



Erin McIlvaney heading to British Transplant Games Nottingham 2024

By Lanarkshire Badminton

Last year Erin McIlvaney of BASE Lanark won 3 Gold Medals at Official World Transplant Games in Perth, Australia, powered by organ donation and is soon heading to Nottingham to take part in the 2024 British Transplant Games on 1st to 4th August.

Erin's mum Kirstin shares their story:

“Erin was born apparently healthy in 2010 but at five weeks old she began to look a little jaundiced and a blood test revealed there was something wrong with her liver. She was diagnosed with Biliary Atresia, a rare liver disease requiring specialist surgery and so she would have to be transferred to Leeds General Infirmary (LGI).

Erin had the surgery and recovered with a lot of great care from staff in LGI and we made our way home to Scotland.

We knew it would be six months before they would know if it had been completely successful. However, not long after we returned home she developed sepsis and it became apparent her liver was damaged beyond repair and she would need a liver transplant.

Her condition was deteriorating and we were sent back to Leeds for specialist care. She was placed on the transplant waiting list, too ill to return home to Scotland we would have to wait in hospital in Leeds until a liver arrived. She needed round the clock monitoring and medication, she was truly miserable and suffered with the worst symptoms of liver failure.

Thankfully the wait was short, after only eight days a new liver was gifted to her. The transplant was successful and we returned home some weeks later with a completely different baby.

Since transplant Erin's health has been excellent, she is growing up to be a compassionate, thoughtful, social person with a passion for knowledge and an ability to inspire. She copes very well with the medical management involved in keeping her healthy.

Children who have had transplants do have to deal with a lot of medical procedures and restrictions, we were very lucky to have excellent play therapists involved to help her cope when she was younger. She is now part of a strong community of young transplant recipients we have met over the years, all inspirational in their own right and always there for each other.

When I think back to those long eight days waiting for the call to come, nursing a very ill baby, we would have given anything to fast forward to better times like these.

Thankfully we have had plenty of those in recent years including watching Erin complete at the British and World Transplant games.

Last year Erin was selected to represent Team GB & NI in badminton at the Official World Transplant Games in Perth, Australia. We traveled as a family on the adventure of a lifetime and watched her win 3 gold medals, among the most positive and grateful team of people you could hope to meet. It was an incredibly emotional trip where we reflected on the superb medical teams who have kept her so well for 13 years.

We took time on the trip to reflect on the legacy her donor left behind. We think of her donor family often and hope they find some comfort in knowing many great things have come from their gift and that it is so cherished.

Erin is looking forward to The British Transplant Games this summer's which is being held in Nottingham next month. She is aiming for success and the possibility of selection for next year's World Transplant Games in Dresden, Germany, is a strong motivation"

From everyone at Lanarkshire Badminton Group we would like to wish Erin the best of luck at the event and look forward to hearing about her experience afterwards. Also thanks to Kirstin for sharing Erin's story which is very inspiring.

Check out Erin's schedule [here](#).

Want to find out more about Erin's journey? Check out her interview with 360 on BBC Alba [here](#).