

Allyson Felix makes fifth Olympic Team, first since becoming a mother

JUNE 21, 2021 • NEWS, 2021, TRACKTOWN20



Allyson Felix celebrates with her daughter Camryn after making her fifth Olympic Team. Photo by Jay Bendlin

By Caela Fenton and Kate Walkup

Allyson Felix relied on a strong final 50 meters to qualify for her fifth Olympic Games at the 2020 Track and Field Olympic Trials at Hayward Field, running a season best of 50.02 in the finals of the 400-meter dash. Felix is only the sixth female U.S. track and field athlete to qualify for five Olympics.

“Honestly, I just told myself before the race that, when it comes down to it, I'd have to fight,” Felix said. “That's been a theme of mine for the past couple years. I was just going to give it my all and leave it all on the track.”

Minutes after crossing the finish line, Felix picked up her two-year-old daughter and carried her down to the track, where the mother-daughter duo shared the historic moment together.

Felix gave birth to Camryn at 32 weeks via an emergency C-section. In an opinion piece Felix wrote for *New York Times*, she said that her then-sponsor Nike would not guarantee that she “wouldn't be punished if I didn't perform at my best in the months surrounding childbirth.”

Felix has been a vocal advocate of maternity protection for athletes. In May of 2019, she published an op-ed in the *New York Times* detailing that when she asked Nike to contractually agree to maternity protections, Nike declined.

Despite being one of the most decorated athletes in the history of track and field, Nike offered Felix 70% less pay after she became a mother.

Felix—along with other Olympians Alysia Montano and Kara Goucher—represents the rising demand for change in the sport industry. As Felix said, “The rules are still mostly made for and by men.”

After leaving Nike in 2019, Felix became Athleta's first sponsored athlete and has been with them ever since. Gymnastics phenom Simone Biles joined Felix and the Athleta team earlier this year.

Felix wasn't the only mother celebrating post-race with a child on the track.

Quanera Hayes won the 400, crossing the finish line in 49.78. Her two-year-old son, Demetrius, joined her on the track, participating with Haynes on the medalists' victory lap and standing with her on the podium.



Quanera Hayes (center) also joins Felix (left) as a mother to make the Olympic Team destined for Tokyo. Photo by Jay Bendlin

Hayes and Felix join a cohort of athletes, including the USA Olympic Marathon Trials winner, Aliphine Tuliamuk, who are currently uncertain as to whether their infants/toddlers will be able to travel to Tokyo with them for the Olympics, given the rules barring international spectators.

Felix expressed her gratitude about sharing that moment on the Hayward Field track with her daughter.

“I just wanted to really show [Camryn] that no matter what, you do things with character, integrity, and you don't give up,” Felix said. “To me, whether that was winning, losing, no matter the outcome, I wanted to stay consistent to that.”

The 2004 Olympics in Athens marked Felix's Olympic debut, where she won silver in the 200 meters at the age of 18. Now, at the age of 35 and a mother, the USC alum has come full circle, competing for one last time at the Olympic Trials at Hayward Field.

“I knew that this was going to be my last Olympic trials,” Felix said. “I knew I wanted to come race in this beautiful stadium, and having my daughter here was just like icing on the cake.”



Photo by Adam Eberhardt

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