

# Mines face off on the green

**MORE** than \$20,000 in funds was raised by Gunnedah businesses earlier this month to support a vital life saving service provided by the Westpac Rescue Helicopter in our region.

The fifth annual Mining and Suppliers Charity Bowls Day came down to a classic showdown between Whitehaven and Shenhua bowls teams - the latter winning by a whisker.

"We were 2-1 up at one stage," Whitehaven bowler Chad Griffiths recalled.

"But we ended up getting beaten 3-2 on the last end.

"We were definitely the underdogs... they had a pretty crack team," he joked.

"It certainly had the crowd excited."

Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service community liaison officer for the New England-North West region, Michael Wilson, was stunned by the Gunnedah business community's support of the event.

"Everyone has been blown away by their generosity," Wilson said.

The funds raised will go directly to support ongoing operational roles provided by the service in the area.

"Last year it performed 257 jobs in our region alone so that money will go a long way to help the service in the sky again this year."

The rescue helicopter's Gunnedah Volunteer Support Group secretary, Gwenda Edmonds, said the importance of the service could not be understated.

"Funds will help ensure that no one will ever have to pay to be transported, a fact that the community and the service are very proud of," she said.

A full complement of 28 teams comprising 84 players played for the perpetual trophy.

Four teams played off in the final with the grand final played between the Whitehaven No2 team and the Shenhua No3 team.

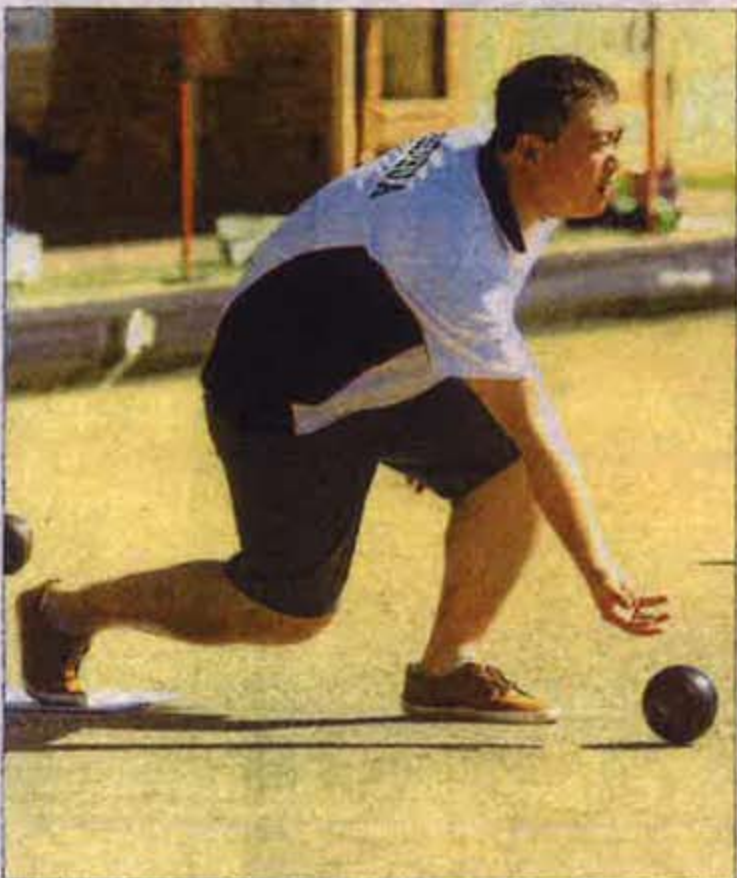
Organisers thanked major sponsors Aurizon, Whitehaven, Boggabri Coal, Mackellar Excavations, TOLL, Pacific National and Gunnedah Service and Bowling Club, all event sponsors and supporting sponsors as well as the players.



SAM Snape and Sarah Shields discuss scores during the bowls day.



KEIRON Rochester sends another down.



JOEL Zhao rolls one down during the charity bowls day earlier this month.



REPRESENTING Shenhua from left to right are Wayne Black, Warren Keep and John Buckley with Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service General Manager Richard Jones.