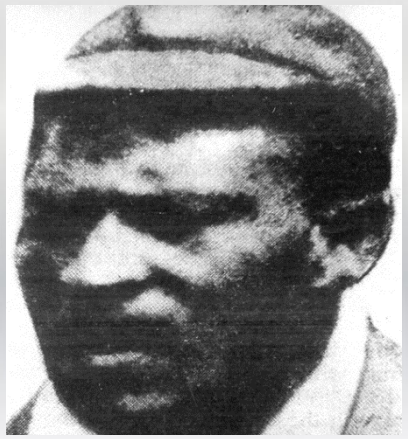
First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



George John

Cricket

Inducted in 1984

West Indian legacy of fast bowling began with the likes of George John. He was fast, very fast, with an ability to cut the ball into the right-handed batsman that would have made for an uncomfortable time at the crease.

His fellow Trinidadian, CLR James, author of the renowned *Beyond A Boundary*, once batted against John and wrote the following description: *'He was just the right height, about five foot ten, with a chest, shoulders and legs on him all power and proportion. He was one of those rare fast bowlers who proposed to defeat you first of all by pace and sheer pace. He ran about fifteen yards, a quick step or two first, a long loping stride that increased until near the crease he leapt into the air and delivered, his arm high. Thunderbolts they were.'*

In his prime years there were not any West Indies tours to any other nation, so John established his fearsome reputation on the local and regional fields of play, making his first-class debut in 1910.

But, as both John and regional cricket were making progress, the First World War began and stymied their development. By the time of the resumption of matches and tours in the early 1920s, John was almost 40 years old, an age where most fast bowlers are reaching for their pipe and slippers. John still had raw pace and guile, sufficient for him to be chosen – even at a bowler's 'retirement age' – for the 1923 West Indies tour to England.

The team had not yet attained Test status but played against County teams that contained many Test players and who were considered the epitome of professional cricket. John took a couple of matches to acclimatize to the English conditions with only one wicket from his first two matches. By his third game at Lords versus Middlesex he took 4 for 52 and 4 for 35 at the home of cricket. Another seven wickets in the next match against Oxford and John was firmly established as the opening strike bowler for the team.

The tour lasted from late May to early September, and by early August John was a well-oiled machine going into the match against Glamorgan. A fiery spell of bowling gave him a career-best figure of 7 wickets for 52 runs. By the last match of the tour John had reduced a Test level quality side, HDG Leveson Gower's XI, to 19 for 6 as they chased a mere 28 runs to win.

In one of his last notable performances he took 5 for 54, playing for Trinidad and Tobago against a touring MCC (Marylebone Cricket Club) side, at the age of 42.

In 1984 John was inducted into the Sports Hall of Fame, while in June 1988, he was honoured with his image on the Trinidad & Tobago 30 cents stamp.