

Athlete has written book on transplant experience

Contributed by Liam Horan & Emer Gallagher
Tuesday, 14 August 2007

Daniel McCarthy from Midleton was given only three weeks to live when he was born – but a heart bypass and a heart transplant later the Cork man will represent his country in the World Transplant Games in Bangkok this month.

Daniel will compete in badminton, ball throw, ten pin bowling and 5000m walk at the 16th World Transplant Games, which run from Saturday, August 25th until Sunday, September 2nd.

“My family have a history of heart problems and my father died from a heart condition when I was 18. I was given three weeks to live when I was born but I pulled through,” said Daniel.

“I underwent a heart bypass at 12 and when I was 22 I got my heart transplant. I have never looked back since and I am so grateful to have been given this chance.”

Daniel has even written a book entitled ‘My New Heart’ about his experiences as a transplant recipient.

“I wrote it to inspire people who are waiting on transplants and show them what can be achieved. I was waiting two years and it is tough going. It is also hard on the families of the patients who can feel helpless.”

All proceeds of Daniel’s book went to assist the work of Dr Maurice Neligan at the Mater Hospital in Dublin, who carried out Daniel’s heart bypass and transplant.

This year Daniel will compete in the World Games for the second time.

“The World Games in Australia ten years ago were a real highlight,” said Daniel, who works as a supervisor in Bishopstown Bar in Cork.

“I won gold, silver and bronze at the European Heart and Lung Transplant Games in Italy last year but the World Games are a different story. I probably only have a slim chance of winning but at the end of the day it’s about promoting donor awareness.”

Daniel’s mother and his four brothers and four sisters will be cheering him on from home.

“I get great support from the local community and in particular Aghada GAA who have been fantastic to me,” added Daniel.

You can follow the team’s progress on www.transplantteamireland.com.

For an organ donor card free text the word ‘DONOR’ to 50050 or log on to www.ika.ie for more information.