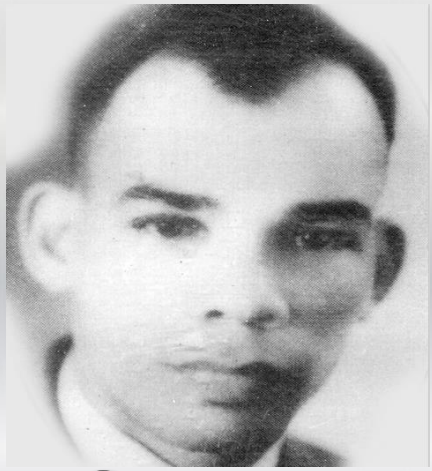
First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



George E.C. Stanford

Chess

Inducted in 1995

At the age of 11, George Stanford was adept enough at the game of chess to play to a draw against an English Master. The man who was introduced to the game in his early years by his father – who exposed and inspired the young George by taking him to numerous exhibition matches – would later become recognized as one of the best players that the Caribbean region has ever produced.

His career as a player coincided with the development of the sport from club tournaments through to the formalization of a national tournament and the establishment of a governing body. As such, it was apt that when the first Trinidad and Tobago national chess championship was held in 1937, it was Stanford – who had honed his skill throughout his teenage years – that was crowned champion.

It was an extremely competitive era, ensuring that Stanford did not have things his own way as he would have to play against stalwarts of the local game including Arthur McShine, A. G. Francis, Frank Bassington and Carl Brown.



It would be a further 11 years until Stanford could claim another national title, but the period in between was filled with other major achievements. In 1938, as reigning Trinidad and Tobago champion, he boarded a steamship headed for British Guiana to take part in the Inter-Colonial Chess Championship. Representing with aplomb, he won the regional title.

Two years later, Stanford played against the Chess world champion from 1935-1937, Grandmaster Dr. Max Euwe from the Netherlands, and was able to earn the distinction of a draw with the world's best.

In 1948 Stanford won his second national title, and added another regional crown later that same year when he secured the West Indian Chess Championship. On a winning trajectory, he then defended his national title in 1949, and would add two more titles in 1965 and 1969.

Even before his title winning spree, Stanford was deeply involved in the administrative side of the sport. He played a major role in the establishment of the Trinidad & Tobago Chess Administration in 1936, overseeing its development throughout the 1940s and 1950s, while seeking ways to increase its popularity. Stanford was also a keen student of the game, paying close attention to the transitions within the global sport to adapt his own style of play, and to pass onto members of the local chess community.

George Stanford was described as a mild-mannered, humble individual, whose competitive attributes were unleashed in his brilliance on a chess board. One of the pioneers of the game, he was inducted into the Trinidad and Tobago Sports Hall of Fame in 1995.

National Chess Champion: 1937, 1948-49, 1965, 1969

Inter-Colonial Chess Championship: 1938

West Indian Chess Championship: 1948