

My Birth Story by Nicola Massieu-Cowlard

Tuesday 16th May 2006

It was late on Tuesday when I was just about to get ready for bed when I got the big surprise! Kevin was busy at work still (no surprises there then) when I went to the loo to do my obligatory 'wee' before bedtime, and found that – hold on a moment – I was sure I'd finished – what's going on?? OH MY GOD!! My waters had broken unexpectedly!! It was midnight.

Wednesday 17 May 2006

I phoned Kevin, who rushed home, then phoned Bournemouth Hospital. They advised that I go straight to Poole Hospital. So whilst Kevin was making his way from the Studio at 120 mph no doubt (in his Subaru, of course!) I was frantically packing my hospital bag! We arrived at Poole around 0130 hrs. They did lots of checks on me, gave me the first of two steroid injections to speed up the development of the babies lungs as well as some antibiotics as I was now in danger and at high risk of getting an infection. We were then told that Poole had no special care cots available and I was going to be transferred to Dorchester Hospital.

As things had gone very quiet and there were no signs of any contractions etc, Kevin went home and I was ambulated to Dorchester in no longer than 20 mins! Very quick! On arrival into the Maternity Unit at around 0400hrs, I was made to feel very welcome. It soon became apparent to me that this hospital had fantastic facilities and a Maternity Unit that was second-to-none. After some rest I was visited by the consultant who went through some basics with me. I was sent for a scan to check on the twins' growth and positions in the womb. There was some concern over the size of Twin 2 and for this reason they wished to keep me at the hospital for at least 6 days. For the rest of the day there were no developments or changes! Most bizarre!

Thursday 18 May 2006

Again no change all day. Kevin dropped by again in the evening and we were given a tour of the Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU). This unit is absolutely fantastic and it was after this tour that we decided that we wanted the birth and care of our twins to remain in Dorchester, which was organised.

Friday 19 May 2006

Friday morning, 9am, doctors did their rounds. I was feeling pretty much the same as the previous 2 days. There was talk of perhaps me being discharged and having to go back for checks every other day, but it was agreed to leave it a couple more days to see what happened. I was put on the baby heart monitoring system - all normal. Well, normal for these twins was that their heart beats were practically the same all the time - and apparently this is unusual – so they gave the staff a real challenge because it was vital to establish 2 heart beats!

HOWEVER – at 1030 hrs, it was all changing. Severe back ache and pains under the bump – to the point where it was becoming really quite uncomfortable. I was in the initial phases of labour! HECK!! Get Kevin in quick!! How sudden – all the changes – madness!! Back they put me on the monitor at 1100hrs and yes, there it was – contractions now showing. Kevin was called at 12.30 and arrived at around 13.00hrs. I was offered Gas and Air for pain relief. This stuff is Bloody Marvellous!! At least it works for me and that's all that mattered!

Lunchtime came and went for me – Kevin took advantage of my condition (!) and ate my lunch!! Good job I was on the ball and didn't order Spaghetti Carbonara with Ice cream for dessert!! By 1300hrs, only 1cm dilated, but like clockwork, it was 1cm an hour, so by 4pm I was told I was in 'established labour' – 4cm dilated! At this point, the doctor decided to fit a small electric probe on the head of 'Twin one' which would monitor, without any doubt, this twin's heartbeat and Twin two

would be monitored via ultrasound/scan. The contractions were very regular, but the gas and air was superb. The midwife who had been assigned to me, Jo, was excellent and made Kevin and I feel very reassured at every stage of the labour whilst she was with us. 1800hrs – a visit from the Anaesthetist. Long discussions took place about epidurals and spinals. We decided that due to the situation and the fact that Twin Two was breech, we would agree to an epidural to reduce risk. Kevin, again took advantage of the food arriving for me.

The hours passed by, the contractions getting stronger and more regular, until about 2300hrs when the Anaesthetist came to fit the epidural. I was 10cm dilated by then – without going into too many details, I had to sit on the side of the bed and lean forward, in order to open the vertebrae in my back – this sounds very easy, unless of course you suddenly get the urge to push – SHIT!! Not now, I'm not allowed. It took everything I had not to lose control and push like crazy!! I did, in fact, push twice but all was okay.

2330hrs – Down we were led to theatre, and en route, I was rather sick – to put it mildly!! Either an after-affect of the epidural or just a reaction after nearly 12 hours of gas and air – not sure! Anyhow, Kevin was kitted out in his 'Green Wing' theatre overalls, head gear etc. Really fetching – not!! They transferred me onto the birthing bed, legs in stirrups (most undignified) and at midnight the fun started!!

The epidural had been administered perfectly, with just enough anaesthetic to numb the pain, but not too much that I lost all feeling from the waste down!! I was totally aware of the contractions!! So, after 15 mins and a few big pushes along the way, Oscar Edward was born at 0015hrs! Kevin says he shot out like a bar of soap (!) but he did need a bit of Forceps assistance. I was then told to relax (!) for a while so that I could be scanned to ascertain the position of Twin 2. After lots of prodding around, it was confirmed that this baby was in the breech position and I was told that I should push with the next contractions – well, it didn't take too long!! At 0032hrs and again with some help from our 'Forceps Friends', Isabel Rose was born safe and sound. It was such a relief that both came into this world safely and without the need for a 'Sunroof delivery' as they sometimes call it 'in the trade' – ie, a Caesarean Section!!



Ironically, the most complicated part of the whole delivery was the 2nd placenta which took nearly half an hour to sort – but I won't go into the gory details!! To give you an idea of the number of people in theatre, I am told there were 9 in total, involving doctors, paediatricians, anaesthetists, midwives etc, plus Kevin and !!! Rather a busy place when twins are involved and premature!! All was completed by around 0115 hrs. Tea and toast were served at around 0300 hrs!! Well, I think I deserved it, don't you?!!

Would you like to share your story?
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