

Youngsters urged to play and enjoy game

Youngsters interested in playing the game of cricket were advised by Dr. Michael Holding, former West Indies' fast bowler, to play and enjoy the game. "It will go a long way in making you a better person," he said.

Dr. Holding made the remarks while addressing the Cricket Hall of Fame's 25th anniversary celebrations held Saturday, October 7, at the Marriott Hotel, downtown Hartford, Connecticut.

"Cricket is a great game," Dr. Holding continued. "It is about team work, making friends, building character, learning and growing. Because of cricket I have been able to make a lot of great friends. I have achieved a lot because of this great game. It has done a lot for me. I enjoyed playing the game, it was great," he said.

"When you are involved with playing the game at certain levels oftentimes you are confronted with negativism. People will tell you that you were not selected because the selectors do not like you. Do not let any obstacles get in your way. Just play and perform. Performance opens doors. It will let people know about your talent."

He related a recent confrontation by two youngsters, who reminded him of the time when he kicked down the wicket during a game in New Zealand. He attributed that action to the fact that he was young and fresh in the game at the time. "We mature as we grow. I learned from that incident and can attest that I have not been involved in any incident since that action. Everyone deserves a second chance. Do not keep on making the same mistakes," he advised.

Dr. Holding, who is now a respected broadcaster of the game, concluded his speech by appealing to the mayor of the city to help the Hall of Fame get a building to help it become a big attraction in Hartford. "This Hall of Fame is unique," he said. "It does not only honor people who bat and bowl but individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the sport and their community."

Holding, a special guest at the event was presented with the Hall of Fame's first commemorative ring for services rendered to the institution since his induction in 2004. Beginning next year (2007), all inductees will receive commemorative rings.