

TWINS

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COVER KIDS

Go Broncos! Rasjon and Dasjon Buford are huge Denver fans, says their mother, Melissa. These 6-year-old fraternal twins have a real passion for watching and playing football. This summer they practiced playing ball with their 9-year-old brother, Michael, and will continue to play this fall in a recreational pee-wee league. Dasjon and Rasjon are first graders who love math and also enjoy art and reading. They stay busy at home with their 2-year-old brother Drake, and their 3-year-old sister Taylour.

Photography: Jerry Walters

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Twins, again!



The first time I heard my obstetrician tell me that I was pregnant with twins, I thought he was kidding. After assuring us that it was true, we spent the next 20 minutes staring at a sonogram screen, watching two little babies twirl and kick and wave their little hands around inside my belly. We were thrilled.

Six months and 110 pounds later, my twin boys, Andrew and Zachary (who weighed in at an unbelievable 9 pounds, 12 ounces and 7 pounds, 9 ounces!), were delivered by cesarean.

Time passed and things changed. I

got divorced, remarried and gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, Maya. But, as each day passed, I watched my boys play together and wondered who was going to play with Maya? No problem! By the time Maya was 6 months old, I was pregnant again.

Two more

When I started bleeding early into the pregnancy, I raced to my doctor. Sitting on the exam table in the dim sonogram room, I told the technician, "I know I had a miscarriage. You can tell me if I did." And that's when my

life changed forever. "You have two," she said. Two? I have three children, I thought to myself. Two what? And that's when it dawned on me. I was pregnant with twins, again!

This pregnancy ended in the middle of my seventh month when the slight bleeding I'd been having became continuous hemorrhaging. I was rushed to the hospital where, crying and holding my husband's hand, I watched as my tiny little girls were delivered two months and one week early. In stark contrast to my boys, Cassy and Sydnee weighed only 3 pounds, 1 ounce and 3

pounds, 3 ounces. They spent the first month of their lives in the neonatal intensive care unit and the next six months attached to apnea monitors to make sure they continued breathing.

The babies are now 1 year old. Although they are still small for their age, they are happy and silly and do all the normal things that 1 year olds do. Maya, our singleton, is 2. She is a beautiful and bright little girl who loves both her older and younger twin siblings and seems to enjoy her special position as our only "one." The boys, who are 8, are old enough to realize that our unique family causes people to stare or ask a lot of questions and luckily, it doesn't bother them.

Always an adventure

So what is it like being parents of two sets of twins and a singleton toddler? It's a party! Because the three little ones are so close in age we bought a triplet stroller. It weighs close to 100 pounds, the wheels don't swivel, it attracts LOTS of attention and it doesn't fold up, but it is the only way I can leave the house without help.

When we do leave the house, my huge diaper bags (yes, bags) have to be filled with enough snacks, drinks, diapers, emergency toys, wipes and ointments to keep everyone happy for as long as possible. Then, everyone must be packed into our minivan. The boys get in and out by themselves. The girls are a different story. The closest baby gets stuffed into a snowsuit, jacket or sweater and run to the car while I grit my teeth and pray that no one left inside is getting into any trouble. Then I repeat the process with the next closest baby and then again with the last one. After everyone is safely strapped into his or her car seat, we are ready to roll.

Stares and whispers

Once we arrive, I jump out and put the stroller together. I extract each baby from the car and place each one into the stroller. I grab our bags, instruct the

boys to stop jumping around in the busy parking lot and, followed by double takes, off we go, ready to field the inevitable stream of questions: "Are these all yours? Are they all twins? How ever do you manage it all?"

The truth is that I would never trade my special family for anything in the world. As much as the three babies may cry at the same time, they laugh and jump all over me at the same time, too. As much as the

"...I would never trade my special family for anything in the world."

boys may sometimes have to wait for my attention, they have learned to be independent and patient because of it.

At the end of the day, when my husband and I eventually fall into bed exhausted, we always remind each other that we have been given a beautiful and unique gift.

And, finally, as much as helpful strangers who rescue us by opening heavy doors might say, "God bless you!" after looking over my wonderful brood, I say, "Why thank you. He already has." ♥

Mati Sicherer, of Fair Lawn, New Jersey, is a former teacher with an M.A. in counseling. She is the mother of five, including fraternal twin boys born in November 1990 and fraternal twin girls born in February 1998.



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