

# Danielle Zirkelbach Poised to Become First Mother Sponsored by the Surf Industry for Being Both Athlete and Mom

From Motherless to Movement Leader: Danielle Zirkelbach's Historic Surf Sponsorship Bid



**Honolulu, Hawaii Jul 3, 2025 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com))** - The surf industry may be on the edge of a long-overdue revolution—and at the center of it is **Danielle Zirkelbach**: surfer, artist, mother, former professional athlete, and advocate.

Zirkelbach is set to become the **first-ever mother to receive surf industry sponsorship not despite motherhood, but because of it**. In a sport long known for its emphasis on youth, perfection, and performance, her mission is boldly simple: to prove that **motherhood is not a setback—it's an asset**.

“I’m not a world champ. I’m not an Olympian. I’m not a supermodel. I’m a mother who made the hardest comeback—and I documented it. When I needed guidance, the surf world was silent. The whole world seemed silent. If a woman did it before me, there were no notes left. No road map. No role models who would help. So I became one, and I’m here to help. The silence around surfing mothers ends now. The comeback is maternal—it’s the hardest work a human can do, and it deserves to be seen, and truth be told.” Zirkelbach says. “And that, in itself, is radical.”

Before her time in the ocean, Danielle was already breaking barriers on the field. She’s a **former collegiate and professional soccer player**, with **athletic records that still stand today**—a testament to her lifelong drive and discipline as an elite competitor.

But her most powerful achievement isn't on a scoreboard.

It's generational.

Danielle is the first in **four generations of motherless women** to raise a child of her own. In choosing motherhood—and thriving within it—she is **breaking generational cycles** and **ending inherited silences**. Her story is one of healing, reclamation, and rewriting the future—not just for herself, but for every woman who comes after.

A lifelong waterwoman, she stepped back into the waves after giving birth—not to reclaim her past, but to **redefine her future**. Now she's pioneering a new kind of sponsorship model, one that centers **maternal power, visibility, and the full spectrum of womanhood** in surf culture.

Zirkelbach isn't seeking pity or tokenism. She's calling for **real recognition**—visibility, funding, and support for the **invisible labor** of surfing mothers.

"We've made the hardest comebacks in sport. We deserve to be seen, supported, and paid for our work in and out of the water. Mothers are suppressed not because of any weakness, but because **their power—social, economic, and emotional—is immense**. That power threatens systems built on control and inequality. If we could be supported to tell our story, the world would be a better place."

Through storytelling, advocacy, and her own lived experience, Danielle is leading a **paradigm shift in the surf world**—challenging the industry to back a new kind of hero: the mother who paddles out.

She isn't just making history—she's making space.

"My children are the gift from God that gave me the courage to change the world. They're not my reason for stepping back — they're my reason for stepping up. They are everything. Because of them, I found my voice, my fire, and my purpose. Helping women be heard.

Our daughters will grow up in a world that celebrates them as a mother, not sidelines them. And our sons will know the strength of a woman — and the importance of standing beside them and helping them always move forward."

There's no official confirmation that Danielle Zirkelbach will be the **first-ever surf-industry-sponsored mother**, but there is no doubt: **she's blazing a path unlike any other, and if there was one person on the planet built for it, it would be Danielle**.

#### What we know:

- **Danielle Zirkelbach** is an accomplished surfer and artist who champions the cause of surfing moms. She's explicitly working to shift perceptions so that **motherhood is seen as a valuable, fundable identity** within surfing culture.
- She's vocal about the **lack of support and visibility for postnatal surfers**, aiming to be a model and voice for change.
- By early 2023, Danielle Zirkelbach had cultivated a dedicated and growing audience of over 20K on Instagram, reaching and inspiring women around the world. From surfing at nine months pregnant to launching a platform for maternal storytelling, she's become a leading voice in redefining surf culture. Her initiative, *Imua Moms*, is quickly emerging as a go-to space where

motherhood, athleticism, and empowerment intersect, amplifying the voices of women making waves on their terms.

## So is she the first?

- Historically, while there have been celebrated returning surf moms (like **Lisa Andersen**, who resumed winning the world tour just weeks after giving birth), these athletes didn't receive sponsorship explicitly because of their *motherhood*.
- No major surf sponsor has yet officially signed a mother *on the strength of being a mom*—until now. Danielle aims to change that narrative. She is one of the strongest and most fluent representatives of a world change like this.

## Bottom line:

Danielle Zirkelbach **could become the first mother in surf history to be officially sponsored as a mom**, not just as an athlete. While her mission is clear and gaining momentum, no brand has formally announced that distinction yet. If she succeeds, like we think she will, she'll make history—and redefine what sponsorship in surfing looks like.

## About Danielle Zirkelbach

Danielle Zirkelbach is a Hawaiian-born artist, surfer, and mother whose work centers storytelling, identity, and maternal power. Her former accolade of being a professional soccer player, swimmer, and runner has primed her for being a 3x Hawaiian Champion Surfer, and a nationally recognized surfer at Surfing Americas Regional Championships, just after 4 years of starting to surf. She's the founder of "Imua Moms," a movement amplifying the stories of mothers in surfing and moving forward. Danielle is currently campaigning to become the first mother sponsored by a surf brand *because* of her motherhood, not in spite of it. Her children would be the first children to watch their mother change the world of surfing for many to come.

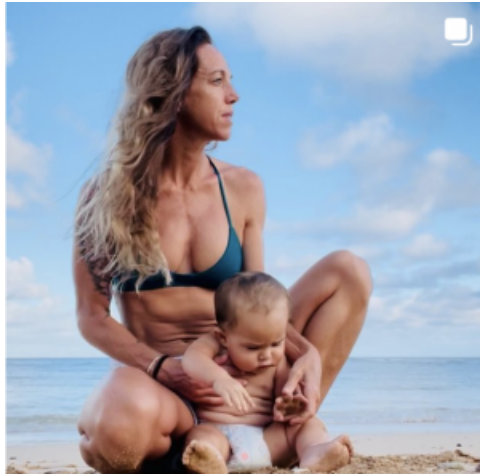
Because she grew up motherless, Danielle Zirkelbach understands, in her bones, what it means to live without maternal support. She didn't just long for a mother—she became one, and in doing so, broke a generational curse that spanned four lifetimes, or two hundred years.

That kind of healing gives a woman the first of her kind vision and bravery. And that vision and bravery is what makes Danielle the ideal person to lead this movement.

She doesn't romanticize motherhood—she reveres it. Her journey through loss, resilience, and rebirth gives her a unique and deeply rooted authority to advocate for mothers in the surf industry.

Danielle isn't seeking sponsorship for herself alone. She's carving out space for all the mothers who have surfed through silence, invisibility, and unpaid labor. She is proof that motherhood is not a setback—it's a superpower.

Her comeback isn't just physical—it's generational, and personal. And that makes her voice impossible to ignore. And the one to change the world.



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