First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



Thor Schjolseth

Football

Inducted in 1984

'The Shamrock crack player was at his best, and when that is the case other players seem childlike.' So said an article in the Trinidad Guardian in 1930, describing a forward and winger who possessed the footwork to sometimes dribble pass three to four defenders.

On that day, Schjolseth was part of the Newtown Port of Spain team, Shamrock, that was attempting to wrest top place in the coveted Port of Spain League from Casuals. That they duly achieved with goals from a Schjolseth who was on fire. It was the type of display that helped Shamrock win the FA Cup in 1927 and put him into the Trinidad and Tobago national team alongside Arthur Maynard and Alfred Charles of Everton, Ellis Achong and Joseph Daniel of Maple, emphasising the healthy spread of the good standard of club football in the 1920s and '30s Trinidad.

He was part of the national team that travelled to British Guiana in 1925 to secure the Martinez Shield – an intercolonial tournament – before retaining it in the return leg in Trinidad the following year.

Schjolseth was born in Trinidad to German parents and joined the 'Café Boys' (as Shamrock was known) straight after leaving school. He is credited with taking the art of dribbling to new levels in local football, whether he was cutting inside from the wing or dancing through the middle, and whether he was then about to lay that sublime pass for his teammate to score, or he was going to unleash a shot on goal himself. The press began to laud his play, with hundreds of fans – not necessarily Shamrock fans – going to the Queen's Park Savannah to see him in action. Thus began Trinidad and Tobago football's love affair with the art of dribbling, sending the crowd into raptures with the wizardry of close control of the ball.

The onset of age saw him drop down a level from Trinidad and Tobago topflight football to eventual Sunday morning Pin Smith football league, where he enjoyed the relaxed environment away from the pressures of chasing titles and trophies.

Schjolseth took up tennis in his latter football years, the competitive fire still burning sufficiently for him to win the national men's doubles title in 1929. He would go on to play until his 60s.

Whenever the topic of a Trinidad and Tobago all-time greatest football team arises, there is always mention of Thor Schjolseth, the man that dazzled crowds and mesmerized opponents, to set a tone for exhilarating play on the local scene. He was inducted into the Trinidad and Tobago Sports Hall of Fame in 1984.