

# Back in the saddle – the woman they thought might not ride for years



**SPEEDY RECOVERY:** Marian Coutts with her horse Red. Inset, in her first competition since her accident.

Picture by Kevin Brady/No163531

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A WOMAN who was seriously injured in a horse riding accident has defied doctors' diagnosis by getting back in the saddle after making an amazing recovery.

Marian Coutts fell off her horse when competing in a dressage competition in Northumberland last October. Her pelvis was broken in six places and she suffered massive internal injuries when her horse, called Just Rodney, fell on top of her.

Medics told the 26-year-old it would take at least a year for her to recover – but she was walking within three months and returned to work six months after the accident.

Now Marian, an accountant with the Durham Aged Miners Homes, is competing in equestrian events again and has helped raise £3,500 for

the Great North Air Ambulance Appeal which saved her life after her accident.

She was airlifted to Newcastle General Hospital, where she spent 10 days in intensive care after her half-tonne Irish draught thoroughbred horse rolled on top of her.

The journey took the helicopter just seven minutes, but would have taken more than 45 minutes by road.

To thank the air ambulance service, Marian, of The Broadway, Sunderland, and fellow dressage competitors raised cash for the charity.

Speaking about her amazing recovery Marian said: "The doctors are over the moon.

"They said I wouldn't be back at work for at least a year,



"The events were also to raise awareness and it's just a crucial service.

"I don't think we could do without it."

Miss Coutts wanted to thank all the medical staff who saved her and helped in her rehabilitation.

Marian has sold Rodney since the accident to a friend, but is continuing to ride on her other horse, Red, a 16.2 hands high dutch warmblood, stabled at Cold Hesledon near Murton.

She took part in two of the three dressage days at Houghall College she organised to raise funds and is planning a further winter series during the next three months.

The money was also raised through a cabaret night she organised at Durham County Cricket Club in Chester-le-Street last month.

but I was back in five months.

"It's been very hard, but I've made a lot of friends along the way. The physios at Sunderland Royal Hospital were just fantastic.

"I was back on a horse in May and competed for the first time in September. But if it wasn't for the air ambulance I don't think I'd be here today.

"I don't think people realise it's not Government-funded.