First Citizens Sports Foundation

# HALL OF FAME



## Rupert Tang Choon

**Cricket**

**Inducted in 1985**

The leg-break googly is the domain of the truly specialist bowler. Sangre Grande born Rupert Tang Choon was a master of the art, representing Trinidad and Tobago at a time when the region was making its first steps from regional first-class cricket, to the highest level: Test matches.

He appeared on the domestic first-class scene at the age of 20, when he took 8 for 32 while playing for North Trinidad in the then prestigious Beaumont Cup.

He was seen as an all-rounder, a title that he took ownership of with his fourth first-class performance against Barbados in a tight Inter-Colonial tournament match in 1936. He made 72 (batting at number 8) in the first innings, then took 6 wickets for 123 and 3 for 131, to help Trinidad and Tobago to victory by 36 runs. Two years later, against British Guiana, Tang Choon took 3 for 13 and 5 for 81, to bowl Trinidad and Tobago to an innings victory.

He was now established as one of the leading leg spinners in the Caribbean, one that could add crucial runs at the tail end of the order. As such, he was considered for the 1939 West Indies tour to England, only losing out on a place when the selectors opted for more specialist spinners who did not bat as well as Tang Choon.

Undeterred, he focused more on his batting, with immediate results as his first-class average rose to 45.66 in the 1940 season. Inter-Colonial cricket remained his stage, but he also played most first-class matches against touring sides such as England, India and Australia. By 1944 he had scored his first ton, 132 against Barbados at Port of Spain, with his finest performance perhaps being the 103 against the touring English team, where he and Gerry Gomez put on 244 runs for the 4th wicket partnership. If it got the attention of the West Indies selectors, then his scores of 17 and 7 in the subsequent first-class match may have harmed his chances of selection.

By 1951 he was experienced enough to be named Trinidad and Tobago cricket captain, but returned to being a specialist batsman for the team the following season, which brought his third century: 104 versus British Guiana. The touring 1955 Australian team would be his last opponents, a testament to Tang Choon's longevity and ability, as he took to the field at 40 years old.

For his long and outstanding contribution to Trinidad and Tobago cricket, Rupert Tang Choon was inducted into the Trinidad and Tobago Sports Hall of Fame in 1985.

**Matches: First Class 52**

**Batting: First Class 2,656 runs, Average 34.05, Fifties 17, Hundreds 3**

**Bowling: First Class Wickets 59, Average 36.01**