

Jefferson Perez

Passion or Profession: Athlete

Period: 1974–

A native of Cuenca, Perez became a national hero when he won his nation's first Olympic gold medal, finishing first in the 20-kilometer race walk at the 1996 Games. Though Perez announced his retirement after placing fourth in the event at the 2000 Olympic Games, he was persuaded to return to competition and set a new world record to win the 20-kilometer race walk at the 2003 World Championships in Paris. He finished fourth in the 20-kilometer and twelfth in the 50-kilometer race walk at his fourth Olympic Games in 2004.

