

Welcome

Ryan Jackson

July 28, 2014

8:53 p.m.

6 lbs. 6 ounces

19 inches

Saturday, July 12 You and David had your birth class with Cherrie to review procedures at birth center, signs of labor, etc. I attended with both of you so that I would know the birth center protocol as well, and get a chance to review the plan you had in place for once labor started.

Monday, July 14 You received the results of your second Group B Strep test, which came back negative after you had used natural remedies to clear it.

Tuesday, July 22 I received a message saying that you had lots of braxton hicks contractions which were uncomfortable, but not regular. Everyone in your family was anxious to meet the baby.

Thursday, July 24 At your midwife appointment, your midwife let you know that you were 4 centimeters dilated already and she could get labor started if you wanted. You declined, and said you preferred to wait for labor to begin. You also felt confident waiting because if you went into labor over the weekend, there would be less traffic driving to the birth center. I spoke with David as well, and reassured him that even though you had made a lot of progress, it didn't mean labor would happen immediately, and you both should just enjoy time with the family and rest. I also reassured him that you wouldn't go into labor just picking up milk from the farm, because he was very nervous about that at the time.

Friday, July 25 The contractions became more frequent (10-20 minutes apart), which included a wrapping feeling around your lower back, but still not consistent. David and I couldn't decide whether you were really in labor or not, and you felt that you weren't in labor because it wasn't painful.

Saturday, July 26 at 7:42 a.m. David let me know that you had been having pretty hard contractions every hour for the last five hours. These contractions were accompanied by a lot of pelvic pain/pressure and you felt they were the real thing. When you called the birth center, the midwife said to let them know when they were 10 minutes apart. After calling the birth center, your contractions seemed to slow down, until they faded away. David told me at 11:27 a.m. that you hadn't had a contraction since your bath at 9 a.m. He said "the baby is taking his sweet ol' time".

Sunday, July 27 We spoke on the phone, and you let me know that you hadn't had any signs of labor since the day before. I mentioned that I had a feeling you were waiting until Rachel (your preferred midwife) was on call, before you felt comfortable enough for labor to begin. You let

me know that she would be back on Monday, and I got the feeling that you would wait for her. We decided that you would give me a call after your appointment, instead of attending with you, and I was looking forward to hearing whether we would meet your little boy soon.

Monday, July 28 The midwives let you know that they would need to reschedule your 9:30 a.m. appointment for Tuesday, because a laboring mom was at the birth center. Shortly after, your appointment was rescheduled again for Monday because the mom had her baby. You went in for your appointment at 1:00 p.m. At that point you sent a message saying, "We just arrived. Rachel is seeing patients in the office and Cherrie is doing labor and delivery. Rachel will take over births at 7 tonight. I keep saying no rush, no rush."

For a few weeks before, I had some intuition that 7 was an important number for your birth, but wasn't sure whether it related to the time, or the date. Once I got that message regarding Rachel being on call at 7, I knew that your baby boy wouldn't be born until after 7 p.m. when you felt truly relaxed.

At 3:10 p.m., David gave me a call that Cherrie had broken your water to stimulate contractions after some other natural methods had not worked. I let him know that I was heading out to provide support for both of you, now that we were certain to meet your son soon.

When I got to the the birth center at 4:00, I said "Hello" to Audrey, and she let me know that both of you were in the main bedroom. I sent David a message to let him know I had arrived.

David invited me back, and the first thing you said was that you wished you hadn't agreed to have your water broken. It seemed like you were nervous because it was a little awkward getting contractions started and there was no turning back at that point; you were going to meet your baby soon. I reassured you that things would begin to become more regular, but you had everyone's support and that we all believed in your ability.

I let you and David get back to your "homework" (what the midwives called natural induction methods), and within a short while your contractions became closer together and stronger. At 5:10 p.m. your hormones had increased as well, and you were now experiencing nausea, though you said it wasn't as bad as when Audrey was born.

When David invited me back to support you, you were sitting on the toilet with Cherrie in front of you and David beside you. Cherrie was talking you through a contraction, encouraging you to

relax. The contractions had brought your baby down lower, and you were feeling even more pressure. The sensation of that much pressure was making you nervous even between contractions, and you felt more confident making eye contact with someone who could help support you and give you strength.

Cherrie checked your cervix for the first time since breaking your water, and said that you had no more progress, though clearly your baby had moved lower because of the pressure and you would soon begin dilating more. You also had more bloody show which was a sign that your cervix was changing.

You felt more comfortable walking, and Cherrie showed you how she wanted you to stomp around the room, encouraging your baby to move lower in your pelvis. David and I walked with you, and I held a bowl in case you started to feel nauseous again. Debbie put on some music as well to help encourage a relaxing space. At this point, Audrey was in the room and had found a comfy spot on the giant ottoman in the room. She watched and encouraged as you walked in circles around the lower floor of the birth center.

Shortly after you began to feel more nauseous again and Debbie supported you as you went back to the bathroom. You didn't want to stay in there, so we all began walking again. Cherrie came back to check on you before she left for the day. She encouraged you and David to continue "homework" and asked the rest of us to step out. David recommended that Audrey and I go to get dinner, so we left for Potbelly.

