

# Deano to run with Olympic Torch

Dean Lanyon



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FOUR years ago, Dean Lanyon was fighting for his life in an American hospital. He was in a coma that would last for 10 weeks.

Today, Dean is senior industrial applications engineer at Cummins Scoresby, having made a remarkable, near-complete recovery.

On July 28, he will be running 500 metres as a torch bearer for the Sydney Olympics.

Dean, who will be running with the torch in Newstead, a town about an hour north of Melbourne, was nominated in the 'individual accomplishments against the odds' category. Here, Dean recounts the events from 1996.

In August 1996, I was 28 years old and stationed with my wife, Natalie, and our then six month old son, Nicholas, in Columbus, Indiana, USA, with Cummins Engine Co. on an inter-company transfer as an engineer.

I was working on a customer visit from a major North American mining company when I developed a severe headache. I took some paracetamol but this did not have any impact. My headache continued to worsen until, finally, I passed out at which time I was rushed to the local hospital. The examining doctor at Columbus Regional Hospital thought that I had a severe migraine. However, as a precautionary measure he ordered a CAT scan. The CAT scan revealed that I had suffered a small cerebral haemorrhage as a result of a ruptured aneurysm.

Once this was realised, I was rushed by ambulance to Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis, a leading health care facility.

In the emergency room, I suffered a second, major haemorrhage and subsequently stopped breathing. My wife, Natalie, was with me and she immediately summoned a resuscitation team who put me on a life support system.

I underwent seven-hour emergency surgery that night. Natalie was told by the doctors that only one-third of those who suffer a cerebral aneurysm can hope to return to normal health.

The day after the surgery, I was semi-conscious. However, less than 24 hours later I developed severe hydrocephalus (a swelling of the brain) and fell into a coma that would last for 10 weeks – an extremely long time to be in a coma. The longer a person is in a coma the less likely they are to come out of one in any reasonable shape.

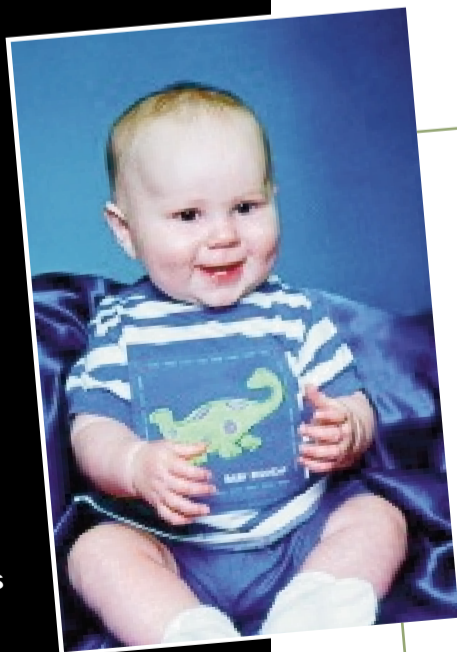
Several days after surgery I also developed vasospasm (a restriction of the arteries in the brain which is a serious side effect of brain surgery) and I had repeated angiograms to overcome this. My blood pressure was deliberately elevated to open the vessels but as a result of this life-saving measure, I subsequently suffered a mild stroke.

From a memory standpoint, my last recollection was at work with a severe headache and my next memory is some three months later in a wheelchair at Rehabilitation Hospital of Indianapolis (RHI) with a balloon tied to it. So, all of the details in-between have been told to me by friends and family.

Cummins was extremely supportive during the whole time and actually paid all the expenses to bring over my entire family (mum, dad, two brothers and two sisters) as well as my wife's mother from Australia. I don't think many companies would incur such an expense and I believe this is testament to the fact that Cummins is, in reality, an extremely caring and community/family minded company.

In RHI I had to learn once again to walk, talk, hold my head up, regain continence, etc. I was basically like a newborn baby and at times my progress was mirroring my son Nicholas' development. But in the following months I did regain all of these skills and have now made a near-complete recovery.

In July 1998, my wife gave birth to our second son, whom we have named Thomas, in honour of my neurosurgeon Dr. Thomas Leipzig, who performed my brain surgery. ☺



Dean and Natalie's second son Thomas is named in honour of neurosurgeon Dr Thomas Leipzig who performed Dean's brain surgery.



Dean's last recollection was at work with a severe headache. His next memory was three months later in a wheelchair with a balloon tied to it. In the photo he's shown with wife Natalie and son Nicholas.