



2016 Team Cook Islands Rio Olympic Games Handbook





Contents

1. Minister of Sports Message
2. President of CISNOC Message
3. Secretary General & Chef de Mission Message
4. Athletes Profile
5. Acknowledgement of Sponsors
6. The Cook Islands
7. Team Cook Islands at the Olympic Games





Byrden and Ella Nicholas - Brother and Sister in the Canoe Slalom event



Minister of Sports

Kia orana, to compete at the Olympics is the ultimate aspiration of any sportsperson. Not only is it a reflection of years of sacrifice and dedication to be the best one can be, it carries with it an immense sense of honour and pride in representing our beloved nation. Congratulations on your selection. It is the reward of all you have put in to get here.

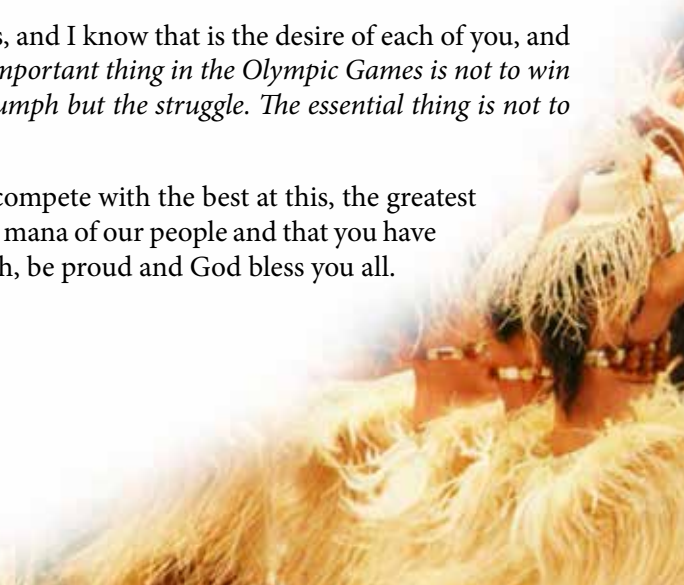
The Olympics, however, is more than an sporting event. It is a coming together of more than 200 nations around the world who share a common goal, and from that we have sharing of cultures and an understanding and celebration of our global diversity. Enjoy this rare opportunity that many will never have the chance to experience and capture those special memories.

While we seek to achieve the highest accolade as reflected by medals, and I know that is the desire of each of you, and that of our nation, I am reminded of the Olympic Creed: *The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well.*

It is with pride that I convey to each of you my best wishes, as you compete with the best at this, the greatest sporting event in the world, in Rio this year. Know that you carry the mana of our people and that you have the support of the entire nation behind you. So, hold your head high, be proud and God bless you all.

Kia Manuia, Kia Toa

Hon. Albert Nicholas Jnr
Minister of Sports
COOK ISLANDS GOVERNMENT





Commonwealth Youth Games Team 2015, Samoa



President of **CISNOC**

Kia Orana

It is with great honour and proud as President of the Cook Islands Sports and National Olympic Committee to be part of Team Cook Islands at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

As a small but very proud Nation, we continue to make sporting history at these the XXXI Olympic Games by sending the largest team ever! In addition the sporting achievements of our athletes continues to make us prouder, with a number of athletes qualifying to represent our country on their own merit.

On behalf of the Executive Board of CISNOC, I express our gratitude to all our member National Federations and Island Sports Administrations, to our Government for your support, our Sponsors and most of all to our Cook Islands People, we say **A1 Meitaki**.

To the families of our Olympians many, many thanks for your support and encouragement of your sons and daughters....

To the Officials, Management and Coaching support, meitaki maata to you all for your part in best preparing our Athletes for Rio.

Finally to our Olympians, your hours of dedication, commitment and sacrifice is forever appreciated, represent yourself and our nation with true Cook Islands pride, and most of all enjoy and live what the Olympics is all about.

God bless us all

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hugh Graham'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Hugh Graham

President - Cook Islands Sports and National Olympic Committee





L-R, Luisa Peters, Patricia Taea, Celeste Brown and Ella Nicholas



Chef de Mission

Kia Orana,

It gives me great pleasure as NOC Secretary General and Chef de Mission of Team Cook Islands to represent my country at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

It is with great pride on behalf of the CISNOC Executive Board, and the sporting community throughout the Cook Islands, that I extend our Kia Manuia and blessing to our Olympic Team.

