

Greenidge: Differences in our character made us successful

Giving a brief history of his journey into first class cricket, former West Indies opening batsman Gordon Greenidge, who was born in Barbados but grew up in England, said that it was the difference in character between himself and his fellow Barbadian partner Desmond Haynes that made them so successful.



“While I was inclined to be more reserved and quiet Haynes on the other hand was very talkative. Whenever you are trying to concentrate in the dressing room, he just kept on talking. It was very hard to concentrate, but when we got to the wicket he was a different person. I later learned that this was his way to get rid of the butterflies,” Greenidge said. “His approach, however, made it easier for us when we were on the field,” he added.

One half of the West Indies’ prolific opening partnership during the 1980s, Greenidge made the remarks shortly after he was inducted into the Cricket Hall of Fame, at the organization’s 27th annual induction ceremony held in Hartford, Connecticut, Saturday, September 20.

Greenidge, who migrated at the age of 14, said that on his arrival in England, the weather was cold and miserable. “After leaving the warmth of Barbados, I did not like it at all. The school I went to was not far from home but going from school to home at times could be very trying and traumatic especially so for a youngster who was new to the environment. There were also times when people would gather to make life difficult for me,” he said.

.Stating that the world we live in today is becoming more complicated, he said that we must take note of what’s happening around us. “We have to accept challenges as they come and try to deal with them as best we could. Growing up in the UK made me a better person.

“Cricket was not high on the agenda at the school that I attended,” he said. “They played soccer but tennis was the focus. Let’s face it, during those times you did not see any black person playing tennis. I played a little soccer but cricket was my first love and that is what I wanted to play. I loved the sport and used to watch my uncle play but following my first contact with the game I had no inclination that I would play the game at such a high level.”

He said that from school he went straight into the game joining a club at the age of 18 of which he is proud to say that he stayed with for 19 years. “I encountered similar trials and

traumas as I did in school while pursuing my club career but I persisted and stayed on. Establishing one self in a sport and the world is not an easy task” he lamented.

Greenidge said that his career took off in the late 1970s and it blossomed even more when he met up with Haynes. As the records showed the pair played a major role in the elevation of the West Indies team to becoming world champions during the 1980s.

Reaching out to the United States of America Cricket Association (USACA), Greenidge said that the International Cricket Conference (ICC), is trying to expand the sport throughout the world and that the West Indies Cricket Board is in charge of the Americas which includes the U.S. “We have a job to see young cricketers reach their goal and I am quite sure that the West Indies Board will be more than willing to assist you in your development.”

He concluded his speech by declaring that the Cricket Hall of Fame is unique, and offered a few suggestions as to how they can improve and grow the organization. These recommendations, he said, if carried out, will help the organization maintain its international recognition.