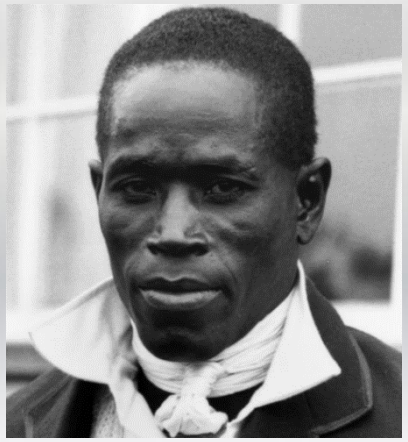
First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



Joseph Small

Cricket

Inducted in 1984

Despite his surname, Joseph Small was a tall, long-limbed athlete, which was useful when he bowled his favoured off-breaks or threw down his medium pacers with his right arm, or when he decided to accelerate the scoring rate with powerful left-handed batting.

Hailing from Princes Town in south Trinidad, Small started playing for Stingo Cricket Club, made up of the lower social classes and whose members were described by CLR James as such: "They were plebeians: the butcher, the tailor, the candlestick maker, the casual labourer, with a sprinkling of unemployed. Totally black and of no social status whatever."

Despite what some would see as a handicap, Small himself was considered a genial player who radiated good nature.

His all-round abilities – which also included being a slip cauldron fielder of note – saw him move through domestic league cricket to eventually make his debut for Trinidad and Tobago in 1910 in the Inter-Colonial Tournament match against British Guiana.

Scoring only 7 runs but taking 4 wickets for 16 runs, he immediately became part of a national team that was trying to stop the dominance of Barbados in the region's premier competition. Later in that same 1910 season, Trinidad and Tobago beat Barbados in the final with Small scoring 17 and 8 with only 1 wicket, but Trinidad and Tobago won the match. He continued to play for Trinidad and Tobago with moderate success and was selected to play for the national team against a touring Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), where he shone in a losing team effort; 25 and 26 scored and his off breaks capturing 7 for 49 runs in the MCC's first innings.

The advent of the First World War put a stop to first-class cricket, but upon resumption in 1920, two years after the end of the global conflict, Small reignited his career against the old enemy Barbados, with 33 and 62 – the latter his first, first-class fifty. There would be more to come. It was quickly followed by his maiden first-class century in his next match, also against Barbados. The battle for regional bragging rights was on and Small was an integral part of it.

Small continued with consistent regional performances that saw him earn selection for the West Indies tour to England – a place earned despite the penchant at the time for only a certain number of black players in the side, which Small's inclusion exceeded.

He began the tour with a fifty (53) and continued 94 and 68 in one match versus Lancashire, 93 and 71 against Nottinghamshire. Together with regular wickets in each match, he finished the tour with 776 runs at an average of 31.04 and took 19 wickets at an average of 33.47

Small had impressed the counties enough that both Hampshire and Sussex asked him to go through the qualifying process to enable him to play for their teams. Small refused. He had no desire to play abroad, and cricket provide a class and societal elevation in Trinidad that satisfied him.

Five years later, in the five selection matches to pick the team that would take part in the first ever West Indies Test match series, Small scored 81 and took five wickets; he would be returning to England to play for the Windies.

In the first Test he took two wickets but made duck in the first innings as the team struggled to cope with the superior play of cricket's highest level. In the second innings he bounced back with 52 runs in an hour and a half at the crease, to become the first West Indian to score a fifty in Test cricket. He played one more Test in 1930 at Queens Park Oval, scoring 20 and 5.

Returning to the Inter-Colonial Tournament, Small was part of the winning Trinidad and Tobago team in the 1931-32 edition, again breaking the domination of the Barbados team.

His love of the game meant that he played local league cricket until his early fifties (quite apt given the place in West Indies history) while working at the Trinidad Leaseholds oil company. The man that set the

path for the West Indies Test team with the first ever batting milestone was inducted into the Trinidad and Tobago Sports Hall of Fame in 1984.

Matches: Tests 3; First Class 77

Bowling: Test Wickets 3, Average 61.33; First Class Wickets 165, Average 27.81; Five

Wicket Innings: 7

Batting: Tests 77 runs, Average 13.16, Fifties 1; First Class 3,063 runs, Average 26.17, Hundreds 4, Fifties 16