



### **Stratton Woman Battles Illness In Hope Of Making It To Join Mad March Hare Run**

JUDE Rouse will line up for her first taste of the Mad March Hare if her body allows her, as she sets out on a three-week spell of radiotherapy to combat her breast cancer. The 60-year-old Nationwide support analyst, of Towcester Road, Stratton, has been a runner for much of her life, with 14 marathons to her name and countless training miles on the road. However, Jude was diagnosed with breast cancer last August, and following a successful pair of operations in the autumn, must now set out on a course of radiotherapy which might leave her body too weak for the 10km run on March 23. The treatment begins next Monday and will run until February 14, giving her five weeks and two days to prepare for the challenge at Lydiard Park Academy, which is organised in aid of breast cancer. "If I can do it I will be over the moon," she said. "Obviously, whether I will be able to do it, I don't know. At the moment that's got to be my aim. "I marshalled the event last year because I had a knee injury. Ten kilometres is not mega-far for me, so as long as I am feeling okay, I will be there on the start-line." Jude has compared her three weeks of radiotherapy with winning the lottery. The cancer was caught early by a routine mammogram on August 8, which was followed swiftly by operations on September 30 and October 21. Check-ups followed the procedures and practitioners have told Jude that 15 lots of treatment across three weeks should be enough to stave off the disease. "I do feel like I've won the lottery with only three weeks of radiotherapy," she said. "I was borderline chemotherapy, which is such a long process. "I definitely avoided the worst. I know other people that are going through it. It is such a tough time for people. I feel lucky to have caught it so early." Jude's husband died in November 1998 - an event in her life which, she said, motivated her to run more and become fitter than ever. There followed seven separate London Marathons among the 14 she has done in total. She has continued to run whenever possible between the illnesses and operations that have dogged the past 12 months of her life. "At the beginning of 2013 I knew there was something wrong with my knee. I had to have keyhole surgery at the end of April, which forced me to have three months away from running," said Jude, a member of Swindon Striders Running Club. "I was up and running in July, slowly building up to four-mile runs, when I had the mammogram in August, which stopped me again. "I have been trying to get back running since my October operation, because the way I see it, the fitter I can get the better it will be for me. "I was up to six miles on a run last week."

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