



BECCA



ROBERTS



CHANDRASEKHAR

Windies Board, players responsible for poor performance of team – Roberts

Lack of planning and foresight on the part of the West Indies Cricket Board as well as lack of commitment by the players were responsible for the team's poor performance over recent years, former fast bowler Andy Roberts said.

Roberts, one of this year's Cricket Hall of Fame's inductees said during his acceptance speech that he does not see the commitment, gut feeling and love for the game that can be attributed to past players among our present team. The impressive ceremony held at the new Marriott Hotel, Adriaen's Landing, downtown Hartford, Saturday, October 1, was attended by a large gathering of cricket fans and supporters of the Cricket Hall of Fame from across the region.

"I don't think that our players of today love the game half as much as the past players did," he said, bemoaning the lack of physical conditioning and training that is evident among the present crop of players.

"It is common practice today," he said, "that the majority of our fast bowlers, if they play two consecutive Test matches, cannot play a third," blaming their breakdown primary on lack of fitness and dedication to the sport.

He said that he had accepted the fact that the team would begin to slip some day, but he did not expect it to happen so rapidly or to fall to such depths. Urging the current players to fully commit themselves to return the team to the top of world cricket, Roberts said that "I pray for the cricketers to work harder and be more consistent in their performance, so that we can regain the top spot in international cricket."

Stressing to the audience the hard work and training that he put in during his time and his determination to become not just another bowler but the best, Roberts said that the talent is there, but the players must be reminded that success is one per cent inspiration and 99 per cent perspiration.

Roberts was among a group of six inductees, which included former Indian leg-spinner Bhagwat Chandrasekhar, recently retired Gleaner sports editor Tony Becca and three local individuals Barbara P. Lindo, Alvin Watson and Hubert Carlyle Miller, who were afforded the honor for their contribution to the sport in the U.S.

Becca, who is renowned for his chronicling of the sport, and who said that he was proud to be honored along with the two former great players, echoed Roberts' comments saying that the problem with the West Indies team is the lack of dedication on the part of the players. "West Indian cricketers today are not as dedicated as the ones earlier, like Roberts and Wes Hall," he said.

Chandrasekhar, who was accompanied by his wife, thanked the Hall of Fame for the honor saying that in a way he was somewhat surprised when he got the call about his nomination to learn that there was such an institution in the U.S. "Now that I am here and learn that you have been in existence so long, I am proud and honored to be inducted into the prestigious institution and can only hope that you will continue to be successful in your efforts."

Roberts and Chandrasekhar join some other greats of the game like George Headley, Sir Garfield Sobers, Michael Holding, Alfred Valentine, Sir Frank Worrell, Sir Vivian Richards and Sunil Gavaskar, who were inducted earlier.

Paying tribute to her family Lindo, who is well known for her work and contribution to the sport in Hartford, said that cricket can be the glue to keep people together. Miller, who has put in 36 years of work in the region, also thanked the Hall of Fame for the honor. Watson who was inducted posthumously was represented by his daughter who said that she was happy that his love and work for the game was not forgotten and that she was grateful for the honor bestowed on her father.