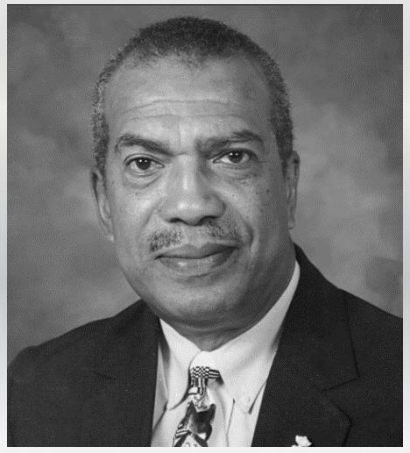
First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



Sedley Joseph

H.B.M.

Football

Inducted in 1985

"One of our great captains." That is the tribute given to this midfielder, who led with his head as well as his skill to take Trinidad and Tobago football to new levels. His composure was a boon for any team for which he played, while his ability to read the game and impart this to his teammates was invaluable and often yielded positive results.

He possessed the uncanny ability to change the flow of a game, with a laid-back style that belied the influence he was having on a match. He was inspirational and respected. It is little wonder then that at the end of 1999 Sedley Joseph was named Trinidad and Tobago's captain of the century.

Hailing from the famous Joseph football family which produced six children who all possessed ball skill, the way was paved for Sedley by his brother Allan, who was a standout midfielder for Maple and Trinidad and Tobago in the late 1940s and 1950s.

From their home on Observatory Street in east Port of Spain, he made the short trip to the hotbed of football, the Queen's Park Savannah. "I grew up on the Savannah looking at the elders play. I grew up in that football atmosphere, so it wasn't difficult for me to move on from being a youngster looking on from behind the goal post, to being in front of the goal post when I grew older."

At St. Mary's College, with its competitive place in InterCol football, Sedley went through the ranks from Colts to the First XI where his leadership skills were evident. But, he was not yet the standout midfielder who could make pinpoint passes to his attacking players, or perfectly position himself in front of his defenders. School football provided the stepping stone towards first-class domestic football. With his brother, Allan, already a Maple legend who had led the team to the League title for four consecutive seasons (1950-53), there was no other team that Sedley was going to play for when he left school in 1958.

Joseph's qualities were now clear and, like many of the new crop of players that debuted in first-class football in the 1958-62 period, he shone immediately. By 1959 he was the Maple captain and began to mould the team into a formidable unit which finished third in the league. The following year they won it, which began a run of four consecutive wins for Maple and meant that Sedley had equalled Allan's feat.

By 1963, and with that fourth league title under his belt, he earned a national call-up for a match against Suriname. Then, in a similar move to his club ascendency, Trinidad and Tobago made him the national captain with a tour to British Guiana his first assignment. It was the beginning of one of the most successful periods for Trinidad and Tobago football, with

the team winning on tours to Barbados, Jamaica, Haiti and holding its own against Costa Rica and Honduras. Joseph instilled the belief that once they marshalled their talent, Trinidad and Tobago could beat anyone. It would prove to be very useful when this incarnation of the team attained its highest achievement.

There was new ground being broken. Trinidad and Tobago had never beaten Suriname, who always proved to be problematic. But in 1964, in Suriname, the intuitive Joseph suggested a couple of players change positions, with positive results as they earned their first win over the South American nation.

With a brace of good results under his leadership, 1967 was a big year for Joseph, Maple and the national team. In January there was the CONCACAF Caribbean zone Championship held in Jamaica, with the hosts, Netherlands Antilles and Haiti, all vying for a spot in the CONCACAF Championship held later in the year in Honduras. The team performed well, finished second to Haiti and booked their place for Honduras.

Returning to the domestic league, Maple secured their 11th League title overall and their 5th under Joseph. Next up, the Pan American Games in Winnipeg, Canada.

Given the opposition, and that this was the first Trinidad and Tobago football team sent to a major Games, there was not a lot of hope of progress beyond the group stage. Joseph's Trinidad and Tobago obliterated that sentiment. They began with a 5-2 dismantling of Colombia (after being down 2-0 at halftime), drew 1-1 with Mexico and

then, in the biggest shock of all, defeated mighty Argentina 1-0. The Argentinians were in disbelief; the Trinbagonians were delirious.

In the semi-final against Bermuda, a bemused Trinidad and Tobago leaked two goals and never recovered. After the euphoria of their earlier results there was initial disappointment, but the team regrouped and defeated Canada 4-1 to win the bronze medal, which remains one of the major achievements of Trinidad and Tobago football.

The captain summed up the experience. “Even before they knew who we were to be grouped with, our passages were booked to come back as we played our last (group) game. They were so sure that we wouldn’t qualify. It was eventually a feeling of elation in that we knew that we had done better than anyone expected of us.”

At the end of the year the team travelled to Honduras for the CONCACAF Championship but suffered losses to Mexico, Honduras and Guatemala. After a busy 1967, Joseph retired from the national captaincy in 1968 but remained at the helm for Maple, leading them to two more League titles that year and in 1969.

His keen football intellect was put to good use as manager of several teams including Maple, and then as a commentator. He mentored many of the national footballers of the 1980s and 1990s, providing insight, advice and motivation.

Sedley Joseph was awarded the Hummingbird Gold Medal in 2005 and was inducted into the Trinidad and Tobago Sports Hall of Fame in 1985.

Pan American Games:	**1967 Bronze Football**
POS League:	**Winner (1960-63, 1967-69)**