It has been a long and tough journey, not only for the athletes and their coaches, but also for CISNOC and the National Federations. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our National Federations and the sporting community, for their continued support and contribution towards our Olympic Team.

This is one of our highest ranked teams ever to the games, having 5 of our 9 athletes qualify through the Oceania Qualification. We have raised the bar for these games, the standard and performance of our athletes leading up to the Olympic Games has been outstanding, and worthy of Olympic standards.

The Olympic Dream, in pursuit of Excellence have earned each one of our athletes the honour of representing our country to the highest platform, which is the Olympic Games, in Rio de Janeiro.



I would like to acknowledge and show appreciation for the tremendous support and contribution of the Government of the Cook Islands, Vonnia's, Matai Clothing, Fave Clothing, and Tav's Cook Islands. To those who I have not mentioned, meitaki maata for your continued support over the years and towards our 2016 Olympic Team.

Finally to all our Olympians – Congratulations! I am honoured as your NOC Secretary General and Chef de Mission to represent you at these Olympics. Show your “Mana”, stand firm with heads held high – we honour you our Olympians.

Kia Manuia Te Atua Te Aroa



Robert B. Graham
NOC Secretary General / Chef de Mission





Taiki Paniani - Silver medalist, Lawn Bowls, Commonwealth Youth Games 2015, Samoa

Patricia Nooroa Taea

Resides: Gold Coast, Australia

Code: Athletics

Event: 100m Sprint

Personal & Season Best: 100m 12.22 (+0.6), Brisbane, Australia, 9 Jan 2016

12.10 (+2.4), Brisbane, Australia, 27 Feb 2016

INTERESTING FACTS

Patricia competed at the last Olympic Games 2012 in London in the event of 100m and managed to run a personal best time of 12.47s. Since then Patricia has bettered her time in the 100m, where she again broke a National Record in the Womens 100m at the Pacific Mini Games in Wallis and Futuna with a time of 12.29s.

In 2016 Patricia broke the National Record in the Womens 100m with a time of 12.22s in Brisbane, Australia.

She is currently residing in the Gold Coast where she is training under Australian based coach, Anthony Fairweather and is a Rio Scholarship holder recipient.



Alex Damien Beddoes

Code: Athletics

Event: 800m

New Zealand Records 4x400m 3:18.59 8/12/2013

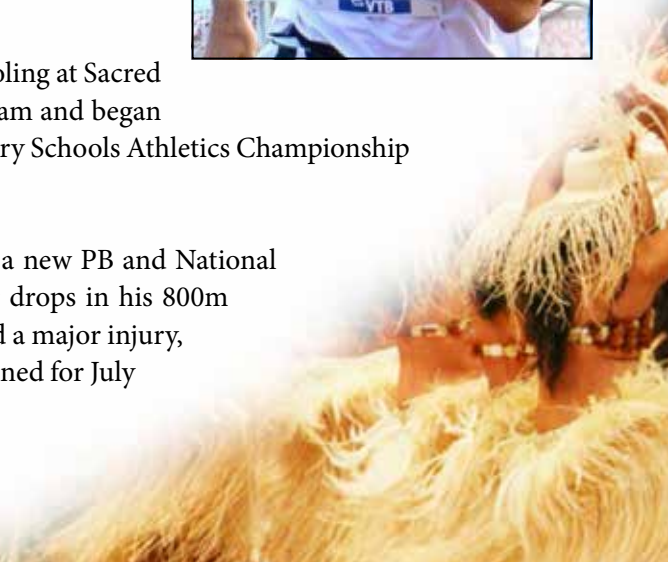
Cook Islands Records 400m 51.21 11/12/2013

800m 1:51.70 26/8/2015

INTERESTING FACTS

Alex grew up on Rarotonga before moving to NZ for secondary schooling at Sacred Heart College, where he was identified by the schools athletics program and began to run seriously. He was a regular finalist in the New Zealand Secondary Schools Athletics Championship and is part of the record holding 4x400m NZSSAC relay team.

In 2014 he attended the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow setting a new PB and National Record, and in 2015 he improved further with a number of regular drops in his 800m times. In early 2016 whilst in his build up phase to Rio, Alex sustained a major injury, and is currently on the comeback with his first competition races planned for July before he heads to Rio.



