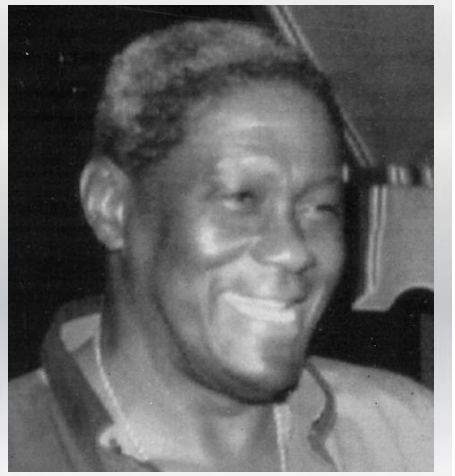
First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



Carl Blackman

Basketball

Inducted in 2000

One of the best basketball players that T&T has ever produced, Carl Blackman belonged to the era when the sport was beginning to take hold in Trinidad, as such his efforts as both team man and individual player, helped it to grow.

Blackman initially played cricket and football, the former with his father's Sunday League team and the latter with Providence FC. But while growing to 6 foot 6 inches could have benefited Blackman in either sport, it was absolutely suited to the one that he eventually chose, basketball.

He joined the Pirates team in 1955, playing in the North Intermediate Division, the top league in the country. Blackman immediately found his niche and the following year was named Player of the Year as Pirates won both the league and knockout competitions; he was also nominated for the Sportsman of the Year Award 1956.

Seeking to advance his game, he joined the aptly named Progressive club for 1957, who then took the basketball triple crown of the league, knockout and Kay Shirt Trophy, with Blackman scoring 17 of his team's 52 points in the final of the latter competition. The sport was growing at a rate, evidenced by a tour to Trinidad by Suriname that same year, for which Blackman was called up to represent his country. T&T won the three-match series 2-1.

Blackman and his teammates then toured Suriname for another three-match series, with the hosts winning this time, by the same 2-1 score line. There was more to come for Blackman in 1957, with a successful tour to Martinique that proved the country's growing ascendancy in regional basketball, followed by a match for T&T against the world-famous Harlem Globetrotters at the Queen's Park Oval.

In 1958, T&T hosted British Guiana and Martinique, with Blackman dominant in his centre role and T&T winning both series. By 1959, Blackman moved to the Woodbrook Limers squad, once again contributing to team success as they won the Trinidad Five-a-Side Tournament between 1959 and 1963. It was also the year that he attended his first games, the Central American & Caribbean Games (CAC) held in Caracas. The team did not go past the first round, facing the stronger Latin nations for the first time.

Remaining with the Limers, Blackman took part in memorable battles with older teams such as Progressive, and new teams such as Wales, in front of large crowds in Port of Spain and San Fernando. In 1962, he returned to the CAC Games, representing a nation on the cusp of

attaining independence, in Jamaica. This time, in his integral role at the centre of the court, Blackman helped T&T reach the play-off stage.

The following year Blackman left for the New York Institute of Technology and represented their basketball team for the four years of his student life. Later in life, he moved to Miami for his retirement. Carl Blackman, who was central to the progress of basketball for a decade, was duly inducted into the T&T Sports Hall of Fame in the year 2000.