The Sepik’s last white ironman team

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I BELIEVE it was David Andrew de Berigny Wall who said “I have a dream”. Wall was then thinking aloud about the Sepik Ironman – a true challenge for a man of 75 years! Alas, Dave, the dream is over. Seven or eight years ago, the whitemen of Wewak decided to make a statement. Four of them were over 60. Their message was simple: “We are senior citizens, we can also compete. We are long-term Sepik residents, we can’t win but we can take part”. Sadly, 2011 will prove to be their last ironman.

Of the early participants, Ian Boatwood now lives in the US; Dieter Idzikowsky (72) died on Wewak golf course in January; and Peter Johnson, 73, a cancer survivor, ran his last 5km at 70. Chris Rose, 62, and Bill Humphrey, 58, tried to keep the light burning but they ended up needing Theo and Pious, two teenage Sepiks. A determined ex-Sepik from Sydney, Dave Wall, wanted to join them but was denied because some stupid idiots left a trail of broken beer bottles along the Boram airstrip. The last white ironmen team has passed on.

Peter Johnson
Wewak