

Cricket Hall of Fame's stalwart passes on

By STAN WALKER



Joslyn Chance Sr., a well-known stalwart of the Cricket Hall of Fame passed away on Saturday, January 24 in South Windsor, Connecticut. Chance, who was inducted into the Hall of Fame on Saturday, October 3, 2009, for his outstanding contributions to the sport, succumbed to an ongoing illness. He was 89 years old.

A passionate lover of the game of cricket, Chance who migrated to the U.S. from Jamaica did not only play a major role in the revival of the Hall of Fame but was also responsible for the launching of Hartford's first youth cricket program.

An accomplished player, before leaving Jamaica, he racked up an impressive career as an all-rounder. An aggressive batsman and effective leg-break bowler, he had the distinction of being the first bowler to capture nine wickets in an innings in a major competition in the island and also was rewarded with 14 of 20 prizes that were given out at a presentation ceremony of one of the competitions that he played in. As a batsman he averaged more than 700 runs per season and as a bowler more than 50 wickets.

On his arrival in the U.S. in the 1960s, he played for the West Indian Social Club's team in the American Cricket League. At one time he was the captain of the team. Chance eventually retired from active participation on the field, but continued to contribute as an administrator.

In 1997, his interest was again aroused when he was approached by then Sportmen's Athletic Club's president Linford "Junior" Miller to take on the task of getting the Cricket Hall of Fame, a subsidiary of the club, which had gone into a period of stagnation, back on track. Chance accepted the challenge and in no time successfully put in place a working committee. The committee was approached to induct former West Indian star player Sir Vivian Richards.

The idea of getting Sir Vivian to Hartford was considered a difficult task at the time as the committee did not have any funds. Being a very determined individual, Chance decided that he would find a way to make it happen. He came up with a plan to put out a souvenir booklet in honor of Sir Vivian and to commemorate the event. Applying the aggressive and fearless approach that he is known for when playing, he committed himself to go into the community to raise the funds, which he did by canvassing businesses, especially those of a West Indian nature, to support his efforts by placing advertisements in the booklet. Through his hard work, the Hall of was able to pull it off and under the leadership of former Sportmen's president, Michael Chambers it has not looked back.

Chance did not stop there. While working with the Hall of Fame, he got together with the late Keith L. Carr Sr., the then Executive Director of the West Indian Foundation to launch Hartford's first youth cricket program. The program which began with most of the youngsters being mere novices to the game developed to such an extent that they were able to put together a team that competed favorably against teams from Trinidad, New York and New Jersey.

His innings has come to a close but many who knew him will not only honor him because of his cricketering fetes but for the outstanding contributions that he has made to the development of the sport in the U.S.

May his sole rest in peace!

Chance's funeral will be held on Saturday, February 7 at St. Justin's Church on Blue Hills Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut. The service is set to begin at 10 a.m.

Anyone needing more information should get in touch with either Hall of Fame's Director Michael Chambers at 860-250-2796 or Stan Walker at 860-243-5314.