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Cancer survivor Ali will tackle tough bike challenge for charity



Ali Mills, who is doing the Fred Whitton Cycle Challenge for Macmillan.

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KEEN cyclist Ali Mills has set herself one of the UK's toughest biking challenges - in honour of a charity which helped during her battle with cancer.

Ali, of Palace House Road, Hebden Bridge, was diagnosed with ovarian cancer at the age of 26.

Fortunately the cancer had not spread when it was caught by doctors, but Ali, now 36, had to have two lots of surgery, including a hysterectomy.

Now she is back to full health, Ali has decided to take on the renowned Fred Whitton Challenge in the Lake District to raise money for Macmillan Nurses.

"I had a bit of a tummy ache which was investigated and they found a tumour.

"I was lucky. It hadn't spread when they caught it, but it would have done over time.

"It's known as the silent killer because usually there are no symptoms until it's already spread somewhere else.

"You don't really expect it at the age of 26.

"It took a while to build up my strength again.

"The Macmillan team were really helpful and supported me enormously.

"They also helped me financially, helping a bit towards my rent.

"That's why I wanted to raise for them - to pay them back.

“They’re still on hand for me.

“I can speak to them at any time.

“They’re invaluable. I had some counselling through them about a year later.

“You don’t forget it. They are an amazing team of people.”

The Fred Whitton Challenge takes place on Sunday May 13 and involves 112 miles through the mountainous region - with a gruelling 12,000ft of climbs.

It starts and finishes at Coniston, and the route includes the climbs of Kirkstone, Honister, Newlands, Whinlatter, Hardknott and Wrynose passes.

Ali said: “I’ve been cycling for two years.

“I was sporty as a kid but typically in my 20s I didn’t really do anything.

“Then I discovered cycling and really enjoyed it.

“I’m looking forward to it now.

“There’s been so much training towards it, I’m exhausted.

“I’d just quite like to do it now.

“I’m hoping I will enjoy it.

“I feel like I’m strong enough to do it.

“I reckon I could probably do it in about nine and half or ten hours.

“And hopefully it doesn’t rain!”

To support Ali on her mammoth cycling challenge visit <http://www.justgiving.com/millsphysio>.

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