it? For children like Seb and Ethan.



MARATHON MEN: From left, Ivan Hollingsworth, Ben Shephard and Andrew Roberts in training.

"These two gorgeous children mean the world to us and both have to experience at times terrible pain, discomfort and uncertain futures.

"To run 145 miles in five days which will undoubtedly be painful, incredibly uncomfortable and mentally brutal, is a small price to pay to celebrate the lives, bravery and resilience of

Seb, Ethan and thousands of children like them around the country.

"Please come and see us on the journey, we'd love to meet you, run with you, and maybe borrow some spare knees if you have any because ours will be wrecked by then."

The trio were among scores setting off from Whitehaven yesterday af-

ternoon, waved off by supporters, and on Thursday, the day after they reach the finish line, they will dust off their tuxedos for a charity Black Tie Ball at Gateshead Hilton Hotel, where Denise Welch and Tim Healy will try to raise even more money.

To make a donation visit www.Seb4chuf.org.uk.

Before



After



Dovetail
Dental Solutions

Free
consultation

Transform your smile in just one day

At Dovetail we understand the importance of your smile and the impact it has on your self-confidence. Our patients tell us the about the devastating effect that being too embarrassed to smile or eat or even talk in public has on their social life and relationships. Sadly, it is often the most nervous patients who delay having treatment and who suffer the most.

Thanks to proven implant technology we can replace existing teeth, or dentures, with new fixed teeth in just one day, greatly reducing the stress on our patients and removing the need to wear a denture during treatment.

So if your teeth are making your life miserable let us put a smile on your face in just one day - arrange your FREE consultation today.