

Birthday test as Sally takes on marathon

FINAL preparations are being made with the London Marathon just a couple of weeks away. Brentwood will be strongly represented and this week two more runners shared their reasons for taking the challenge with **Iain Johnson**

MARATHON day will be a memorable one for Sally Thomson, who marks her 35th birthday on race day.

Coincidentally, 35 is the number of miles Sally, of Gresham Road, Brentwood, clocks up in training each week.

The mum-of-two is feeling "lucky and excited" to have secured a ballot place for the race and is running for the Helen Rollason Heal Cancer Charity.

She said: "When the acceptance letter dropped on my doormat last October, I just could not believe it as it was only my second time of applying."

Battles

Sally's dad, John, has fought four separate battles with cancer after initially being diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma in 1996.

She said: "I decided to fund raise for Helen Rollason as my father has used the charity's support centres in the past.

"He is currently battling another one which has caused other issues with his health.

"The strength I see in my dad though is just amazing and he will be on my mind the entire race, as he is most of my waking day."

Running and motherhood dominate Sally's life and she cannot wait for the big day.

"I'm really looking forward to the event and have very much enjoyed my training and, yes, even those long runs. It's all part of the challenge.

"Belonging to the Thrift Green



BIRTHDAY GIRL: Sally Thomson

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Trotters in Brentwood has been a massive help and I am really not sure I could have got to where I am now without them.

"I completed the Brentwood half-marathon a couple of weeks ago, achieving a time of an hour and 39 minutes, so in theory I could achieve a time of 3 hours 40 minutes in the London Marathon but in truth I am aiming for sub-four hours."

Sally's dad is recovering from an operation and will not be well enough to make the big day, but she will be straight on the phone

to him after the race.

"I know he is very proud of me. I will be 35 on the marathon day itself and wow what a way to celebrate it this year.

"I will experience the entire range of emotions but I will always remember the elation of crossing that finish line, hopefully."

She is hoping to raise £2,000 for the charity, which operates a network of support centres in Essex. ■ To sponsor her visit www.virginmoneygiving.com/SallyThomson.