First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



Aldwyn Hislop

Basketball

Inducted in 1989

The sport of basketball owes its popularity to the likes of Aldwyn Hislop, one of the pioneers of the game, who was part of many ‘firsts’ that created the path towards the modern game.

A student at Queen’s Royal College in Port of Spain, the teenaged Hislop gravitated towards the school’s main sports of football, cricket and athletics, showing particular prowess in the latter as a quarter-miler who could also double up as a 220 yard/200m runner. An injury in athletics diverted his attention to the basketball court, and the rest is history.

If his long frame was suited to running middle distances, it absolutely fit the requirements on the basketball court. His commanding presence got him noticed by the Woodbrook Limers team. Soon, Hislop was not only a stalwart of one of the best teams in the country in the then burgeoning sport, but he was elevated to captain.

Under his leadership, the team swept all before them and soon were undertaking new challenges, such as regional tours.

In 1956, Woodbrook Limers accepted an invitation to play in British Guiana, the first team from abroad to play a series in the British colony. Hislop and the Limers wowed the local crowds, beating the Canadian Navy team that were also part of the series, 58-43, with Hislop scoring 13 points. In their next game, they defeated local team Clowns 60-26, before beating the Guiana national team 59-31, Hislop contributing 11 points. In a second match against the same opposition, Limers won 51-36 and sealed the series win.

In 1958, while on assignment for his employer Shell in the French West Indies, Hislop broadened his international experience by representing the French Universities team versus the Dutch Universities team. With the standard of play in Trinidad and Tobago leagues rising steadily, in part due to players such as Hislop, the nation was ready to form a national basketball team, appropriately led by Hislop.

As the first ever national basketball captain, he led the squad on a tour to Martinique and was at the helm when the world-renowned Harlem Globetrotters visited Trinidad in 1955. As their experience and exposure grew, the team earned the right to represent Trinidad and Tobago at the 1962 Central American and Caribbean (CAC) Games, held in Jamaica. The team finished out of the medals in a tournament won by Mexico, but the experience was invaluable. Hislop, now 34 years old, retired from playing competitive basketball after the Games, having achieved the landmark of taking a team to an international games, but was far from done with the sport.

By 1963 he became the first Trinbagonian to be certified as an international basketball referee, displaying such competence at the regional level that the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) selected him to officiate at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. This he did with aplomb, evidenced by his second stint as an official at the 1968 Olympics at Mexico City. In between, Hislop coached both the men's and women's national basketball teams, during which time the men's team were one of the top two teams in the English-speaking Caribbean.

With his tenure as national coach ending in the mid-1970s, Hislop displayed further love for the sport by organizing exhibition basketball matches in Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica and Guyana. These matches achieved their goal of enhancing or, in some cases, introducing the sport to new territories.

Though no longer competing officially, the fire of competition could not be put out within Hislop, and throughout his life, up to the age of 79 years old, he would turn up to play his beloved basketball at Harvard Club, every Tuesday and Thursday evening. In 1986, he received an award from the Grenada Basketball Association in recognition of his efforts and contribution for the game in that country. One year later, he was part of the 1987 batch of inductees to the Trinidad and Tobago Sports Hall of Fame, a fitting accolade for a legend of the national basketball landscape.