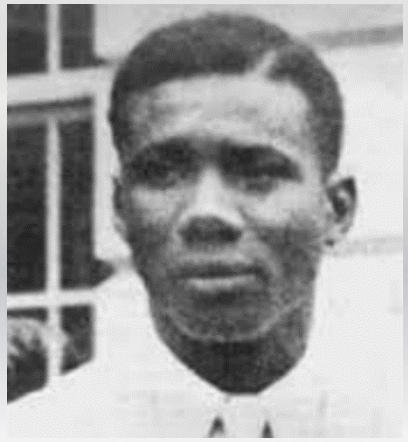
First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



Wilfred Oliver Tull

Athletics

Inducted in 1985

The proud moment of walking out to a packed Olympic Games stadium as flagbearer of the country's first ever Olympic team belongs to this 800m, 1500m and mile runner from Brasso, in central Trinidad. The double Central American & Caribbean (CAC) Games medalist would go on to become a coach of some repute, while becoming a true global citizen with his work for the world's premier institution.

Trinidad and Tobago's national championship events were still being held in 'old money' measurements when Tull announced himself in 1946 with a win in the 880 yards with a time of 1:58:8 at the Queen's Park Oval. It was not only his time that raised eyebrows, but the fact that he doubled up to win the Mile (4mins 40secs), hinting at a big engine to pump those long legs over the multiple straights and curves of the middle distances.

As the double national champ, Tull was selected to represent Trinidad and Tobago at that year's CAC Games in Barranquilla, Colombia.

He did not disappoint. In the 800 metres (as per the Olympic Games the CAC Games distances were measured in metric) he finished second in 1:56.4 behind the winner, Jamaican Wint (1:54.8). With the silver medal adorning his neck, Tull was thinking of his next medal opportunity, the 1500m final in three days' time. He cruised through the early rounds and lined up for the final with only victory on his mind. This he duly achieved with a dominating 4:07.8 that put him almost two full seconds clear of the silver medalist, countryman and local rival Ken Hyland.

Together with Mannie Ramjohn's gold in the next distance up, the 5000 metres, Tull's win was part of a total of seven track & field medals.

1947 brought another 880 yard and Mile double at the national championships. With the Pan American Games yet to hold its first edition, the year before the return of Olympic Games (not held due to World War II) did not offer any international competition.

The sports world was abuzz the following year with the London Olympics dominating headlines. There were concerns in Trinidad over the ability to send a team to a global event that was seen as one of the last steps towards normality after the ravages of war.

In the end, a five-man team was sent to represent the twin-island nation, with Tull standing proud at the head of the team as they took part in the opening ceremony.

Tull ran the in Heat 4 of the 800 metres, recording 1:55.7. It was not enough to see him advance to the semifinals (there were no quarterfinals in that year's competition format). In the 1500m, he finished in 9th place in the semifinal.

Tull returned to Trinidad and continued his battle with Hyland, who denied Tull his customary 880 yards title from 1948 to 1951, until Tull took the title back in 1952 with 1:54.0.

While Hyland took the 1949 Mile crown, Tull made sure it was all his own from 1950 to 1952, with a best time of 4:19.0 in that final win, a full 21 seconds faster than his first win in 1946, all at the same Oval venue.

In between, Tull donned national colors once more to take part in the very first Pan American Games in Buenos Aires, Argentina 1951. He did not qualify for the 800m final but made the final of his beloved 1500m, eventually finishing outside of the medals.

He retired from competition in 1956 and immediately migrated to the United States, specifically New York, where he began a long career working with the United Nations. His love for athletics continued with his coaching and he became a founding member of the New York Road Runners Club.

The man that became Trinidad and Tobago's first gold medalist at the CAC Games, and who earned a spate of national titles while also being part of the country's first Olympic team, was inducted into the Trinidad and Tobago Sports Hall of Fame in 1985.

CAC Games: **1946 Gold 1500m**