

= Tonga at the 2008 Summer Olympics =

Tonga competed at the 2008 Summer Olympics , that celebrated in Beijing , China , from August 8 to August 24 , 2008 . Tonga was represented by the Tonga Sports Association and National Olympic Committee , and was one of 117 nations that won no medals at the Games . Tonga was represented by three athletes competing in two sports ? Aisea Tohi and Ana Po 'uhila in track and field events , and Maamaloa Lolohea in weightlifting . The delegation 's appearance at the Olympics marked its seventh consecutive appearance at the Olympics since its debut at the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles . The flag bearer for Tonga in Beijing was field athlete Ana Po 'uhila .

= = Background = =

The Kingdom of Tonga is an archipelago of 169 islands (36 are inhabited by about 100 @, @ 000 people) that is located in the South Pacific Ocean to the far east of Australia . Initially known as the " Friendly Islands " by explorers , The islands of Tonga united under a single monarchy in 1845 , and devised a constitution to restrain the monarchy in 1875 . It is the only nation in the South Pacific that has neither been formally colonized nor had its original government dissolved , although it became a protectorate of the United Kingdom on 1900 . Tonga renounced British protection in 1970 and , as of 2012 , was the only monarchy in the Pacific Ocean .

Some 14 years after becoming a sovereign nation in both foreign and domestic affairs , Tonga submitted its first delegation to the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles , California , its largest Olympic team ever as of the Beijing Olympics . The first female Tongan athlete participated in the Olympics at the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul , South Korea . Between 1984 and 2008 , Tongan athletes have participated at all of the seven summer Olympics . From 1988 to 2008 , however , there had not been a Tongan Olympic team greater than five athletes in size . There had been a single Tongan medalist during this time period : Paea Wolfgramm won a silver medal in boxing at the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta , Georgia .

Three athletes went to the 2008 Beijing Summer Games to participate on Tonga 's behalf . Aisea Tohi was its sole track athlete , Ana Po 'uhila was its sole field and only female athlete , and Maamaloa Lolohea was its only weightlifter . At 21 years old , Tohi was the youngest member of the delegation ; Lolohea , at 40 , was the oldest . Po 'uhila was the nation 's flag bearer at the ceremonies .

= = Athletics = =

Aisea Tohi represented Tonga at the Beijing Olympics in track and field . Born on Tonga 's main island of Tongatapu in the settlement of Tofua , attended the Beijing Olympics at 21 years old , participating in the men 's 100 meters dash . Tohi had not previously competed in any Olympic games . During the course of his event 's qualification round , which took place on August 14 , Tohi was placed in the second heat against seven other athletes . He finished the race in 11 @. @ 17 seconds , placing seventh in his heat ahead of Roman William Cress from the Marshall Islands (11 @. @ 18 seconds) and behind Béranger Bosse of the Central African Republic (10 @. @ 51 seconds) . The leaders of Tohi 's heat included Jamaica 's Asafa Powell (10 @. @ 16 seconds) as well as Kim Collins of Saint Kitts and Nevis (10 @. @ 17 seconds) . Of the 80 athletes participating in the qualification round , Tohi placed 71st . He did not advance to later rounds .

Ana Po 'uhila participated in the women 's shot put on the behalf of Tonga at the Beijing Olympics , and was the only female athlete competing for Tonga at the 2008 Olympic games . She was born in Nuku 'alofa , the national capital , which lies on the primary Tongan island of Tongatapu . Po 'uhila first participated in the Olympics at age 24 , when she represented Tonga in shot put at the 2004 Athens games . She represented Tonga again in Beijing at the age of 32 . During the qualifying heat of her event , which took place on August 15 , the Tongan field athlete was placed in the seventeen @- @ person second heat . Po 'uhila was given three attempts to put the shot as far as she could . During the first attempt , she lobbed the shot 16 @. @ 21 meters , ranking 12th in her heat . She

bested this ranking on her second attempt when she lobbed it 16 @. @ 42 meters , ranking seventh amongst those who threw during the second try . Her third and final attempt , 16 @. @ 35 meters , did not beat her second attempt . Using her best mark , 16 @. @ 42 meters , Po 'uhila placed 12th out of the 16 athletes who finished the event . She ranked ahead of Taiwan 's Lin Chia @- @ Ying (16 @. @ 32 meters) and behind Russia 's Irina Khudoroshkina (16 @. @ 84 meters) in a heat led by China 's Gong Lijiao (19 @. @ 46 meters) and Belarus ' Nadzeya Ostapchuk (19 @. @ 08 meters) . Of the 33 athletes who finished the event , Ana Po 'uhila ranked 27th . She did not advance to the final round .

Key

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