

= Solomon Islands at the 2008 Summer Olympics =

The Solomon Islands send a team to compete at the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing , China . The country 's delegation consisted of three athletes competing in two sports across three distinct events ; Francis Manioru and Pauline Kwalea represented the Solomon Islands in track , while Wendy Hale competed in weightlifting . The arrival of the Solomon Islander delegation in Beijing marked its seventh appearance since its debut at the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles . The track athletes did not advance past the first rounds in their events . There were no medalists from the Solomon Islander athletes in these Games . Wendy Hale was the Solomon Islands ' flagbearer during the Games ' opening ceremony .

= = Background = =

The Solomon Islands are a group consisting of approximately a thousand islands that serves as home to almost 600 @, @ 000 people . The island chain was designated a protectorate of the United Kingdom in the 1890s , and remained under British control during World War II , where the island chain was the center of some of the war 's worst fighting . In 1976 , the Solomon Islands won the right to self @-@ government from the British , and declared independence in 1978 . The nation fell into a period of civil instability between then and 2003 , when Australia led a military force to restore law and order in the country .

The first Solomon Islander delegation to the Olympics arrived some six years after the nation 's independence for the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles , California , and was composed of three male athletes competing in two sports . The island nation continued to send delegations to the Olympics throughout its era of civil disorder ; delegations from the Solomon Islands appeared at all seven Summer Olympic games prior to (and including) the Beijing games of 2008 . The first women represented the Solomon Islands at the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta , Georgia . The largest delegations from the Solomon Islands included four athletes and appeared in 1988 and 1996 . Up to and including the Beijing games , there had not been a Solomon Islander who had won a medal at the Olympics .

During the 2008 Summer Olympics , three athletes (one male and two female) participated across two sports in three distinct events . Pauline Kwalea , the year 's female sprinter , was the youngest member of the delegation at 20 years old . Male sprinter Francis Manioru , at 26 years old , was the oldest . Weightlifter Wendy Hale bore the flag of the Solomon Islands at the ceremonies .

= = Athletics = =

Sprinter Francis Manioru represented the Solomon Islands at Beijing in the men 's 100 meters dash as its only male track and field athlete . Born in September 1981 , Manioru was 22 years old when he first competed in the men 's 100 meters dash at the 2004 Olympics in Athens . He ranked seventh in his heat and did not advance past the qualification round . However , Manioru returned as a 26 @-@ year @-@ old to participate in the 2008 Olympics . During the qualification round of the event , which took place on 14 August , Manioru was placed in the first heat against seven other athletes . He finished the race in 11 @.@ 09 seconds , placing behind ni @-@ Vanuatu sprinter Moses Kamut (10 @.@ 81 seconds) , who in turn placed behind Surinamese sprinter Jurgen Thomen (10 @.@ 61 seconds) . The heat was led by Jamaica 's Usain Bolt (10 @.@ 20 seconds) and Antigua and Barbuda 's Daniel Bailey (10 @.@ 24 seconds) . Manioru ranked 68th out of the 80 athletes participating in the qualification heats . Manioru did not advance to later rounds .

Pauline Kwalea represented the Solomon Islands in the women 's 100 meters dash at the Beijing Olympics . She was born in the national capital of Honiara , located on the island of Guadalcanal , and represented the Solomon Islands in Beijing as a 20 @-@ year @-@ old . Kwalea had not previously competed in any Olympic games . During the course of the qualification round of the event , which took place on 15 August , Kwalea was placed in the sixth heat against eight other athletes . She finished last with a time of 13 @.@ 28 seconds . Nicaraguan runner Jessica Aguilera

placed ahead of Kwalea (13 @. @ 15 seconds) , while Andorra 's Montserrat Pujol ranked ahead of Aguilera (12 @. @ 73 seconds) . The heat was led by Jamaican sprinter Shelly @-@ Ann Fraser (11 @. @ 35 seconds) and Ghana 's Vida Anim (11 @. @ 47 seconds) . In the qualification heats , there were 85 participants , with Kwalea ranking 75th . She did not advance to later rounds .

Key

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