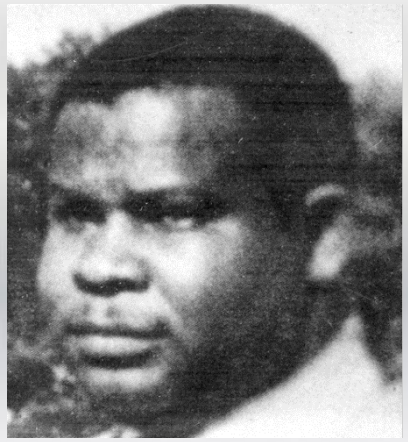
First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



Raymond Reid

Basketball

Inducted in 1989

The unofficial title ‘the father of basketball in Trinidad and Tobago’ is a huge one to bestow upon someone, but it is one that is universally recognized as belonging to Raymond Reid.

Given the grassroots nature of the modern basketball game in Trinidad and Tobago, it would be difficult to imagine that it was once the domain of the middle and upper class communities of the nation. Until the 1940s, basketball was not a game frequently played on public courts, in schools or youth centres. But when Raymond Reid, sportswriter for Radio Trinidad, took an interest, it was not as a player but as a competent administrator who could expand upon the virtues of the game to which he was attracted.

It was a good partnership. In the late 1940s, as Reid was becoming involved, the game was gaining popularity and being played in some schools such as Queen’s Royal College, as well venues such as the Woodbrook Youth Centre.

By 1950 he was elected the Assistant Secretary – then Secretary in 1951 – of the Trinidad Amateur Basketball Association. With some teams such as the Woodbrook Limers going on tours to British Guiana, and the standard of play in Trinidad and Tobago leagues rising steadily, the nation was ready to form a national basketball team which Reid oversaw. He recognized the need for a fledging national team to gain experience and exposure, and ensured that they toured nearby territories such as Martinique.

Reid also achieved a major feat when he arranged for the world-famous Harlem Globetrotters to come to Trinidad to play in 1955, ensuring huge crowds and major promotion for the sport. Under his tenure the tours continued towards the end of the decade. Reid's administrative experience grew when he was selected as a Manager for the British West Indies team for the 1959 Pan Am Games in Chicago (the British colonies of the Caribbean competed under the collective banner in 1959 and at the 1960 Olympics).

In the ensuing years, the efforts of Reid and other dedicated individuals led to another first. As their experience and exposure grew, the national basketball team earned the right to represent Trinidad and Tobago at the 1962 Central American & Caribbean (CAC) Games, held in Jamaica. The team finished out of the medals in a tournament won by Mexico, but the experience was invaluable, and fielding a team at a Games helped to further progress local basketball.

Reid devoted more time to the Anglican church, becoming a priest in 1966. It did not slow his desire to keep growing the sport. When he was made Superintendent of the St. Michael School for Boys, he immediately

introduced basketball to the curriculum, ensuring the popularity that lasts to the modern day. By the early 1970s, his work in taking basketball from its infancy to a wider section of fans and players yielding real progress, Reid began handing over the administrative reins of power to new officials. In 1972 he was awarded the Public Service Medal of Merit Silver for his all-round efforts, while the public courts at Port of Spain's Prince's Building site were named after him.

Beyond basketball, Raymond Reid's life was one of service. When it was lost tragically in a fire in 1980, the nation was shocked. Tributes poured in for the man for whom basketball was his first love, and in 1987 he was posthumously inducted into the Trinidad and Tobago Sports Hall of Fame.