

= British Virgin Islands at the 2008 Summer Olympics =

The British Virgin Islands took part in the 2008 Summer Olympics , which were held in Beijing , China from 8 to 24 August 2008 . The dependency 's participation at Beijing marked its seventh consecutive appearance in the summer Olympics since its debut in 1984 , and its eighth Olympic appearance ever . The British Virgin Islander delegation included two athletes in 2008 participating in two distinct events in one sport : discus thrower Eric Matthias and sprinter Tahesia Harrigan . Of the athletes , Harrigan was the flagbearer and the first female Olympian to participate on behalf of the British Virgin Islands in its entire history . Overall , Harrigan advanced to quarterfinals in her event , although neither athlete medaled .

= = Background = =

The British Virgin Islands participated in seven summer Olympic games between its debut in the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles and the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing . Their Olympic debut was at the 1984 Winter Olympics in Sarajevo , Yugoslavia , where the nation submitted a single athlete . The number of British Virgin Islanders participating in the summer games , excluding 1996 and 1984 , included four or less athletes , and until Tahesia Harrigan in Beijing , only included men . Harrigan was the first female athlete to participate on behalf of the British Virgin Islands , and was its first female flagbearer . At Beijing , the British Virgin Islands were represented by two athletes , both in their twenties and both participating in track and field events : Eric Matthias and Tahesia Harrigan . Harrigan progressed to quarterfinals in her event , although neither athlete medaled .

= = Athletics = =

= = = Men 's competition = = =

Former Boise State University student Eric Matthias participated on behalf of the British Virgin Islands at the discus throw event . He was one of two British Virgin Islanders participating in a track and field event and in the 2008 Olympics as a whole . Matthias ' appearance in Beijing marked his first appearance at any Olympic game . Once at the Olympics , Matthias was placed in the second qualifying heat on 16 August . He threw the discus 53 @. @ 11 meters , ranking last out of 18 athletes . The 17th place finalist in the second qualifying heat , Iraq 's Haidar Nasser Shaheed , threw 1 @. @ 08 meters further , with heat leader Rutger Smith of the Netherlands throwing the discus 12 @. @ 54 meters further than Matthias . Overall , out of 37 athletes , Matthias placed last , and did not progress to the final round on 19 August .

= = = Women 's competition = = =

University of Alabama graduate and single parent Tahesia Harrigan was the sole female competitor from the British Virgin Islands , and one of two participating in a track and field event and for the BVI as a whole . Her appearance at Beijing was her first Olympic appearance ; she did not compete in the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens because she was pregnant at the time . When at the Olympics , Harrigan competed in the first round of the 100 m dash on 15 August , where she was placed in Heat 2 against , among others , Lauryn Williams of the United States and Christine Arron of France . Harrigan ranked third in a heat of eight athletes with a time of 11 @. @ 46 seconds , placing behind Williams by 0 @. @ 08 seconds and ahead of Brazil 's Lucimar Moura by 0 @. @ 14 seconds . Overall , Harrigan tied Jade Latoya Bailey of Barbados for 25th place out of 85 . She progressed to the next round .

Harrigan competed in the second round on 16 August , placed in Heat 4 against Williams , Jamaica 's Kerron Stewart , and Belgium 's Kim Gevaert , among others . She placed fifth out of eight

athletes with a time of 11 @.@ 36 seconds ; she was 0 @.@ 10 seconds ahead of sixth place heat finalist Semoy Hackett of Trinidad and Tobago and 0 @.@ 12 seconds behind Belarusian fourth place heat finalist Yuliya Nestsarenka . Overall , she tied Arron for 16th place out of 40 athletes . Harrigan did not progress further .

= = = Summary = = =

Key

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