

Atlantis tops Hall of Fame Six-a-side tourney

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By Stan Walker

Atlantis Cricket Club trounced local favorite's Hartford Destroyers in the finals to emerge as champions for the first time in the Cricket Hall of Fame's Annual Six-a-Side Tournament held at Hartford's Keney Park, June 9 and 10.

Except for Cornwall Cricket Club, which it defeated in a closely contested game by two runs, the New York-based aggregation, which has been participating in the tournament for nine years, brushed aside all its opponents to make it to the finals. The Destroyers went to the finals by comfortably winning all their matches.

Defending champions Riverside Cricket Club of Hartford faltered in their very first game and never recovered eventually bowing out on the first day as they lost all of their allotted matches.

Played in lovely cricket weather, fans were treated to two days of exhilarating competition and a display of lusty hitting which produced 67 sixes and 90 fours.

In the finals, Atlantis was sent in to bat by the Destroyers who had won the toss. With the sounds of reggae, soca, calypso and rap music blaring in the background, the Atlantis openers' Harry Thompson, 36, and former West Indies all-rounder Clayton Lambert, 21, got their team off to a good start moving into double figures in the very first over. The other batsmen, William White, 30 not out and skipper Desmond Thompson, 24, continued in a similar fashion and when their allotted 10 overs were completed they had racked up the commanding score of 118 for the loss of three wickets.

Faced with the task of scoring at least 12 runs an over in order to secure victory, the Destroyers who considered the target a formidable challenge, suffered a serious setback at the start of their innings as they lost former Jamaica player Frederick Redwood in the very first ball. Attempting to drive White out of the ground Redwood's bat took an edge with the ball flying high overhead for the wicketkeeper to make a comfortable catch.

Wayne Bennett joined other opener Roderick Riley and the pair pushed the score along, with Riley in particular making a gallant effort with some lusty hitting. However, just as it seemed that they were about to move ahead of the required run rate, Bennett got out for 21. Things took a turn downhill from then on as the remaining batsmen found it difficult to get the bowlers away and when the overs ran out they had reached only 98 runs. An exhausted Riley finished with an unbeaten 56 runs in which he hit three sixes and two fours.

At the presentation which followed cash prizes were awarded to the winning and runner-up teams and to outstanding individual performers. The batting prize went to Redwood who topscored with 51 runs while M. Wilson, who took 3 wickets for 3 runs against Sri Lanka, won the bowling prize.

The winning team has been invited to participate in the Barbados Sixes tournament which is set for May of next year in Barbados.

Ten teams participated in the tournament which has become a very popular summer attraction in Hartford.