Bryden Rereao Clarke Nicholas

Resides: New Zealand
Code: Canoeing
Event: Slalom K1M
Age: 27

INTERESTING FACTS

Bryden is a qualified doctor currently working as an Orthopaedic registrar at Tauranga Hospital.



Bryden started paddling as a 12 year old through school at Tauranga Boys College in New Zealand where he won many New Zealand Secondary school age group titles in white water canoeing. He also excelled in a number of other sports including playing representative basketball and rugby for the Western Bay of Plenty.

As a junior Bryden represented New Zealand in both the K1 and C2 where he won silver at the Australian Youth Olympic festival and his best result was a 9th place in C2 at the Junior World Champs in Slovenia in 2006.

He competed at the World Champs for NZ in C2 as a senior before putting competitive sport aside for a number of years while he finished his medical training.

He started to represent the Cook Islands in 2011 and in that year he won the NZ U23 national title and competed again internationally in World Cups. He qualified for Rio at the World Champs in London in 2015.



Ella Rose Vaiora Nicholas

Resides: New Zealand

Code: Canoeing

Event: Slalom K1M

Age: 25

Best Results: 2016 World Cup 1 Italy 34th, 2016 World Cup 2 Spain 40th, 2016 World Cup 3 France 36th, 2015 World Champs London 43rd, 2014 Oceania Championships 3rd, 2014 Australian Open 9th
2012 London Olympic Games 18th



INTERESTING FACTS

Ella is a qualified medical doctor and a role model for Cook Islands women in sport. She has competed for the Cook Islands in canoe slalom since 2007 and in more recent years juggled her sport with the demands of University and medical studies.

Ella started paddling as a 12 year old through school at Tauranga Girls College in New Zealand where she excelled in a number of sports including playing representative basketball for the Western Bay of Plenty. She received regional honours as sportswoman of the month several times while at school, and several top trophies including sportswoman of the year in her final year at college. No mean feat in a school of over 1400 girls. An accomplished public speaker having gained distinction for Level 8 of the Trinity College of London speech exams. Ella has proven leadership qualities captaining many school sports teams and in her final year at school was Sports Captain as part of the top 4 leadership team.

Current International Canoe Federation world ranking is 67 from 252 and she is 6th ranked in Oceania and 2nd ranked in New Zealand.



Teau Moana Mc Kenzie

Resides: New Zealand
Code: Sailing
Event: Womens Laser Radial



INTERESTING FACTS

Teau was born and raised in Rarotonga, Cook Islands where she also started as a sailor at a very young age.

Teau started sailing when she was seven and in 2009 she won two medals at the Pacific Mini Games held here in the Cook Islands.

She won bronze in the individual women's category and together with fellow national sailor, they won gold in the teams event. She sailed in Singapore during the Youth Olympics in 2010 before competing at the Pacific Games in New Caledonia 2011 where she won two medals – a silver in the individual women's race and gold in the teams event with fellow national sailor.

In 2013 Teau won a gold medal at the Pacific Mini Games in Wallis and Futuna. At the 2015 Teau won a silver medal at the Pacific Games in Papua New Guinea and a gold medal in the Teams event.

She represented the Cook Islands at the Sail Melbourne event in December 2015 where she was to compete in the Qualifiers for Rio 2016 and she was confirmed a qualification for the Oceania region by ISAF.

Peter Taua Elisa Henry

Taua was a small size sailor with a great “I can do” attitude that is still with him. He brings his Manihiki attitude for competition to Rarotonga and into international competition where he has performed exceptionally well. Today he trains especially hard to improve his heavy weather techniques and is very competent in all weathers.



In 2015 Taua started his elevated training towards Olympic qualification. He is a dedicated athlete towards gaining his goal with personal fitness goals at the gym, on the road and on the water, and diet - all making up his daily life.

His first major goal of 2015 was the Pacific games in Papua New Guinea, where the competition was expanded by the first time that Australia competed, this set the stage for huge challenge with two Aussies and New Caledonian competitors expected to be at a very high level. Taua had a great tussle with them and had to be content with a fourth place, which placed him as the best Pacific Island competitor. Together with Joshua Ioane whom he trains they were able to carry off the Mens Laser Team Bronze medal.

