



PARIS 2024



2024 Paris Olympics

Samoa Swimming Report

Dr. Suzie Schuster
National Coach / Secretary General
Samoa Swimming Federation

OVERVIEW

The long-standing rules for Universality Placements (UP) Invites were abruptly changed in April 2024, three months before the 2024 Paris Olympics. Traditionally, the swimmers from each nation vying for a UP invite must attend the World Long Course Championships before the Olympics. The year leading up to the 2024 Olympics offered two Long Course Championships as qualifiers, Fukuoka in August 2023 and Doha in February 2024. The fastest swimmer (FINA points) would typically receive the invitation to attend the Olympics.

Samoa Swimming ensured that the two top senior males and two top senior females for Samoa could attend these qualifying events, so they were positioned to receive an invite. In April 2024, World Aquatics made an executive decision and removed the requirement to participate in the World Championships to qualify for the UP invite. World Aquatics then released a ranking document for each country and earmarked the top Aqua Points male and female to receive the UP invite.

While this is a transparent process and supports the World Aquatics aim that the 'fastest' of each country should represent at the Olympics, the new ranking system caused strife and stress for the SSF.

With SSF's top female officially retiring in January 2024, we could not prepare our 15-year-old (now ranked 1st) for such a large-scale event as the Olympics. Thus, we completed all the paperwork to nominate our third-ranked female, as she had represented Samoa for five years, competed at three world events, and was prepared to compete at the Olympic level.

Now that SSF is fully aware of the rules for UP invites (under the new qualification system), SSF will take a more decisive role in ensuring all junior and senior swimmers have opportunities to compete at Open International events. With the new quadrennial, we are tracking our key swimmers to move along the elite pathway over the next four years.

Male Vetting for the 2024 Paris Olympics UP Invite

Johann Stickland was ranked first for Samoa Swimming in the 100-freestyle event and received the UP invite for the 2024 Paris Olympics. The SSF did not contest this invitation and fully supported it.

Female Vetting for 2024 Paris Olympic UP Invite



SAMOA SWIMMING FEDERATION
 Email: samoaswimmingfederation@gmail.com
 Mobile: (+6 85)7771930

15 May 2024

Female Swimmer SAMOA for Olympic Consideration (Non-Qualified Pathway)

Consideration: Salani Sa'aga Registration # (DOB 10/05/2008)

Ranking	Olympic Event	Time	World Aquatic Points
1 st Female	100m backstroke	1:07.79	804

Salani has been swimming for Samoa since August 2023. Her three (3) competitions she has represented Samoa in:

- Commonwealth Youth Games Trinidad and Tobago, August 2023
- Pacific Games Solomon Islands, November 2023
- Oceania Swim Championships Gold Coast, April 2024

Salani has progressively improved with each competition, moving from 400+ Aqua points to breaking the 800 Aqua points mark for an Olympic event. Salani is presently the leader of our development swimmers, breaking national age records and securing placements in competition events. She was not earmarked for Olympic consideration as she has a limited portfolio of high-level competitions such as World Championships and other internationally staged open events. Salani's development path for 2024 includes Oceania 2024 (completed), Junior Pan Pacs (August), and World Championships (SCM) in Budapest (December). Salani has much potential and can realistically aim for qualifying times for the 2028 LA Olympics. We do not encourage fast-tracking her career as our athletes must be fully equipped to compete and attend high-calibre events like the Olympics. Given her age, current training, and resources, we firmly believe that Salani will continue to lead in her events for the new quadrennial cycle. Focus on mental acumen, psychological training and competition performance strategies, and targeted cycle planning must be prioritised.

Consideration: Kaiya Brown Registration #213131 (DOB 04/17/2004)

Ranking	Olympic Event	Time	World Aquatic Points
2 nd Female	50m freestyle	28.04	598

Kaiya has been swimming for Samoa since 2019. She has represented Samoa on the World stage at three World Aquatic Championships. She is a silver medal holder for the Pacific Games in 2019 and 2023 and a multiple Medal holder for Oceania 2024 Gold Coast. She is presently the co-captain for Team Samoa. She is a mature 20-year-old swimmer who is an outstanding Sports Ambassador for Samoa through her tertiary studies in Sports Administration at the Auckland University of Technology.

