

### Dutch veteran walks barefoot



- 1 Dutch Afghanistan veteran Anton Nootboom completed a 3,000-kilometer monster trek through Australia on Sunday. The “Barefoot Dutchman” from Goes in Zeeland who emigrated to Australia in 2015, walked an average of 25 kilometers a day for five months and raised 75 thousand Australian dollars (48 thousand euros) for men’s mental health. “It has been quite a walk,” Nootboom said. “It was unbelievably heavy, especially because of all the stones that stick to your feet. People were a bit disappointed when they saw the soles of my feet because they still looked very good, but actually they were broken and bruised within.”
- 2 Nootboom faced some mental problems and found relief in walking barefoot. “But also, by talking about it. You notice that there is a taboo among veterans on discussing their feelings. I made the trip to draw attention to this.” Nootboom walked barefoot to increase publicity. “A normal 3,000-kilometer trip attracts much less publicity. I didn’t practise for it. Nothing can prepare you for such a trip. I wanted to show that you can do anything if you set your mind to it.” The journey took him from Cairns in the north of Australia to right outside his front door in Sydney and earned him two Guinness World Records, including one for the longest barefoot journey. A few hundred people walked the last kilometers with him. “I am incredibly wrecked, I will not do anything for the next two or three weeks but rest and recover,” Nootboom said.

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