Returning home Taua carried on with his training towards representation at the Sail Melbourne event in December 2015 where he was to attempt to qualify the Cook Islands for the Olympic Games. He returned home with the qualification confirmed by ISAF! This opening the door to a renewed and up scaled development plan towards Rio!



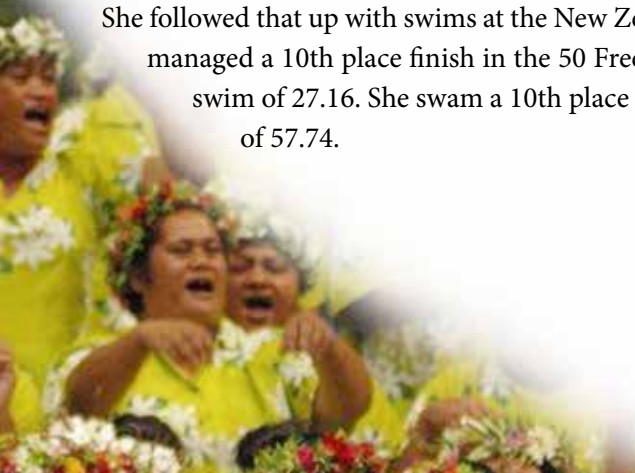
Tracy Lee Keith-Matchitt

Tracy hails from the village of Titikaveka where her great grandmother and grandmother were born and raised. She was brought up in Tokoroa, being taught the Cook Island culture and traditions by her grandmother and was heavily involved in the cultural aspects throughout her high school years. She also competed in the local Te Eiva Nui competition in Tokoroa, New Zealand.



Tracy competed at the Victoria State Champs in Australia this year, where she swam in the 50 and 100 Free while under full training. She ranked 30th in the 100 Free in 58.95 (her PB was 57.85). She also ranked 23rd in a much better swim in the 50 with a 27.46 (PB 27.16) just missing out on a finals swim.

She followed that up with swims at the New Zealand Open Championships and Olympic Trials. Still in big training she managed a 10th place finish in the 50 Freestyle in a time of 27.13 which was a career Long Course PB after a heat swim of 27.16. She swam a 10th place heat of 58.41 and into the national 8th place in the final with a career PB of 57.74.



Westley Tikiariki Roberts

Resides: Figtree, NSW, Australia
Swim Club: Wests Illawarra Aquatic Swim Club
Place of Training: University Recreation and Aquatic Centre,
University of Wollongong
Coach: James Greathead
DOB: 24/06/1997



INTERESTING FACTS

Roberts, who originally hails from Atiu, won the gold medal in the men's 1500 metres long course freestyle event with a time of 15 minutes 42.27 seconds at the 2016 Oceania Swimming Championship in Suva, Fiji. He also won the Gold Medal in the 400m freestyle for the Cook Islands and it is the first time in history that the Cook Islands National Anthem was played at a Regional event.

Roberts was raised in Atiu before he left for Australia where he has been swimming competitively for the Wests Illawarra Aquatic Swim Club.

Roberts, who made his debut for the Cook Islands at the championship, also smashed his personal best time of 16.05 minutes. He set new national records in the 400m, 800m and 200m freestyle events at the championship.



Luisa Fatiaki Taitapu Peters

Resides in Noumea, New Caledonia and is currently training at the Oceania Weightlifting Institute under coach and former top weightlifter, Paul Coffa.

Born and raised in the Cook Islands, Luisa hails from the village of Avatiu where she grew up and started up the sport of Weightlifting.

INTERESTING FACTS

Luisa is the current National Record Holder in the Snatch and Clean and Jerk with a total PB of 227kg, which she set in July 2016 at the current training venue in New Caledonia.



Acknowledgement of Sponsors



GOVERNMENT
OF THE COOK ISLANDS



COOK ISLANDS
TOURISM CORPORATION



Fave Clothing



Ene
Moana



Mairi Scott



The Cook Islands

THE SOUTHERN GROUP

A mix of coral atolls and volcanic islands – a good few of the nine Southern islands could be listed as “must see before I die.” An idyllic climate, stunning scenery, warm-hearted people and a desirable way of life where “hurry” has not been coined, make them irresistible. Bush clad volcanic peaks descend to glistening white sands and the inevitable palm fringed blue lagoons. Rarotonga, the capital and Aitutaki, breathtakingly beautiful, dominate the call of the conch.