Swim History and Accomplishments for Team Samoa

- 2019 Pacific Games Samoa
- 2022 Junior Pan Pacs Hawaii
- 2022 World Aquatics Championships (SCM) Melbourne
- 2023 World Aquatics Championships (LCM) Fukuoka
- 2023 Pacific Games Solomon Islands
- 2024 World Aquatics Championships (LCM) Doha
- 2024 Oceania Swimming Championships Gold Coast

President <i>Kerrie Funiwalu</i>	Vice President <i>Fitimalu Donna Aiono Le Togalua</i>	Secretary General <i>Suzie Schuster</i>
--	---	---

Samoa Swimming Final Report



SAMOA SWIMMING FEDERATION

Email: samoaswimmingfederation@gmail.com
Mobile: (+685)7771930

Kaiya has complied with the reporting requirements set out for the Samoa Swimming Federation, has represented Samoa multiple times at Open events, demonstrated upstanding behaviour on Team Samoa, and showcased Olympic values through their actions, training ethic, competitive spirit and cultural heritage as presented in the Junior Pan Pac (Hawaii) performance. Kaiya has completed workshops and seminars on athlete well-being, high-performance pressure, stress and the high-performance athlete. She has taken the necessary steps to prepare to compete at the Olympic level.

Outcome:

The Samoa Swimming Federation endorses Kaiya Brown for the Universality Placement invite (female).



Kerrie Punivalu, President

15 May 2024

(Name, Title and Signature)

(Date)

President
Kerrie Punivalu

Vice President
Fitimalu Donna Aiono Le Tagalos

Secretary General
Suzie Schuster

World Aquatics accepted and approved this request. Additionally, the Sa'aga family was informed of the ranking, and Salani abdicated her invitation to the Olympics, thus allowing Kaiya Brown to receive the invitation.

RESULTS

Kaiya Brown

Event Pt	Heat	Placing	RT	Seed Time	Final Time	World Rank	PI Rank	AQUA
50m Freestyle	5/10	7th	7.1	28.04	28.31	48/79	3rd	580 (behind Fiji & PNG)

Johann Stickland

Event Pt	Heat	Placing	RT	Seed Time	Final Time	World Rank	PI Rank	AQUA
100m Freestyle	3/10	8 th	.65	52.08	52.94	66/79 (24.54/28.30)	1st	693

SWIM ANALYSIS

Johann, a seasoned swimmer training in Australia, did not approach his race with effective tactics. His split times were 4 seconds apart, producing a +4 second positive split. While nerves and excitement played into the lack of strategic performance, his training programme is being queried as a +4 positive split, indicating a gap in the training effect. His reaction time is on point, and his stroke mechanics are ideal, but his back-end race mechanics, lactate response, breath control and stroke rate need significant improvement. He held his taper well during the lead-up to his event on day four, and his final time was within 3% of his season-best time. However, Johann's events have a lot of growth potential, which needs to be addressed for this new quadrennial cycle.

Kaiya had a significant challenge holding a taper to day eight. She raced in the 50m freestyle and ranked 48th overall. Her performance was on point mechanically, but she encountered a head cold two days before her event. It was not easy to hold a taper for a long time, and physically and mentally challenging. Her time was within 3% of her personal best time of the season. Kaiya, a tertiary student and part-time coach in Auckland, needs to readdress her training programme and intentions for the new millennial. She is a stronger middle-distance swimmer, and if she intends to continue pursuing sprint events, her training regime must align with this.

OVERALL REPORT (Johann)

Johann performed well in the pool and was a social member of Team Samoa. He engaged in all the events, programmes, and incentives for Olympic athletes within the village. Furthermore, he made many friends with Team Samoa and Oceania athletes, a social goal for all Olympic athletes—engagement and social inclusion. It is recommended that Johann invest more time into his training regime aligning with competitions to gain the experience and nurture the maturity needed for elite athlete performance.

OVERALL REPORT (Kaiya)

As mentioned, Kaiya had a long lead-up to her event on day 8. She maintained a positive attitude, daily regimen, and training programme. Two days before her event, she contracted a head cold, which was not easy mentally to manage. Overall, she had a very positive attitude and showed a high level of maturity with all interactions—training and village events. She continues to work on managing her performance anxiety issues through journaling and reflection activities. She was an easy athlete to manage, though it would be recommended that she invest more time in her training programme to achieve competitive times and AQUA points.

OVERALL REPORT (TEAM SAMOA)

The team's Samoa management was dedicated and hard-working before and throughout the entire Games. They tirelessly ensured all athletes' well-being and needs were addressed daily. Being a small team housed within the Oceania section in the village brought additional support services for the team in terms of medical rooms, meeting areas, administrative support, and social well-being. This exceptional management team worked together to assist the sports management and the athletes to perform optimally. We want to thank the Team Samoa CDM, Management, and Board for creating a superior game experience for the entire team.

END NOTE

This was a wonderful experience for the Samoa Swimmers on Team Samoa. I thank the SASNOC Board, SASNOC administration, Team Samoa Leaders, and Management for their effective leadership. The swimmers grew from this experience and showed that their regional competitiveness is ranked high (top 3), while their World performance is within the 50-60th percentile. It is the goal of SSF to have a swimmer qualify for the Olympics but know that this will take two – to three more Olympic cycles to achieve. Meanwhile, we applaud Johann and Kaiya's performances and continue to add to the growing history of competitive sport in Samoa through swimming.