First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



Conrad B. Tench

Football

Inducted in 1984

At 6 feet 3 inches, Botha Tench was seemingly built for purpose. Blessed with all-round sporting abilities that would also see him shine on the national hockey team, it was in football that Tench made a name for himself as a center back whose style is still revered today.

His ability was evident from secondary school, Queen's Royal College (QRC), and it was a natural progression for him to join the Casuals club upon leaving school. By 1932, at 20 years of age, he was their captain, shoring up the back line but given to amazing displays like the occasion that he scored seven goals in a 10-2 defeat of Notre Dame. His style was described as a roving center back, who saw his role as much more than its defensive requirements. He coordinated his play with his wingers, always looking for that long pass that would release them. His height also made Tench a natural target for corner kicks into the penalty box.

His main purpose, defense, was always made up of clean tackles, Tench was every inch the fair sportsman.

By 1933 he was a regular in the national football team, learning his trade under captain Arthur Wilkinson and taking part in the Inter-Colonial Martinez Shield or standing resolute when the team played the attack minded players of Venezuela.

It was no mean feat to get into the Trinidad and Tobago team as a center back. The nation seemed to be blessed with an abundance of talented players for the position in the 1920s and 30s, like Alfred Charles and Arthur Maynard. Tench had made the grade at 20 years old. His trajectory would continue with being given the vice-captaincy of the national team before the 1935 tour to Jamaica. His reputation preceded him, evidenced by a tour preview in the Port of Spain Gazette: *'a centre half who is worth his weight in gold. A leach to the opposing centre men who are most dangerous. His unusual height and persistency coupled with a board love for hard work and doggedness enable him to play soccer in a manner which will win the heart of any crowd.'* The team were victorious, setting up the Caribbean rivalry still evident today.

Tench continued to play for Trinidad and Tobago and Casuals (1938 League champions with Tench alternating roles between centre back and playing in the forward line) until 1939, when he immediately became a selector for the national football team. He played hockey for Queen's Park Cricket Club (QPCC) with distinction, while also partaking in rugby and cricket. But it is for football that he is remembered, when he formed part of the Trinidad and Tobago team that began to truly cement its place

as a force in the regional game. As such, he was inducted into the Trinidad and Tobago Sports Hall of Fame in 1984.