

Written by Amanda Turner
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Russian star Aliya Mustafina is expecting a baby with husband Alexei Zaitsev, whom she married in November.

Two-time Olympic champion **Aliya Mustafina** is preparing for a new role in 2017: motherhood. The newlywed's father, **Farhat Mustafin**, shared the news with a Russian newspaper on Thursday.

"My daughter will give birth in the summer," said Mustafin, a bronze medalist in wrestling at the 1976 Olympic Games. "Doctors say it will be in July. We don't know the sex of the baby yet. They are living in Moscow – my daughter has her own apartment. She is ready to become a mother."

Mustafin praised his new son-in-law, bobsledder **Alexei Zaitsev**, whom Mustafina married in November. The two athletes met in 2015, while they were both being treated for injuries at a Moscow hospital. Zaitsev is the youngest son of a hard-working family from Krasnodar, Mustafin said.

This past summer, Mustafina was once again the most successful Russian gymnast at the Olympics, winning gold on the uneven bars, silver with the team competition and bronze in the all-around — repeating three of her four medals from the 2012 Olympics Games in London.

Mustafina, who turned 22 in September, has not committed to training for the 2020 Olympics. She is currently studying at the Russian State University of Physical Education, Sport, Youth and Tourism in Moscow. This past fall she said starting a family was her next goal.

"I want to graduate, to become a mother and raise children. And my childhood dream – to go to

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the moon," she said in October. "I'm tired of the gym and I want to relax. If I miss the gym, then, I'll come back. I'm thinking about how to do something for the development of gymnastics, rather than coaching."

Mustafina was one of five Russian Olympians to marry in 2016. **Ksenia Afanasyeva**, who missed Rio because of injury and illness, tied the knot this year.

David Belyavsky

, who proposed to his girlfriend in Rio, was married in Greece after the Olympics. Long-time couple

Denis Ablyazin

and

Ksenia Semyonova

, who are also expecting a baby, were married as well.

If Mustafina were to make a comeback, she would join a small number of gymnasts who have returned to international competition after giving birth. Seven-time Olympian **Oksana**

Chusovitina

is the

most notable, but others include Great Britain's

Lisa Mason

and Bulgaria's

Ralitsa Rangelova

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