First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



Margaret Hoyte – Pollard

Field Hockey

Inducted in 2008

The backbone of any hockey team is a solid defense. In that regard, Trinidad and Tobago, through players such as Margaret Hoyte-Pollard, had the foundation to build their game throughout the most progressive period for the national team.

From an early age Hoyte-Pollard's defensive skills were apparent, and they were honed and nurtured throughout two decades of competitive play that would see her eventually become the proud captain of both club and country.

A natural sportswoman, Hoyte-Pollard played hockey at St. Augustine Girls High School and began her national career, when selected at just 14 years of age, for the Trinidad and Tobago Secondary Schools Team. She was by far the youngest player in the squad, but such was her talent that the selectors looked past her age. By the time of her graduation from high school in 1968, she was already picked up by the top team in Trinidad, the Port of Spain based Rockets.



As the team took domestic honors, playing for the Rockets also helped Hoyte-Pollard make the seamless transition from national junior to national senior defender, her debut coming in Jamaica in 1970. Making her intentions clear, she was named Most Outstanding Player on that occasion, an award usually reserved for the playmaker midfielders and goalscoring forwards.

She would earn the award again, this time on home soil when Trinidad hosted the Caribbean Championship in 1972 and Trinidad and Tobago shared the title with Jamaica. For good measure, she also won Most Outstanding Player at the 1974 tournament held in Barbados.

These performances made Hoyte-Pollard an easy choice as the half-back for her biggest challenge yet when the national team went to the 1975 IFWHA World Conference in Scotland. There, at the tournament that was the forerunner to the Hockey World Cup, Trinidad and Tobago beat Bermuda 3-0, Austria 1-0, Zambia 2-1, drew 1-1 with Great Britain U-23, lost 4-1 to Canada and 4-0 to both Ireland and perennial powerhouse the Netherlands.

The experience and exposure were priceless and would have helped Hoyte-Pollard in 1976 when she captained Rockets at the North, Central, South American and Caribbean Club Championships held in Mexico. Facing the full might of the hemisphere's best teams, Hoyte-Pollard led Rockets to victory, defeating Argentina's San Fernando in the final.

Three years later, Hoyte-Pollard was still an integral part of the Trinidad and Tobago team that returned to the IFWHA World Conference, held in Vancouver. This time the team beat Zambia 10-0, with the defender

Hoyte-Pollard scoring one goal. They also drew 2-2 with Argentina after being 1-0 down at halftime, lost 3-0 to Scotland, 3-1 to India, and 2-0 to West Germany. A year later, given her experience and ability to lead from the backline, Hoyte-Pollard was made captain of a West Indies women's hockey teamed that was formed for the Golden Jubilee Quadrangular Tournament played in Scotland.

Hoyte-Pollard returned to the Caribbean Championship later in 1980, in the Bahamas, where she would win another Most Outstanding Player Award. She would retire from competitive hockey in the very early 1980s and concentrated on leadership of another type in her continued role as a primary school teacher.

A player recognized for her outstanding defensive play and with the accolades to support it, she was the Trinidad and Tobago Hockey Association's nominee for Sportswoman of the Year in 1972, 1977 and 1980. In 2001 she was included in the top 100 sports personalities of the millennium, and in 2008 Margaret Hoyte-Pollard was inducted into the Trinidad and Tobago Sports Hall of Fame.