



THE SUCCESS STORY



OCEANIA WEIGHTLIFTING INSTITUTE, SIGATOKA • FIJI

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INSTITUTE.

In January 2002, the General Secretary of the Oceania Weightlifting Federation, Mr Paul Coffa shifted to Sigatoka, Fiji and in doing so he decided to establish a weightlifting centre for the Pacific athletes in Sigatoka.

With the assistance of the Nadroga Province and in particular, Ratu Sakiusa Makutu on the 12th April, 2002, the Oceania Weightlifting Institute was officially opened.



Seiuli Paul Wallwork , OWF President officially opens the Institute.

OBJECTIVES:

The purpose for the Oceania Weightlifting Federation establishing this Institute was:

- (a) To assist athletes within the Pacific region to train in a professional environment.
- (b) To prepare elite athletes of the Pacific for major international events such as the South Pacific Games, the Commonwealth Games, World Championships and of course the Olympic Games.
- (c) To educate further the athletes in the requirements of preparation for major international events.
- (d) To provide a platform for regional coaches to further their coaching experience with elite athletes.
- (e) To assist the region in the promotion of Technical officials.

2002

Since the Institute was opened on the 12th April, 2002, the results have been outstanding. The major success for 2002 was the Commonwealth Games held in Manchester. Lifters who trained at the Institute produced outstanding results by winning

2 gold, 5 silver and 9 bronze medals.



The Nauru Women and Men Team at the Manchester Commonwealth Games.

The Fiji Weightlifting Federation (FWF) also benefited tremendously in 2002. With the assistance of the Institute, Fiji was provided with an opportunity to develop its Federation. In October 2002 the first ever national championships was held in Levuka, Fiji, with 40 lifters taking part, followed by another tournament held at the Institute for the F.W.F. in December 2002.

In 2002, 54 lifters from 7 countries trained at the Institute. Some full time and some part

2003 **THE SUCCESS CONTINUED IN 2003.**

The focus in 2003 was the South Pacific Games held in Suva. The lifters training at the Institute accounted for 77% of Gold medals, 80% of silver medals and 64% of bronze medals won at the South Pacific Games.



Three Pacific top lifters at the South Pacific Games.



The Fiji National Team at the South Pacific Games.

From August to December, 2003, the OOTC program came into force and this enabled certain lifters to train full time at the Institute for lengthy periods. They benefited greatly from this especially in their approach to major events.



Sioe Haioti from Niue.



Sam Pera Junior from the Cook Islands.

In 2003, 57 lifters from 12 countries trained at the Institute. Again some of these athletes trained for a long period of time with a few training for a shorter period.

2004

The first six months of 2004 again we saw 70 Lifters from 9 Countries training at the Institute preparing this time for the Oceania and South Pacific Championship, an Olympic Qualification event.

All Oceania lifters, who have qualified, (with the exception of the two Australians,) or received invitation cards to compete at the Athens Olympic Games train or have trained at the Institute.

The lifters of the Pacific competing in Athens are as follows:

<u>Nauru:</u>	Yukio Peter (IOC Scholarship) Reanna Solomon (IOC Scholarship) Itte Detenamo (OOTC program)
<u>Samoa:</u>	Uati Maposua
<u>PNG:</u>	Dika Toua (Solidarity & OOTC program)
<u>FSM:</u>	Manuel Minginfel (Solidarity & OOTC program)
<u>A. Samoa:</u>	Eleei Ilalio (OOTC program)
<u>Kiribati:</u>	Meameaa Thomas (Solidarity)
<u>Fiji:</u>	Ivy Shaw (FASANOC)
<u>Cook Islands:</u>	Sam Pera (Solidarity & OOTC program)

Ten lifters representing eight countries of the Pacific competed at the Athens Olympic Games. Dika Toua (PNG) three times PNG Sports woman of the Year, placed 6th, which was the highest placing of any Pacific athlete from any sport.



Oceania lifters training at the Institute in preparation to the Oceania Championships in Suva, Fiji.



Pacific lifters staying in Sigatoka at the Oceania Weightlifting Institute together with IWF officials, Mr. Robert Nagy and Mr. Attila Adamfi.

