

## HANUABADA - THE GOLDEN VILLAGE

Four years ago at the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games, Papua New Guinea (PNG) made history by winning two gold medals at one Games and both of these medals came from weightlifting.

Dika Toua, the golden girl of PNG, four times Olympian, won gold in the 53kg category. And a young man by the name of Steven Kari produced an outstanding performance in winning gold in the 94kg category. Both athletes are Hanuabada natives. The village in PNG is known as the golden village. These two athletes are the pride and joy of the seven and half million Papua New Guineans.

At these Games on the Gold Coast next week, both lifters are going for back to back gold. It won't be easy but they are very confident in pulling it off. But they will not be the only two lifters from Hanuabada looking for gold. There is another lifter, who is favourite in the 62kg category to win gold – Morea Baru. He is ranking first in the Commonwealth and well ahead of his oppositions. What a coup it would be, for the village of Hanuabada. A village which is in Port Moresby and thrives on producing international lifters.



**Steven Kari 2014 Glasgow Gold medallist**



**Glasgow's Gold medallist Dika Toua**

Dika Toua has competed at four Olympic Games with her best placing in 6<sup>th</sup> position at the Athens Games. The Gold Coast will be her fourth Commonwealth Games. She won silver in 2006 and gold in 2014. Morea Baru placed 6<sup>th</sup> at the Rio Olympic Games in 2016.

And there is a very long list of lifters coming from Hanuabada who have competed at Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games and World Championships over the years. Question is, what makes the village of Hanuabada so successful at the international weightlifting scene. The village thrives on only two weightlifting clubs.



**Paul Coffa with Douglas Mea in Hanuabada**

The coach of one of these two clubs, is Douglas Mea. Douglas has an eye for identifying young talent and then turning them in to top national and regional lifters. He has been doing this for many years. Douglas himself was a former top lifter for PNG and together with Frank Robby, another former top lifter for PNG and now a senior official, have been able to mobilise the street kids of Hanuabada into sporting champions.

Supported by a formidable federation, led by Sir John Dawanincurra, President of PNG Weightlifting and President of the PNG Olympic Committee, a leader with long term vision, the Hanuabada lifters have

been given every opportunity, for many years to train with Paul Coffa at the Oceania Weightlifting Institute in Mont Dore, New Caledonia. The six PNG lifters representing their country at these Games, are all from Hanuabada Village and they all resident at the Oceania Weightlifting Institute in New Caledonia. The lifters are as follows:

WOMEN: 48kg category Thelma Toua, 53kg category Dika Toua and 90kg category Lorraine Harry.  
MEN: 62kg category Morea Baru, 77kg category Toua Udia and 94kg category Steven Kari

At the end of the event at these Commonwealth Games, will Hanuabada Village retain its weightlifting supremacy. Only time will tell.

**PAPUA NEW GUINEA WEIGHTLIFTERS AT THE GOLD COAST:**



Steven Kari with 213Kg Clean



Dika Toua Clean & Jerk 105Kg



Thelma Toua with 90Kg Clean & jerk



Morea Baru smashes the Oceania record with 130Kg



Toua Udia snatch with 127Kg



Young Lorraine Harry with 85Kg snatch

A billboard advertisement for PNG weightlifting. On the left, a man in a light blue shirt is pulling open his shirt to reveal a yellow t-shirt with a green and red logo that says 'trukai'. The background is a bright, cloudy sky. On the right, the text reads: 'LIFTING PNG TO GOLD' in large, gold, 3D letters. Below that, it says 'GOLD COAST 2018 COMMONWEALTH GAMES 4TH - 15TH APRIL'. At the bottom right, it says 'SUPPORTING PNG WEIGHTLIFTING FOR MORE THAN 20 YEARS' and 'MOREA BARU | PNG WEIGHTLIFTER | 4 X GOLD MEDALLIST IN 2017'. There is also a small 'trukai' logo at the bottom center.

Morea Baru in billboard around the city of Port Moresby