



Cricket Hall of Fame's Induction Ceremony a big hit

By STAN WALKER

This year's (2016) Cricket Hall of Fame's Induction Ceremony proved to be one of the most exciting and according to many of the attendees should be a very memorable day for the institution.

The celebration started with a Women's Six-a-Side tournament in Keney Park, Hartford, which had as many as 20 women from New Jersey and New York participating. The event was sponsored by Cricket Council USA (CCUSA), a sports and management company out of Florida, the Sportmen's Athletic Club and the Connecticut Cricket League.

Topping the list of inductees was former West Indian Test Players Jeffrey Dujon, John Shepherd and Roselyn Emmanuel. The others were P. K. Guha, a strong promoter of the game in the U.S., Ivy Mahabir, a founder of women's cricket in the U.S., Bassett Thompson, and Lorna Austin, who are involved with New York City's school cricket program.

Each of the inductees was well received. They mixed their acceptance speeches with a certain amount of humor and some of their experiences both behind and in front of the scenes when they entered the international arena. Dujon, in particular, who was on the West Indian team which dominated the sport in the 1980s, likened himself to the outcast Mexican character in the movie "The Magnificent Seven." He said that when he joined the team, while sitting in the dressing room with all the stars around him, he began to wonder what he was doing there. It however, motivated him to perform so magnificently behind the stumps that today he is recognized as one of the five best wicket-keepers ever to play the game throughout the world.

Another highlight of the ceremony was the attendance of Shepherd's 94-year-old mother, who took the opportunity to present him with his Hall of Fame ring. It was also revealed that as a youngster she was the one who got him started in the game by throwing a ball at him which he tried to hit with a "coucou stick" (the tool that is used to stir the pot when they are cooking turn-cornmeal, a well known Barbadian dish).

One other feature of the ceremony was the presentation of a bible with blessings and prayers from the Hall by the Rev. Hugh Hamilton for improvement to the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) and team to the Board's president David Cameron, who was present. Cameron was also presented with a Certification of Appreciation in recognition of his help in establishing a

professional league, the first of its kind in the West Indies.

According to Hall of Fame's president Michael Chambers, Cameron's presence made the program much richer. Not often do you get to welcome the president of any of the world's cricket board at the Hall of Fame, he said, and thanked him (Cameron) for assisting the 90 male and 15 women players who now have professional contracts in the West Indies, which he said is an accomplishment that is hard to duplicate.

Cameron informed the group that he was pleased to see so many women attending a cricket ceremony and revealed that the Board has purchased the Sticky Wicket Hall of Fame in Antigua and are planning to reopen it by next year.