First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



Ralph Gosein

(Posthumous)

Umpire

Inducted in 2020

Given cricket's long history, the idea of neutral umpires for international matches is relatively new. The sport did not always have the resources to send umpires to various series around the globe (the concept began with one neutral umpire per Test in 1992). Therefore, the umpires that stood in matches in their home territories had to be of the highest integrity, overly familiar with the sport's endless laws and rules, while possessing the judgement to deal with spontaneous occurrences. Ralph Gosein possessed all these qualities, resulting in him being regarded as one of the Caribbean's leading umpires.

After attending Fatima College in Port of Spain, Gosein began his working career at the Chamber of Industry & Commerce. While there, he met Eric Lee Kow who was umpiring in first-class matches and would eventually progress to umpire nine Tests between 1953 to 1960.

Gosein took on the suggestion, took the necessary exams to qualify and began umpiring domestic matches. By 1954, he umpired his debut first-class game, with mentor Lee Kow the other umpire.

His astuteness in the role marked him out for higher level matches, and soon Gosein was amongst the cadre of top West Indian umpires; it would only be a matter of time before he earned a Test call-up.

It happened in March 1965, for West Indies versus Australia at the Queen's Park Oval. Gosein's umpiring partner was Jamaican Douglas Sang Hue in what turned out to be a drawn match. For Gosein, he reached the ultimate stage in his form of officiating, but it was not without nervousness. He later stated, "When I got to the ground and saw the amount of people, I nearly tuned back for home!"

The 1960s to 1980s era did not have the crowded calendar that now forms all formats of the game, and in Gosein's time there was only one series per year by a touring team. Nevertheless, the quality of his umpiring ensured that he stood in every series in the Caribbean between 1965 and 1978. It was not without its challenges. In 1976 in Sabina Park, Gosein was present when Clive Lloyd's West Indies unleashed its first incarnation of its four-pronged pace attack against India. Indian captain Bishin Bedi declared his team's first innings early to protest the persistent short-pitched bowling they were facing, then had no batsmen available after number 5 in the 2nd innings due to injuries sustained. The umpires came in for criticism, but at the time there was no rule to limit the number of short-pitched balls bowled per batsman.

In 1978, again at Sabina Park, when the Windies Vanburn Holder was dismissed by the Australians on the final day, the crowd rioted,

preventing the remaining 38 balls in the match from being bowled. West Indies were 110 runs behind with one wicket left, but Gosein remained steadfast that the match was completed, turning down a request by both teams to play the 38 balls on the next day which would have constituted a six-day Test. The Marylebone Cricket Club that governed the global game before the formation of the ICC upheld Gosein's decision.

The latter part of his umpiring career coincided with a time of great upheaval for cricket, instigated by the advent of World Series Cricket (WSC) by Kerry Packer. When WSC toured the Caribbean in 1979 for five 'Super Tests' and 12 One Day matches, Gosein umpired every game. He then retired from active umpiring in 1980, having given the first-class game 26 years of service.

However Gosein would return to service in the following decade when the Third Umpire was introduced in 1992, and he would fulfil the role enabled by the growing technology within the sport. He carried out the Third Umpire duty until 1997, while also leading the Trinidad and Tobago Umpires Council as President and sitting on the West Indies Umpires Association as Vice-President. The latter was a position that he occupied until his passing in 1999. For his services to cricket, Ralph Gosein was awarded the Hummingbird Medal Gold in 1988, and was posthumously inducted into the Trinidad and Tobago Hall of Fame in 2020.

Test Matches:	**25**
ODIs:	**2**
World Series Cricket Super Tests:	**5**
World Series Cricket ODIs:	**12**