First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



Cuthbert Thavenot

Lawn Tennis

Inducted in 1985

1911 was a good year for Trinidad and Tobago tennis. It was the year that multi-title winning Alice Mildred Cambridge was born, as well as Cuthbert Thavenot. Like his fellow Hall of Famer Cambridge, Thavenot was able to win titles across three decades, testament to both his skill and longevity.

Thavenot hailed from a family of tennis players, with his sister Ruth also joining Cuthbert on the national circuit. By his early teens Thavenot was making headlines and showed aptitude for the Doubles game. He had formed a partnership with Harold 'Fuchi' Nothnagel early in his career, with the teenage pair making an almost immediate impact by claiming the 1930 Doubles national title, a feat that they would repeat in 1931. On the latter occasion, Thavenot teamed up with A. P. Blair to also claim the Mixed Doubles title.

The competition was fierce, with Thavenot and Nothnagel losing their Doubles title in 1932. Stung by the defeat, they returned to reclaim their crown the following year, with Thavenot also breaking new ground by winning his first Singles title; he was a double national champion once more. While he and Nothnagel made the Doubles title their own for the next three years, Thavenot would not win his second Singles title until 1936.

In 1938 he kept it in the family, partnering with his sister Ruth to secure a second Mixed Doubles title, the first of their hat-trick of victories that included Thavenot's first national title triple crown in 1939: Singles, Mixed Doubles (with Ruth Thavenot), Doubles (with Nothnagel). Hunter Archie replaced him as Singles champion the following year, but nothing could stop the Thavenot/Nothnagel machine in the Doubles competition, the duo winning until 1941.

The national championship was not held in 1942 and 1943 due to the World War II. Upon resumption, Thavenot trod upon a familiar path, winning the coveted Singles title once more. Even better, he completed another triple crown, winning the 1944 Doubles with Nothnagel and the Mixed Doubles with Elsie Coussement.

It would be Thavenot's final Singles title, however as a Doubles player there were plenty more victories to come. First, another hat-trick of titles from 1946-1948, followed by further wins in 1953 and 1954. The Brandon Trophy – a regional tournament based on national team participation – was introduced in 1950. Though he could be considered a veteran at that stage, Thavenot still qualified to represent Trinidad and Tobago in the early 1950s.

His was a game based on strength, with the ability to smash the ball, together with powerful ground shots from either the left or right side, making him perfectly suited to the Doubles game. Add his dynamic volleying and you have Cuthbert Thavenot, one of the best tennis players that Trinidad and Tobago has produced, and an inductee into the Trinidad and Tobago Sports Hall of Fame in 1985.

National Singles title: 1933, 1936, 1939, 1944

National Doubles title: 1930, 1931, 1933-36, 1939-41, 1944, 1946-48, 1953-54

National Mixed Doubles title: 1931, 1938-40, 1944