

# OSEA KOLINISAU



Getting to where I am in my rugby career took a lot of hard work and training. I'm thankful for all of my father's teaching and support. As a pastor, my father taught me that with hard work and faith in Jesus Christ, nothing is impossible. I've seen that come to fruition in my own life. I know that it was Christ who gave me my talent and I'm thankful for the opportunities He's given me to use it for His glory.

Heading to the 2016 Rio Olympics was incredible. When they told me that I would be the one to carry our country's flag, it really meant a lot to me. Whenever I had watched the Olympic opening ceremony prior to that, I would watch the lights, all the sportspersons walking out, and the flags which represented the many countries. Knowing I would be walking this flag out in one of the greatest sporting events in the world made me emotional. Rugby is Fiji's No. 1 international sport. I was proud to be able to represent not only myself and my team, but my family and my country as well. This was a huge honor.

**Osea Kolinisau** is a professional Fijian rugby player who was the flag bearer for his country at the 2016 Rio Olympics. He was also captain of the Fiji sevens team and led it to the gold medal — Fiji's first-ever medal at an Olympic Games. Kolinisau plays professionally in the United States with Major League Rugby.



***"Before I was born the Lord called; from my mother's womb He has spoken my name." — Isaiah 49: 1***



Being at the Olympics brought a whole new level of joy to me. Before, I would always cry when our national anthem was played. But at the Olympic Games, I couldn't help but smile.

People would ask me, "Why are you smiling so much?" And I couldn't answer. I just wanted to laugh because of the joy that was bubbling up inside of me.

But even greater than the chance to represent my country is the privilege I have to represent the Kingdom of God. Nothing compares to that! You can win a gold medal, but the greatest prize is to know you are a child of God. The biggest goal for any person should be to know Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior.

God gives me the joy I have for the game of rugby. He is the source of all my joy. With Christ in me, I experience a peace and calmness that is unexplainable. My teammates and I make sure we pray and spend time with God before and after every time we play. In the mornings, we have devotions together and then again after we train. We all know that Jesus Christ is the reason we play this game. He who saved us from death and brought us to life through His death and resurrection is on our side.

When I'm done playing rugby, I hope that people will look back, see the way I played and realize that I was different — not because of what I did, but because of Whom I believe in. When people see where I am today, I want them to know I got here because of Christ alone.

Without Christ in my life, I wouldn't be the person I am today. I wouldn't have won an Olympic medal. I'm glad God chose me to compete and win, but I'm even more glad that I'm a part of His Kingdom, which is worth more than gold.