

Cricket Hall of Fame's accomplishments are world-class

By **STAN WALKER**

The accomplishments of the Cricket Hall of Fame are world-class, Dr. Geoff Edwards, former president of the Canadian Cricket Association (CCA) said as he responded to his induction into the institution.



Dr. Edwards was among a group of six individuals which included Godfrey Mitchell, Lionel Bedessee, Petal Samuels, Neville Flowers and Linval DaCosta, who were honored for their contributions to the growth and development of the game in the U.S. at the Hall Fame's annual Induction



Ceremony, which was held Saturday, October 3, at the Sheraton Hotel, Bradley International Airport, Windsor Locks, Connecticut.

Referring to the present state of the game in the U.S. and Canada, Dr. Edwards said that the International Cricket Council (ICC) should concentrate on supporting the game in these regions rather than trying to run it.

“The reasons why more youths are not gravitating to the game here in the U.S. is because they are not able to obtain scholarships like are available in most of the other sports,” he said, adding that for instance in the West Indies where the sport is more popular youths are not able to obtain scholarships from the University of the West Indies (UWI).

Dr. Edwards, who obtained support for the introduction of women's cricket from CCA in 2001-2003, said that we need to try and get more women participating in the sport.

Mitchell, one who has been at the forefront of the game in the New York region for several years, was admired for the tireless and unselfish work that he gives in the development of the game in the area. He drew a big round of applause during his presentation which featured a video from present West Indian batting star Christopher Gayle congratulating him for his achievement and paying tribute to him for the yeoman services that he has given to the leagues throughout the northeast region.

Another highlight of the ceremony was the tribute paid to Bedessee by one of his grandsons, who responded for him following his induction, by speaking about the outstanding role that his grand-dad has played in the development of the game in Canada and the U.S. Responsible for building his humble business into an empire, Bedessee's company has been involved with the sponsorship of several teams and cricket programs in New York, which includes the popular Inter-League tournament.

Samuels, the only female in the group is known in the U.S. cricket community as a competent cricketer, scorer, umpire and coach. She is the founder and president of the Georgia Women's Cricket Association. The organizer of cricket development camps, coaching clinics and tournaments, she is regarded as one of the driving forces in the development of women's cricket in the U.S.

A formidable cricketer, Flowers, in his early years excelled in both soccer and cricket. A Physical Therapist by profession, he has made contributions to many cricket clubs in New York and the Caribbean. He has volunteered his services to the New York Red Stripe Cup teams, the U.S. Masters Team tour to Jamaica, Barbados, Antigua, and Grenada. Every year, he contributes to the Michael Holding Masters scholarship awards in Jamaica.

DaCosta, who came to the U.S. at the age of 12, is a foundation and lifetime member of the Wembley Athletic Club, formerly one of the top cricket organizations in New York. He has made some useful contributions to the development of the sport in the area by serving in several positions in the New York Cricket League, which included Vice-President and Trustee.

During the program presidential awards were handed out to Maurice G. Lindsay, a radio and television host in Springfield, Massachusetts, and Bishop Michael Mitchell Sr., pastor and founder of King's Chapel Church of God. Certificate of Appreciation Award went to David J. Jorgensen, Chairman of the Board of the Police Athletic League (PAL) of Hartford for the outstanding contributions that he is making in the community. Sgt. Louis Luiz, Supervisor of PAL, who was absent at the ceremony, also was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation by Hall of Fame's director George Steir on the following Tuesday at the gym where the program takes place.