THE NORTHERN GROUP

Six of these islands of escape called the Cook Islands, lie to the North. Described as “the stuff that dreams are made of” their remote appeal pulls at the hearts of explorers, adventurers, authors and artists. Each is unique. Discover the largest atoll, Penrhyn, the intriguing island of Suwarrow with a population of two, Pukapuka with its own language and Manihiki with its treasure trove of black pearls. Palm fringed pearly white sands framing turquoise lagoons prove irresistible.

RAROTONGA

Palm fringed beaches. Soaring lush mountain peaks. Te Rua Manga, The Needle rises majestically from volcanic rock. Cascading waterfalls sparkle in the sunlight. Rarotonga is the hub and the capital of the Cooks. Its 32km encircled by a “ring” road – Ara Tapu tracing the coast framed with beaches, villages and churches, paw paw patches and taro fields, shops and scooters. Beyond? Roaring white waves crash on the coral reef. Voices of a capella singing mark Sunday. Dancing. Drumbeats. Fun

AITUTAKI

Araura, Ararau, Utatiki. Honeymoon island. Northern. Pure white sand. Clear turquoise lagoon. Tranquil motus scattered like confetti. The archetypal tropic island and the Eden of the Cooks where peace is paramount. Slipping from beach to bathing to bed is the lifestyle.



Snorkelling a must for the divers. Brilliantly hued fish flashing in crystal waters. Sea birds and land lovers seek its sanctuary. Idyllic and alluring.

MANUAE

And its neighbouring islet Te Au O Tu set in a sheer shallow lagoon. Elusive, remote. Uninhabited. Fish of all varieties fill its waters. A breeding ground for seabirds and marine turtles alike. This remarkable atoll - the first to be discovered by Captain Cook – was once a penal colony and a copra station – is now a sanctuary where marine life thrives.

Originally 500 Polynesian settlers lived here but warmongering left it decimated. For the 8 left Aitutaki became their home. Today permission to make the foray through a single challenging passage is paramount. Beauty and tranquillity are its trademarks

ATIU

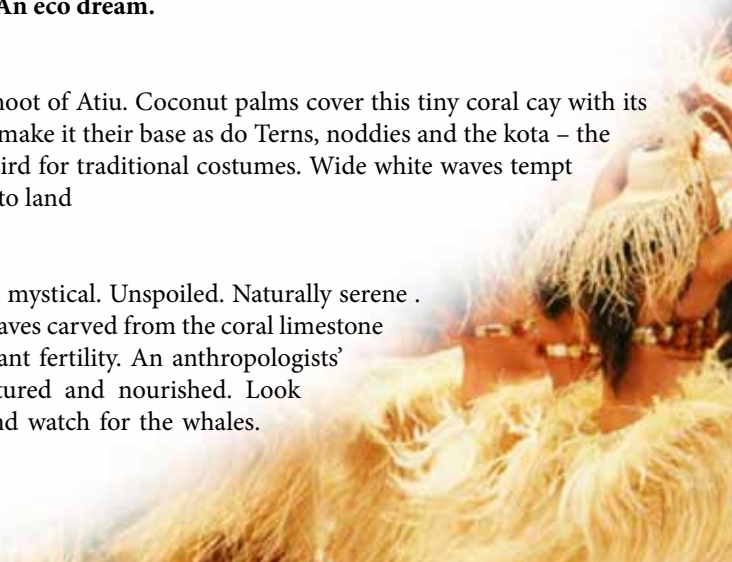
Enuamanu - land of the birds. A volcanic core bordered by coral and cliffs. Lush green forests. White crested surf. Coffee fragrance wafting in the breeze. Unusual in its structure, the wild jungle landscape and unique bird caves that riddle its coast appeal to the explorer; its legends and traditions like the tumunu fascinate visitors. An ornithologists' haven. Home of the Kopeka, the Kakerori and fiery coloured Kura. Exotic and rugged. An eco dream.

