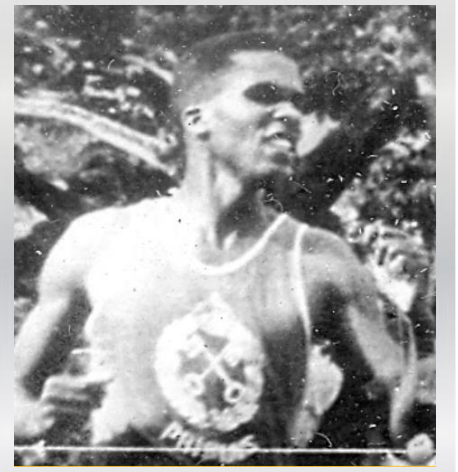
First Citizens Sports Foundation

HALL OF FAME



Lennox Yearwood

Athletics

Inducted in 1987

When Lennox Yearwood is described as a 'middle distance runner', it does not do full justice to the fact that this Arima-born athlete was able to move between distances with great ease. Yearwood could turn on the speed for the 400m, find the balance of pace and endurance for the 800m, or occasionally run the tactical race required of the 1500m.

By the age of 18 he was national champion in the 800m, running 1min 59.8secs at Skinner Park to take a title that he would defend for the following two years. He proved his depth in 1962 by also taking the 1500m title with a time of 4mins 04.5secs.

He attended Abilene Christian University in Texas, further enhancing his running by representing his school on the US college circuit as part of the famed Abilene Wildcats. By 1966, Trinidad and Tobago was taking part in two events within weeks of each other: the Central American & Caribbean (CAC) Games in Puerto Rico, and the Commonwealth Games in Jamaica.

While some Trinbagonian athletes chose to participate or were selected for only one of the games, Yearwood was on both Trinidad and Tobago teams.

At the CAC he ran his pet distance, the 800m, and took the silver medal in 1min 51.7secs behind Jamaican Neville Myton and ahead of teammate Benedict Cayenne, for a Caribbean clean sweep. Yearwood and Cayenne then teamed up with the two Edwins – Roberts and Skinner – to earn silver in the 4x400 Relay.

In Jamaica a few weeks later, he ran in the 880 yards (this would be the last edition of the Commonwealth Games to measure distances in yards), qualifying for the final, where he ran 1min 57.5secs for 8th place. But, his eyes were also on an upcoming event.

As delightful as the 1964 Tokyo Olympic bronze in the 4x400 Relay was for Trinidad and Tobago, the competitive fire within the team itself meant that they felt that they needed to exorcise the relay with something special. With Wendell Mottley and Kent Bernard coming into the squad, and Roberts' place assured, it was a straight shootout between Yearwood and Cayenne for the final spot.

Yearwood got the nod. They set about demolishing the opposition and had their eyes set on nothing less than a world record. When Yearwood handed over to Bernard, Trinidad and Tobago were in fifth place. Bernard took them up to second in his handover to Roberts, who accelerated into first, with Mottley now free to finish the job. A cheering Jamaican crowd put aside all allegiances to salute the new world record of 3mins 2.8secs, one of the best displays of relay running.

In Winnipeg the following year for the Pan Am Games he again qualified for the 800m final, but his eventual 1min 52.86secs was not enough to gain a medal.

Yearwood struggled with injuries the following season, which was an Olympic year, and did not qualify for the team that left for Mexico. He drifted away from athletics but his feats as a world-class runner have been honored with the Lennox Yearwood Expressway in his native Arima, and with his induction into the Trinidad and Tobago Sports Hall of Fame in 1987.

Commonwealth Games: **1966 Gold 4x440 Relay**

CAC Games: **1966 Silver 800m**
1966 Silver 4x400 Relay