First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



Jin Hean Ho

Lawn Tennis

Inducted in 1985

A tennis player that participated in the greatest tournament of them all before a world war resulted in him taking root in Trinidad, imparting his play and experience, and naturally, securing a few national titles in his new homeland, Jin Hean Ho was born in Malaysia but soon became a global citizen.

As a student in England, he came into the sport relatively late, in his early 20s, playing at the Inns of Court. A natural ball player, he soon progressed to the elite level and entered the Wimbledon Championships in 1934.

Ho would participate at Wimbledon for six consecutive years, exiting in the early rounds but gaining invaluable experience, evidenced by his reign as champion of Paddington Sports Club from 1935 to 1937. That run at Wimbledon came to an end with the advent of World War II.

Ho returned to Malaysia, which was under Japanese rule, a conundrum that resulted in him representing China, playing against the Japanese Davis Cup player Y Mori, with Ho drawing upon all his Wimbledon experience to win 6-4, 7-5. When the war ended, Ho migrated to Trinidad and Tobago in 1946 and immediately enriched the local tennis scene. He immersed himself on the administrative side of the game, becoming a councillor on the Northern Lawn Tennis Association.

One year later, Ho played against the visiting British Champion, Tony Mottram, and defeated him. In 1948, Trinidad hosted the British West Indies Championship and Ho, now a naturalized citizen, represented Trinidad and Tobago, defeating Jamaican Willie Cooke 6-3, 6-1, and Cooke's countryman Lester Kirkaldy 7-5, 6-1. Inclement weather forced an end to the tournament which was left undecided. In 1949 Ho was made captain of a team that travelled to Jamaica seeking to win the West Indies Championship outright. Ho lead from the front, winning 10-8, 6-0, 2-6, 6-0 against Clinton Nunes. The other Singles and Doubles matches did not go Trinidad and Tobago's way, and Jamaica won the championship 3-1. However, Ho took his good form and returned to Trinidad to win his first national Singles title later that year.

He defended that Singles title in 1950 and added the Doubles title in the same year, partnering with Hunter Archer. Setting his sights on the Mixed Doubles crown, he won it in 1952 with Alice Mildred Cambridge. The pair would go on to secure a hat-trick of national titles. In 1955, despite being 46 years old, he was able to win a third Singles national title, after which he pulled back from competitive play though he remained deeply involved with the sport.

When the British West Indies played Canada in the 1956 Davis Cup series held in Trinidad, Ho was selected as a non-playing captain, emphasising his mentoring role. Remaining a councillor of the Lawn Tennis Association, he utilized his legal training to help form the Association's constitution, part of the bedrock for the governance of the modern game. He was also President of the Colleges Lawn Tennis Association, where he was involved in the promotion of tennis among the youth. Ho served on other entities with wider reach, including the government appointed committee to select a site for the National Stadium (now the Hasely Crawford Stadium).

Ho restricted his play to club level in his later years but emerged to win the National Open Championships Veteran's title in 1971, a full four decades after he first picked up a racquet. An international character who impacted local tennis in a big way, Jin Hean Ho was inducted into the Trinidad and Tobago Sports Hall of Fame in 1985.

National Singles title: **1949, 1950, 1955**

National Doubles title: **1950**

National Mixed Doubles title: **1952-54**