TAKUTEA

Enua-Iti (Small Island.) Isolated. Uninhabited. Never settled. An offshoot of Atiu. Coconut palms cover this tiny coral cay with its pristine unbroken reef. A sanctuary for seabirds. Red Footed boobies make it their base as do Terns, noddies and the kota – the unofficial emblem of the islands. Feathers from the red-tailed tropicbird for traditional costumes. Wide white waves tempt surfers with their unexpected wake. Permission required by the Ariki to land

MANGAIA

Au' Au. Eighteen million years old. An enchanted place. Ancient and mystical. Unspoiled. Naturally serene . This southernmost island is the coolest of the group. Honeycombs of caves carved from the coral limestone exude magic. Thick foliage fed by submerged streams signals abundant fertility. An anthropologists' paradise and an archaeologists' dream. Traditional crafts are nurtured and nourished. Look for the pupu shell necklaces woven pandanus work and tevaivai. And watch for the whales. Extraordinary beauty.



MANIHIKI

The siren isle of the South Seas. A necklace of tiny coral atolls strung around a vast lagoon it is the epicentre of the famous black pearl industry. 400 people divided between two main islands Tukao and Tauhunu garner their living from these prized jewels of the sea. Farms fringe the shores. Boats buzz back and forth. Water is the backyard and provides bounty. Not only precious pearls but marine life is plentiful. Titi, giant clams – the flowers of the lagoon, crayfish and maroro. Rito – the young coconut frond fibre – prized for its hats and bags. Pandanus mats. Charm.

RAKAHANGA

As sister island to Manihiki – which was supposed to have broken off from the atoll – it is also one of the most isolated. And at risk of disappearing. So low lying the water levels could wash it away. 150 Rakahangans live off land and sea from an abundance of local fish and the food supply of its sister island. Fine weaving and craftwork are a signature. Good humour guaranteed. Lush. Accessible only by sea.

MAUKE

Akatokomanava. Wild flowers blooming. The garden isle. Exotic. Fishermen fringing the reef. Pockets of golden beaches and secret caves with a tracery of underground chambers leading to the sea. Cool waters sunk deep inside. Unique attractions? Ziona (Divided) Church and the banyan tree said to cover over an acre of land. The home of maire meant for chiefly garlands and miracle oil, sought after for its healing powers. A fragrant place of languid pace.

MITIARO

Nukuroa. 200 people living the life of 50 years ago. Fish skulking around the reefs. Cool underground caves and freshwater pools filled with healing powers. Voices raised in harmony on a Sunday. Large lavish lakes – tranquil and clear. An original fort built on the makatea as protection from the marauding Atiu warriors. Tiny coves and secluded beaches make this little raised coral island a jewel in the Cook Islands crown. Leisurely pace. Fragrant maire vines. Immaculate.

NASSAU

Te Nuku-o-Ngalewu when patrolled by nearby Pukapuka. Renamed Te Motu Ngaongao when the Manihikians drifted to its shores. Ruled by its neighbour Pukapuka. Another Eden of the Pacific. Tiny and set on a coral reef – a sand cay with no lagoon yet lush with



vegetation, copra plantations, taro crops and a rich bounty of fish from the reef. Its 70 people live off the land. Visitors are rare but greeted with warmth and generosity.

PALMERSTON

Home Island. Unique in its history. A perfect tropical atoll. The reef, strung with tiny islets and sandy cays like a necklace around the vast blue lagoon. Flecks of coral spear its water. Parrot fish swarm beneath. English is the first language thanks to Leicestershire man Captain William Masters who settled here with his three Polynesian wives. Of the thousands of world scattered descendants, 70 are still there. A Pacific gem.

PENRHYN

Tongareva – ‘south floating in space’ - the largest and northernmost island. Deep blue lagoon waters cover 233sq. metres. Glistening shores coated with pearl shell. The best weavers of rito hats, mats, fans and jewellery items inlaid with pearl. A paradise for fishing fanatics and seafood admirers. Bone fishing is a lure. For the intrepid explorer who may discover getting here is a challenge. Inter island flights and boat trips very irregular.

PUKAPUKA

Te Ulu-o-Te-Watu. Ancient with historical ties to Samoa as far back as 2000 years. A distant coral atoll; fan shaped and strung with three small islets tracing a clear blue lagoon. Self sufficient and run on strong socialistic principles its culture and different language provide its people (some 400) with distinctive character and a strong matriarchal lean. Conservation practiced for centuries ensures abundant crop growth. Seafood, fish, taro and birdlife abound. All sports flourish. Original, creative crafts. And known for its beautiful women.