While we were gone, Rachel had begun her shift on labor and delivery around 6, and recommended now that contractions were regular that you get in the tub to relax. After Audrey and I returned and had a little time to eat dinner, David let both of us know that things were progressing and invited us both back. Audrey quickly found her way to your side, and was massaging your legs and feet while you laid on your side in the tub. Rachel had encouraged you to lie on your right side to thin the lip of cervix on that side. She said you could switch sides, but you said it felt better on your right side and switched back.

You were asking those around you to help you get through the contractions. Rachel was encouraging you to just "Let go", in order for the contractions to work efficiently without tensing up. Meanwhile, David and Audrey were supporting you, and I was rubbing their backs

to give them support as well. When you said you couldn't do it anymore, I continued to remind you that you were already doing it!

Within a few contractions, Rachel let you know that when you felt like it, you could begin pushing! You appeared to be in disbelief when Rachel said you were almost done. When I looked at the clock it was just about 7:00 p.m. which caused me to smile, because I felt you would be able to fully relax at seven with Rachel as your midwife. You told everyone in the room, that you were so tired, and didn't know if you could. She let you know that she was 110% positive that you could begin pushing your baby out if you were ready, and every mom got to this point during their labor. Audrey was extremely excited at this point, and wanted to help support you as you changed position to a squat.

After pushing for a few contractions and not being able to get comfortable or feel productive, you talked about getting out and moving to the bed where you could rest. Since you still felt extremely tired, everyone supported you as you walked to the bed and Audrey and David were beside you. You were working very hard, and I continued reminding you "you are strong" while fanning you with whatever was nearby. Every single time I fanned you, you would say "The fan feels good!" which I found endearing.

While lying down and pushing, you brought your baby lower and lower. Audrey would exclaim "I see him!" with each push. After witnessing the love and support from your whole family, Rachel said that it almost made her want another baby. You joking said, "you can have this one for me!" She laughed and declined your offer.

Now that his head was lower, Rachel said she could tell his head was not coming down completely straight and that's why it was taking a lot of effort to bring him down in that position. Debbie suggested lying on your side while pushing and in between contractions swung your upper leg very far forward to help your baby rotate.

You mentioned again that you had envisioned squatting to give birth, and would like to do that even though you didn't feel strong. Rachel and Debbie suggested squatting in the bed while supported by David, but the bed was very soft and it was almost more effort that way. Debbie then suggested that you squat using the bedpost for support, while David was sitting on a stool behind you to provide even more help. In this position, gravity helped a lot and you continued using a mirror while pushing so you could see your baby's head as he moved further down. In

this position, his head straightened out more and was able to get further down into your pelvis. At this point he was not moving back between contractions.

You moved back to the bed on your hands and knees, and the midwives let you know you could push in any position but that your baby would be here soon and it would be best if you were lying down so that David could catch the baby. You kept saying "I don't know what I want" while David told the midwives that whatever helped labor end sooner is what you both wanted to do. In that moment, he was only concerned about you which was very sweet. Once you laid back on the bed with David by your side, Audrey put on a pair of gloves as though she was ready to catch as well. She continued exclaiming "I can see him!" with each push.

At 8:53 p.m., in only a few pushes, you used your strength to bring your baby out and David caught Ryan! He brought him to your chest immediately, and everyone was brought to tears. You and David were consumed by the moment, and kept saying "we did it, we did it, you did it!" As you heard Ryan's first cry, you said "I know how you feel." I encouraged Audrey to get beside you, and once she was next to you and David, she began crying tears of joy.

It was amazing to be part of such a tender moment, as all of you were able to participate in Ryan's first moments of life. You were consumed by emotions and began declaring your love to everyone in the room. Debbie and I redirected your love to your family, as we encouraged more cuddling and gazing at Ryan.

As you were looking at Ryan, you started to look for similarities. David declared that he had the stronger genes because Ryan resembled him more. While you were holding Ryan, Rachel encouraged you to push to help the placenta come down, and you said "I'll push with him in my arms anytime!"

Your placenta had not released after an hour and Rachel and Debbie began to encourage it through pitocin, positioning, etc. David and I also began praying with you at that point for your placenta to release so you wouldn't need to transfer or have a surgical procedure. David was providing a lot of counterpressure to your back, as I talked to you and held your hand. You felt like you had to poo at one point so it seemed your placenta had come out. Rachel noticed that it was still attached slightly and by that time, Cherrie had arrived and was able to quickly get your placenta to release without transferring.

At 10:34, you were able to fully relax and just focus on nursing Ryan again. You said “I’m okay with husbands touching me, doulas touching me, no midwives. I don’t want midwives touching me” because you wanted to let your back and belly have a rest from all the stimulus.

After some time had passed, the midwives wanted you to empty your bladder so it wasn’t putting as much pressure on your bladder and you were so thrilled to go to the bathroom. You said that when you gave birth to Audrey, you weren’t able to go potty immediately because of the numbing and you loved being able to go when you needed to. It was nice that something so simple brought you so much joy, and we all laughed with you.

Once Ryan was lying beside you nursing, you were encouraged to eat something hot, instead of just the meat and cheese you had brought. You decided an omelette from Cafe Brazil sounded good, so close to midnight, I went out to get both of you breakfast for dinner.

After you and David had eaten, and you had gotten up briefly to go potty, the midwives were content to leave all of you alone while you rested. When I left, the lights had been dimmed so that everyone could settle in and snuggle for a good nap before you left in a few short hours and headed home to see the rest of the family.

Lots of love and admiration,

Taylor Rhodes-Estrada

