

Supplementary Table 3. *Identified enablers influencing female athletes return-to-sport postpartum*

CATEGORIES	IDENTIFIED ENABLERS
INDIVIDUAL	
Physiological	
Physiological	Improvements in physique; ⁴⁸ reduced weight gain/weight loss postpartum; ³⁷ achieving similar results as pre-pregnancy ³⁷
Attitudinal	
Physiological	Feelings of improved physical fitness, stamina, and skill; ³⁹ increased confidence in physical capabilities; ⁴⁴ feeling strong ¹⁵
Pride and satisfaction	Self-pride in accomplishments; ^{12 43} being satisfied with training efforts and performances ³⁷
Self-awareness	Increased intuition with body; ⁴¹ being physically aware of self; ³⁷ increased intuition regarding running/performance ⁴⁴
Enjoyment, passion, motivation, and important for self	Enjoyment for sport/enjoying sport; ⁴⁹ feeling refreshed/motivated and experiencing enjoyment upon return; ^{38 43} having a strong passion for sport; ¹³ motivation to return/continue; ^{38 41 43} being motivated and having confidence in ability to return; ³⁷ motivation (to make the most of time and effort); ⁴⁶ being motivated (to train/compete); ⁴⁹ sport = personal pleasure, personal time, and enjoyment; ¹² important for self-care; ⁴⁴ sport as leisure; ¹³ sport as important to self; ^{11 47} sport as time off/away from being a mother; ⁴¹ being part of a team deemed important for wellbeing ³⁷
Reciprocity	Positive changes to motherhood and sport; ¹⁶ reciprocity between motherhood and sport; ⁴⁴ sport a positive influence on motherhood; ¹³ sport able to benefit family (e.g., child able to see different places); ⁴¹ sport beneficial to motherhood; ⁴³ desire to be role model (for children and athletes); ¹² being/considering self as a role model ^{16 37}
Expectations	Having lessened expectations of self/not having to prove oneself to others; ¹² not having preconceived expectations on self; ⁴⁴ keeping an open mind about one's ability to train and be a mother; ⁴³ ability to manage expectations of physical capabilities (by listening to body); ⁴⁴ feelings of not being forced to choose between motherhood and running/making a team ¹²
Identity, priority, and/or perspective	Having another identity besides 'runner'; ¹² change in priority; ^{12 15} prioritizing children over running; ¹⁶ change in perspective/change in priorities; ¹³ change in perspective; ^{41 43 44 46} viewing motherhood and sport as 'less contradictory'; ¹² changing outlook/adopting a 'go with the flow mind-set'; ⁵² maintaining a strong athletic identity ³⁷

Adapting emotions and stereotypes	Ability to resolve divergent/negative feelings; ^{12 37} ability to omit/overcome negative perceptions; ⁴¹ ability to resist stereotypes of motherhood; ⁴³ need/ability to justify return; ⁴⁶ having strong self-efficacy ⁴⁹
Strategical	
Planning pregnancy, childbirth, and return	Planning pregnancy and childbirth (i.e., to ensure financial stability; ¹⁶ to limit impact on sport goals; ¹³ to coincide after competitions and allow recovery; ^{41 43} get back into shape); ⁴³ planning how to train and juggle child/athlete/mother responsibilities (before baby arrives); ⁴³ having a 'comeback' plan ³⁷
Ability to manage roles	Ability to adjust training/competitions to juggle family time; ⁴⁴ configuring training so not wasting time away from family; ⁵¹ setting training around child's needs (e.g., modifying training based on child's needs); ⁵² adjusting schedules to relieve workload; ³⁸ ability to compromise, and finding ways to fulfill demands of being a mother and athlete; ⁴¹ ability to balance the needs of family with the needs/expectations of coach and teammates and sport organisation; ⁴³ learning how to balance/negotiate motherhood with being an athlete; ⁴⁶ ability to develop childcare strategies; ¹⁶ ability to compartmentalise or combine mother and athlete roles; ^{13 15} ability to separate and integrate mother/athlete identities; ⁴⁸ ability to negotiate/integrate family and sport; ⁴³ ability to compartmentalise roles; ³⁷ integrating sport/training with family (e.g., children attending training); ⁵² being organised; ³⁷ ability to balance training and desired breastfeeding practices (e.g., expressing breast milk); ^{15 45} using a day-care service ⁴⁹
Training	Maintaining exercise and fitness (through pregnancy); ^{41 52} taking a gradual and individualized approach to training; ⁴¹ early return-to-sport/competition postpartum; ⁴⁸ using a back to basics/simplified training approach; ⁵² making training a priority; ⁴⁹ making time for training; ⁴⁹ putting in effort at training (note: training effort increased perceived competitive success postpartum) ⁴⁹
Other	Cultivating support networks (for help); ⁴³ taking on additional paid work (to receive maternity leave) ¹⁶
INTRAPERSONAL	
Social Support	
Childcare	Partner support (childcare); ^{37 38 43 47 49} parent support (availability and understanding with childcare); ^{37 38 41 43 47} friends or community (i.e., neighbours) as secondary childcare providers ⁴³
Emotional	Having a family/supportive partner (with a job); ¹² partner/spouse for emotional support; ^{16 43} partner support and understanding (i.e., the importance of sport) ^{41 47}

Financial	Relying on partner/spouse for financial support (income); ¹⁶ friends/community members to help financially (e.g., by hosting fund raisers) ⁴³
Other	Having an egalitarian relationship ⁵²
ORGANISATIONAL	
Time	
Time	Having enough time to recover postpartum/regain fitness ^{15 42}
Social Support	
Coach	Coach belief that a return is possible; ³⁷ coach support (understanding mother responsibilities and helping to combine roles); ⁴¹ coach support (emotional support, encouragement, and assisting the participants in balancing their parenting and sport responsibilities by being flexible with training and competition schedules); ⁴³ having partner as coach (allowed for greater flexibility, support and understanding of mother responsibilities) ⁵²
Teammates	Teammate support (important for social, emotional, childcare and training support); ⁴³ having other athletes for knowledge/advice (i.e., breastfeeding and training); ⁴⁵ having a team to train with (motivation); ⁴⁹ team supportive of athlete bringing their baby to training ¹⁵
Policy	
Encouragement	Providing athletes with encouragement and invitations to return ¹³
Recognition and understanding	Being open (receptive) and understanding of mother-athlete needs; ¹³ recognising motherhood; ⁴³ amendment of organisational attitudes regarding motherhood (e.g., eliminate perception of exclusivity/incompatibility) ⁴³
Financial and childcare support	Receiving Government financial support (i.e., maternity leave); ⁴¹ providing athletes with childcare accommodations (e.g., assisting with childcare expenses; ⁴³ paying parents' hotel room so they could provide childcare at training camp/driving athlete back to the hotel to breastfeed/allow athlete extra time before games to pump); ¹⁵ a model of support that encompasses greater legal and financial protections, and equitable policy; ¹⁴ funding to support time to recover from childbirth and return-to-sport (e.g., maternity leave); ¹⁵ funding (support paying) for childcare; ¹⁵ support for planning and funding family travel (including allowing athletes to remain/be in contact with their families whilst training and competing; and providing athletes with childcare accommodations) ⁴³
Return-to-sport guidance	A return-to-sport plan that is co-developed by the athlete, coach, and healthcare provider; ¹⁵ obstetrician/gynaecologist guidance ⁴⁰