THE NEXT FOUR YEARS 2004-2008

The results that the Institute has achieved in the last two and half years has been great.

We are now at the crossroads. In order to achieve even better results than we have so far, we need to now elevate the Pacific lifters standard further in order for them to aim at winning Commonwealth Games medals in Melbourne 2006, and a chance for a medal at the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

With the combined support of the National Federations, the National Olympic Committees, the Oceania National Olympic Committee (IOC Solidarity) and the OOTC Program the Pacific lifters can take the big step forward and achieve these goals.



Success continued when the Institute lifters dominated the Mini South Pacific Games in Palau in the month of August, 2005.

Whilst all of this was happening, Seiuli Paul Wallwork, President of the Oceania Weightlifting Federation, made a special visit to Fiji and in the course of events, convinced Mr. Coffa to relocate the Institute to Samoa, as Samoa was building a world class purpose facility in Tuainamato. The SPG Minister and the Prime Minister of Samoa played a big part in securing the relocation of the Institute, the Coffa family and the elite athletes of the region.



The Institute was relocated to Apia on October 12th, 2005 and was met with instant success when institute lifter, Yukio Peter (Nauru), won a silver medal at the Centennial World Championships in Qatar in December 2005.

Samoa in July 2006 held the biggest international weightlifting event the Pacific has ever seen with 30 countries taking part and massive television coverage not only local, the Pacific region but also international in China. The event was the Commonwealth & Oceania Championships and the first Pacific Rim International. The major event was followed by another success at the World Championships when in the month of October, 2006, Manuel Minginfel (FSM) won a silver medal in Santo Domingo.

Obviously whilst the institute was located in Samoa, the local lifters benefited greatly and produced vastly improved results. There has also been a huge increase in the number of lifters.

Institute lifters at the South Pacific Games 2007 won 39 out of the 45 gold medals.



The Minister for the SP Games opens the Oceania Weightlifting Institute in Apia-Samoa on October 12th 2005



The accommodation in Apia-Samoa for the Institute lifters.



The First Pacific Rim International tournament held in July 2006 in Apia

The Institute has also produced in the last two years one of the greatest female athletes the region has ever seen, Samoan, Ele Opeloge. Ele holds every Oceania and South Pacific record in the 75+kg category. She holds the snatch record with 119kg, the clean & jerk record with 151kg and the combined total record of 269kg.

She placed 4th in Beijing in the +75Kg category.

A NEW ERA

In February 2008, the Oceania Weightlifting Institute and the Oceania Weightlifting Federation headquarters has been shifted to Noumea, New Caledonia. The New Caledonia Government is building a brand new weightlifting institute to cater for the relocation.

The Institute has a temporary training facility until January 2009 when the brand new institute and accommodation facilities will be officially opened for the athletes.

We believe the relocation will be a further boost to the sport of weightlifting in the region.

The lifters from Oceania competing in Beijing placed as follows:

Men

<u>Australia</u>	Damon Kelly placed 9 th in the +105Kg category
<u>Nauru:</u>	Itte Detenamo, placed 10 th in the +105Kg category
<u>FSM:</u>	Manuel Minginfel placed 11 th in the 62Kg category
<u>Cook Islands:</u>	Samuel Pera junior placed 12 th in the +105Kg category
<u>Tonga:</u>	Maamaloa Lolohea placed 13 th in the +105Kg Category
<u>Kiribati:</u>	David Katoatau placed 15 th in the 85Kg category
<u>New Zealand</u>	Mark Spooner placed 21 st in the 69Kg Category
<u>New Zealand</u>	Richard Patterson placed 21 st in the 77Kg Category
<u>Tuvalu:</u>	Logona Esau placed 23 rd in the 69Kg category
<u>Fiji:</u>	Joe Vueti placed 23 rd in the 77Kg category

WOMEN

<u>Samoa:</u>	Ele Opeloge, placed 4 th in the +75Kg category
<u>PNG:</u>	Dika Toua, placed 8 th in the 53Kg Category
<u>Australia</u>	Deborah Lovely placed 8 th in the +75Kg category
<u>Solomon Islands:</u>	Wendy Hale placed 12 th in the 58Kg category