First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



Frederick Taffy Holder

Boxing

Inducted in 1984

Trinidad and Tobago has produced many fine exponents of the art of boxing throughout its sporting history, but few in the lightweight division. This was not the case in the 1920s and 1930s, when the national title was keenly contested by fighters that captured the attention of local fans.

Taffy 'Al Taffy' Holder's rise to eminence amongst the lightweight division helped to build the sport overall. Like many sportsmen of the era, boxing was but one of many sports in which Holder took part. Apart from running track, he was playing first-class football for the mighty Everton FC based in Port of Spain and winners of the league title from 1930-1932.

Holder juggled between his two main sports of football and boxing, but it was not without some close calls. On one occasion he played a knockout match for Everton on a Wednesday, forcing the game to be replayed on a Friday. Holder duly played the match.

Everton won but he could not stay to celebrate because he had to rush home to shower, change and get to the boxing ring for his participation in the evening's main bout, which he also won.

Eventually Holder realized that taking part in both sports was becoming too hectic and settled on boxing. In 1931 the boxer 'Fearless' Freddie was at the top of his reign, one that had many pundits predicting that no local boxer could take his crown. Holder had other ideas, and come the night of his challenge, he outboxed the champion with a display of speed that inflicted Freddie's first defeat, which was thought to be impossible. Like 'Fearless', Holder's reign as champion was a long one.

Even with age when some of his speed was waning, he adapted his style to rely more on power. He was able to take on opponents in the heavier divisions and emerge victorious. His craft in the ring made him popular with the fans and he retired as a local legend in the sport. As such, Taffy Holder was inducted into the Trinidad and Tobago Sports Hall of Fame in 1984.