

= Cook Islands at the 2008 Summer Olympics =

On behalf of the Cook Islands , the Cook Islands Sports and National Olympic Committee sent a team to the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing , China , marking its sixth consecutive appearance at the Olympics since its debut in the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul , South Korea . The country sent four athletes to the Games across three sports and four distinct events (Gordon Heather and Tereapii Tapoki in track and field , Petero Okotai in swimming , and Sam Pera , Jr. in weightlifting) . No athlete of the Cook Islander delegation progressed past the first rounds in their events (with the exception of weightlifting , where the first round was the only round) and did not go on to win medals . Pera was the nation 's flag bearer at the ceremonies .

= = Background = =

The Cook Islands are a collection of fifteen islands lying in the South Pacific Ocean that are governed under a single parliamentary entity . Some 10 @, @ 000 people live in the dependency . The country is in a free association with New Zealand , who handles the nation 's external affairs . The Cook Islands became self @- @ governing in 1965 . 23 years later , the Cook Islands sent their first delegation to the Olympics at the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul , South Korea . Between 1988 and 2008 , the Cook Islands sent delegations to all six Summer Olympic games . The size of the Cook Islander delegation was largest in 1988 , when it reached seven athletes . The size of the nation 's delegation has not risen past four since then as of the Beijing Olympics .

At Beijing , four athletes competed for the Cook Islands . Of those competitors , three were men (Heather , Okotai , Pera) and one was a woman (Tapoki) . They competed across three sports (track and field , swimming and weightlifting) and four distinct events (men 's 100 meters and women 's discus throw in track and field , men 's 100 meters breaststroke in swimming , and men 's heavyweight in weightlifting) . As of the 2008 Olympics , there had not been a Cook Islander who has won a medal at the Olympics . Sam Pera , Jr . , a weightlifter , was the flagbearer for the Cook Islands at the ceremonies .

= = Athletics = =

= = = Men 's competition = = =

Gordon Heather was the sole male Cook Islander participating in a track event at the Beijing Olympics , marked by his competition in the men 's 100 meters dash . Born on Rarotonga , the most populous of the Cook Islands and the home to its capital city (district) , Heather was 18 years old when he participated in the Beijing Olympic . He had not previously competed in any Olympic games . During the 14 August qualification round , Heather participated in the ninth heat , which included eight athletes . He finished the dash in 11 @. @ 41 seconds , placing last in the heat . Micronesia 's Jack Howard placed ahead of Heather (11 @. @ 03 seconds) in seventh place . Heather 's heat was led by Qatar 's Samuel Adelebari Francis (10 @. @ 40 seconds) and Trinidad and Tobago 's Marc Burns (10 @. @ 46 seconds) . Overall , 80 athletes competed in the event 's qualification round , and the Cook Islander sprinter ranked 75th . He did not advance to further rounds .

= = = Women 's competition = = =

Tereapii Tapoki was the only female Cook Islander participating in a track and field event in Beijing , and was the only Cook Islander in her nation 's delegation during those games . Born in Oiretumu , a settlement on the island of Mauke , Tapoki 's debut at the Olympics was in the 2004 Athens games when she was 20 years old ; she represented the Cook Islands in the same event during those games . Tapoki was placed in the first heat during the 15 August qualification round , which included 19 athletes . The athletes were given three opportunities to throw the discus . During the

first attempt , Tapoki threw the discus 46 @.@ 77 meters , placing 12th out of the 19 competitors in her heat . Her second attempt landed 44 @.@ 11 meters away , placing her 15th out of those who attempted the discus during that round . She marked her highest score , 48 @.@ 35 meters , on her third and final attempt . Of those in her heat , this placed her in 19th place . 37 athletes registered marks during the qualifying round , with Tapoki ranking last . She did not advance to later rounds .

= = = Summary = = =

Key

Note ? Ranks given for track events are within the athlete 's heat only