

Gayle aims to help bring back joy and happiness to Windies fans

By Stan Walker

Admitting that batting is the biggest downfall of his team, West Indies cricket captain Christopher Gayle promised to work towards performing at the best of his ability to help bring back joy, happiness and smiles on the faces of Windies fans, even if he is relieved of the captaincy.

He made the remark in response to a question that was thrown out to him at a reception held at the Sportmen's Athletic Club Friday, August 13, to welcome him to the city of Hartford.

At the reception Gayle who was in Hartford as the guest of Sportmen's and the Cricket Hall of Fame, was presented with a certificate of appreciation from Sportmen's president, Shirley Mathews, who declared him an honorary member of the club.

Chris Gayle receives certificate from president Shirley Mathews



Councilwoman rjo Winch followed with a proclamation, from the city's mayor Pedro Segarra, in which Friday, August 13 was declared "Christopher Gayle's Day in the City of Hartford." Councilwoman Veronica Airey-Wilson who assisted Winch in the presentation, said that "We are truly honored to have you in our city. We always watch and cheer you on whenever you are playing and will assure you that the West Indians in Hartford are behind you 100 percent."

Gayle was also presented with another proclamation by Councilman Kenneth Kennedy on behalf of governor Jody Rell, in which she said is a testimony of his outstanding talent and excellent skills in the game. Kevin Hussein from the Connecticut Cricket League presented him with plaque in recognition of his achievements and contributions to West Indies cricket.

At a brief visit to the Hall of Fame, Gayle was given a miniature bat to record each century he scores from now on and to return it to the institution when the total runs scored in that manner reaches 1,000.

Responding to a question about himself and his players' inability to stay long at the crease, he said that there are times when we are playing against a team that we want to beat so badly that a sort of anxiety inside of you lead you to want to destroy them. "This is a sport in which you can go either up or down. No matter how talented you are, you are inclined to fail more often than you succeed. The downward trend is happening too often to us, so whenever you get a chance to succeed, you must always try to do your best," he said.

"Concentration is a problem. You can get distracted from many things. Sometimes we tend to focus on playing too much of an attacking game and that causes us to lose proper concentration.," he stated.

"We also need better communication between each other. When you are able to reach in your 20s or 30s in a quick time, a bit of encouragement from your partner or some other member of the team urging you to calm down can be of great help. I believe that I am now more matured and will be inclined to do better in the future," he said.

"The fastest bowlers that I have played against are Shoaib Akhtar of Pakistan and Brett Lee of Australia." He related an experience that he had facing Akhtar in which he said that he was very surprised to see how quickly the ball had ended up in the wicket-keeper's gloves after it had passed him.

He had some good feelings about the new academy which was established recently by the West Indies Cricket Board. "It is a good thing. It is something which is needed in the Caribbean that I believe should help the youngsters that are coming up," he said."