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# Determined survivor achieves lifting goal

FORMER Ayr resident, Dean Clifford, is a survivor – and a determined one at that.

Dean was born with a serious genetic skin disorder called Epidermolysis Bullosa, commonly known as a “cotton wool baby” and his family were told he would not live past five years of age.

Now 29, Dean and his family have to go through a daily program to get him mobilised because the glue between his skin is not there and if he touches anything, his skin “just comes away”.

As a motivational speaker, Dean Clifford is the National ACE Ambassador and delivered a speech to 460 delegates from all over Australia at an ACE Disability Conference at Broadbeach on the Gold Coast recently.

It also gave him the opportunity to catch up with some Burdekin delegates, after having visited this district two years ago.

He is also the Goodwill Ambassador for the Brisbane Broncos and the National spokesperson for dEBra (the Dystrophic Epidermolysis Bullosa Research Association of Australia).

In 2008, Dean was in training to benchpress 105kg under the direction of trainer and friend, Brad Thorn, a former Broncos player.

Asked how the goal was progressing and if he achieved that goal, he said he had just succeeded in lifting 120kg.

That equates to twice his body weight – an amazing feat for anyone, let alone someone who has learned to live with the rare and incurable skin condition.

Dean has fought back from imminent death to not just survive and thrive – he is now a key member of the Ken Mills Toyota Kingaroy and Nambour dealerships, where he is the marketing and business development officer.



*Debbie Szendrey, Mark Haynes and Jill Vettovalli were fortunate enough to catch up with Dean Clifford in between sessions at the ACE Conference.*