SUWARROW

Treasure Island. “The most romantic island in the world”. Isolated. And uninhabited for much of the year. A yachties’ delight with its natural harbour. The only non Polynesian settlement. Sighted in 1814 by the Russian ship Suvorov - hence its name. A bird sanctuary for thousands of seabirds forming a white cloud swooping and soaring over the brilliant blue lagoon spiked by coral kaoa. Green turtles and coconut crab crawl languidly on the white sand. A secluded haven.



Team Cook Islands at the Olympic Games

1988 Seoul / KOREA

Chef de Mission Hugh Henry (CISOA President)
ATHLETICS William Taramai, Erin Tierney
BOXING Zekaraia Williams, Richard Pittman, Tereapii Maea
WEIGHTLIFTING Joseph Kauvai, Michael Tererui

1992 Barcelona / SPAIN

Chef de Mission Terry Hagen (CISOA President)
ATHLETICS Mark Sherwin
WEIGHTLIFTING Sam Pera Snr

1996 Atlanta / USA

Chef de Mission James Little (CISOA Snr Vice President)
Admin Delegate Vainga Tonga (Sports Development Officer)
ATHLETICS Mark Sherwin, Ray Preston - Manager / Coach
SAILING Turia Vogel
WEIGHTLIFTING Sam Pera Snr, Michael Tererui - Manager / Coach

2000 Sydney / AUSTRALIA

Chef de Mission Rosie Blake (CISOA Assistant Secretary General)
Admin Delegate Lydia Sijp (CISOA Administration Officer)
ATHLETICS Teina Teiti, Ray Preston - Manager / Coach
SAILING Turia Vogel
WEIGHTLIFTING Sam Pera Snr, Michael Tererui - Manager/Coach

2004 Athens / GREECE

Chef de Mission Rosie Blake (CISNOC Assistant Secretary General)
Admin Delegate Robert Graham (Sports Development Officer)
Team Attache John Tierney (CISNOC Vice President)
ATHLETICS Harmon Harmon, Tereapii Tapoki, Harmon Harmon Snr Manager /



WEIGHTLIFTING Coach, Andy O'Brien Manager /Coach
Sam Pera Snr, Tony Hole Manager / Coach

2008 Beijing / CHINA

Chef de Mission Paul Allsworth (CISNOC Vice President)
Admin Delegate Nga Rima (Administration Manager)
ATHLETICS Gordon Heather, Tereapii Tapoki, Siniva Marsters - Manager / Coach, Patrick Hellier - Manager /Coach
SWIMMING Petero Okotai, Ray Preston Manager /Coach
WEIGHTLIFTING Sam Pera Jnr, Sam Pera Snr - Manager/Coach

2012 London/ GREAT BRITAIN

Chef de Mission Geroge George Williamson (CISNOC Vice President)
Admin Delegate Siniva Marsters (Administration Manager)
Team Attache Puna Mitchell
ATHLETICS Patricia Taea, Patrick Tuara, John Teiti - Manager / Coach
CANOE SLALOM Ella Nicholas, Sue Clarke – Manager, Aaron Osbourne - Coach
SAILING Helema Williams, Anne Tierney – Manager, Ben Paton - Coach
SWIMMING Tapaia Payne, Celeste Brown, Romani Katoa - Manager, Hugh Dokter - Coach
WEIGHTLIFTING Luisa Peters, Unakea Kauvai – Manager, Sam Pera Snr – Coach

2016 Rio de Janeiro / BRAZIL

Chef de Mission Robert Bruce Graham (CISNOC Secretary General)
Admin Delegate Siniva Marsters (CISNOC Sports Manager)
Team Attache Bernado Calfat Grabowsky
Team Physio Paul Aitu
ATHLETICS Patricia Taea, Alex Beddoes, Anthony Fairweather – Coach, Keith Roberts – Coach
CANOE SLALOM Ella Nicholas, Bryden Nicholas, Robert Nicholas – Manager, Jimmy Bercon – Coach
SAILING Teau McKenzie, Peter Taua Elisa Henry, Rachel Basevi – Coach, Charles Baillie Strong – Coach
SWIMMING Tracy Keith-Matchitt, Wesley Roberts, Romani Katoa – Manager, Horst Miede – Coach
WEIGHTLIFTING Luisa Peters, Unakea Kauvai – Manager









Rio 2016™

