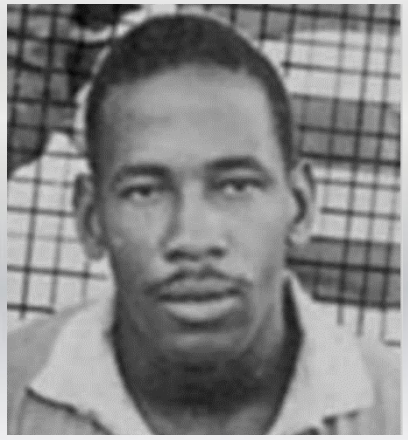
First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



Doyle Griffith

Football

Inducted in 1989

A player that earns national selection at 18 years of age is undoubtedly talented, but confirmation of that talent through longevity at the highest level is harder to achieve. Doyle Griffith held his position as half-back for 15 years in the Trinidad and Tobago football team, taking part in the growth of the squad as well as an unprecedented tour.

The 5-foot 11-inches player was not as naturally talented with the ball as some of the other players of his generation, but had an indomitable spirit once the game began and prepared fantastically well, ensuring that he was always one of the fittest players on the field, which added to his longevity. He could also read the game extremely well, crucial for his position between defence and attack.

Hailing from Point Fortin, his football was good enough to earn him a place on the South team for the coveted Red Cross Cup versus North in 1950, at the age of 18. His performance in that

match – marking the opposition, distributing the ball to the front – was so good that he was called up for national duty soon after. He made his debut against British Guiana in Georgetown in a drawn (1-1) affair.

By 1952, playing for Shell in south Trinidad, he had cemented his place in the national team and was established as one of the best players in the region, emphasized by his inclusion in a Caribbean XI that toured Suriname that year. Griffith was the final piece of a national team puzzle; from the late 1940s they had begun to show real progress and were together long enough to be dubbed the 'Family Eleven'. They won on their travels, won at home and won another inter-colonial tournament. It proved to be the catalyst for them to undertake a bigger challenge, a tour of the United Kingdom.

This they duly did in 1953, Griffith part of the team that boarded the SS Golfito in June of that year. It was the national team's first exposure to international competition outside of the Caribbean region. They secured 5 wins and 3 draws in their 14 games in unchartered territory.

Griffith returned to club duty with Shell, who won the 1957 FA Cup and took the Gooden Chisholm Cup in 1959 by beating a Shamrock side that was on track to win every competition that season. His good performances and consistency earned Griffith another tour to England that year, this time with a British West Indian team containing the likes of Alvin Corneal and Wille Rodriguez.

In 1960 he was made captain of the Trinidad and Tobago team, leading them against the likes of touring team Middlesex Wanderers. Though new players like Sedley Joseph, Lincoln Phillips, Jean Mouttet, and Andy

Aleong were emerging, Griffith remained a national player until 1965, testament to his dedication to the game and his outstanding play as a half-back. His career was one of the longest by any Trinbagonian player, spanning the pre-independence era of inter-colonial tournaments and the post-independent entry into the World Cup qualification matches.

He eventually migrated to the USA, and was honoured for his contribution to Trinidad and Tobago football with induction into the Trinidad and Tobago Sports Hall of Fame in 1987.