

Jamaica Cricket Umpires Association Second Oldest in the World

This year the Jamaica Cricket Umpires Association will mark its 65th anniversary. Not known by many, the association which was started in 1946 is older than its British counterpart, the Association of Cricket Umpires. It is also the only cricket organization existing at the time which required candidates to sit for an examination before becoming an umpire. The other umpiring associations in the Caribbean region came later in the 50s. The West Indies Cricket Umpires Association was formed in 1969.

Over the years, Jamaica has been blessed with a team of outstanding umpires, which included stalwarts like Tom Ewart, Johnny Wongsam, Reggie Cole, Rupert Aitcheson, Noel Wright, Owen Davies and Johnny Gayle. It has been fortunate to have had at the helm diligent and dedicated officers.

Despite the modernizing of the art which now includes sophisticated technology, no reference to umpiring would be complete without recognizing the outstanding performances of test umpires like Douglas Sang Hue O.D. and Steve Bucknor, O.D. Sang Hue, who retired in 1982, brought fame and distinction both to himself and the association of which he was the first Vice President, as well as to his country and the West Indies. He has been acclaimed as the epitome of keenness, professionalism and fair play.

Bucknor, also now retired, who followed in Sang Hue's footsteps, was acknowledged by almost all the cricket authorities throughout the world to be among the best. In the new arrangement of having as the norm a home umpire and a visitor, during his active days, his outstanding service was constantly in demand.

Recently one of its members Norman Malcolm was re-appointed to the Emirates International Panel of International Cricket Council (ICC) umpires. Malcolm previously served alongside Guyanese Clyde Duncan, who has been replaced by Trinidadian first-timer Peter Nero.

The Emirates Panel comprises two officials from the boards of each test playing nation. Emirates panel umpires stand mainly in one day internationals (ODIs) at peak periods.

In its own right, the Jamaica Cricket Umpires Association is one of the institutions which has enriched and sustained the noble game of cricket. The association has an outstanding record of being champion of its loyal and capable members, a leader in the organization and effectiveness of its international network and as a devoted follower of the game.