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Couple's baby wish granted

Paraplegic athletes welcome son after years of hoping

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Of all the happy smiles in the maternity ward at Kaiser Moanalua Medical Center last week, John and Christine Greer's were the widest.

The couple, both paraplegics, welcomed Dylan Keoni Greer into the world on Thursday morning. He is their first child.

"It's overwhelming," said Christine, holding a healthy Dylan close. "It's kind of surreal, almost an out-of-body experience."

The Greers, both serious athletes, have been married for nine years.

"For the last three or four years, we've been trying (for a baby)," said Christine. "I'm 37 now, and it was like, the clock is ticking, pressure's on!"

When they first learned of Christine's pregnancy, the Greers were excited but cautious due to a miscarriage two years ago.

"At home, a lot of the things from the baby shower are still in boxes in Dylan's room," Christine said. "We didn't unpack them and set everything up because it's almost like we didn't want to jinx it (a healthy delivery)."

Thanks to careful planning and gifts from family and friends, the Greers are set to care for an infant. A portable crib attached to their bed will allow for convenient nighttime access, while a full-sized crib in Dylan's room has been modified with a gate that allows access through the front so that they won't have to lift him over the railing.

"We can do basically everything, just slightly modified," John said.

The Greers also look forward to introducing Dylan to their 11-month-old yellow lab, Kona Girl.

"We've got the house, we've got the dog, and now we've got the baby," Christine said. "We're just so blessed."

Christine, who is originally from England, met John while both were wheelchair tennis competitors. They also have competed locally as paddlers in the Queen Liliuokalani long-distance races.

"We're just active people," John said. "Tennis was the main sport we were passionate about, but after the Paralympics in 2004, I retired and we decided to buy a house and settle down. Then, to keep fit, we added canoe paddling."

The Greers have also participated in the Great Aloha Run and the Honolulu Marathon, where both have been top finishers in the wheelchair division.

They left the hospital for home yesterday ready to take on their next great challenge: raising their son.

"We've been waiting a long time for this," said John. "It's the best gift she (Christine) could ever give."
