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BARBADOS, WEST INDIES



SPORT IN VIEW

ISSUE 1: JULY 2025



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Sport In View is a departmental magazine geared toward providing the most contemporary commentary, research, discussion, analysis, and views on all issues in sport. It provides the medium through which staff and students of the Academy of Sport and Faculty of Sport, sport academics, experts in sport, and enthusiast can share their opinions on important matters related to sport. This magazine, the only one of its kind in Barbados, will ventilate all discourse related to sport.

The first edition of this magazine focuses mainly on cricket in celebration of the first international series played at the 3Ws Oval. The series between the South African and the West Indies women represents a significant milestone in the history and legacy of this venue. It authenticates the 3Ws Oval as a leading cricket facility in Barbados, only second to Kensington Oval.

Our second edition will be released in six months and we invite submission of articles from the sporting community. You may use the contact information below to submit articles or to obtain further information. We welcome your comments, feedback and contributions as we seek to use this periodical as a channel for the development of sport in Barbados and the region.

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A PUBLICATION OF
THE ACADEMY OF SPORT
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
CAVE HILL CAMPUS, BARBADOS

<https://www.cavehill.uwi.edu/sport/home.aspx>

Meet Our Editorial Committee



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MR. JAVIER REID



MS. ANICIA WOOD

Anicia Wood is a former professional volleyball player, now serving as a sports administrator, coach, and lecturer in sports coaching and sport science. As Chair of the Barbados Beach Volleyball Commission, she is deeply committed to the development of beach volleyball in Barbados, with a strong focus on sustainable programming and athlete development. Her work aims to harness the sport's full potential not only as a platform for athletic excellence, but also by making beach volleyball a marketable product to drive sports tourism and economic growth.

Cricket's Sacred Ground: Exploring the 3Ws Oval at UWI Cave Hill Barbados



CRICKET WALL OF FAME AT 3WS OVAL, UWI CAVE HILL

The 3Ws Oval is named in memory of three great Barbadian and West Indian cricketers - Sir Frank Worrell, Sir Clyde Walcott and Sir Everton Weekes. Considered to be one of the best cricket grounds in Barbados, the 3Ws host touring teams, local, regional, and international matches. Since the sporting facility was developed to international standards, four warm up matches were held in the 2007 World Cup and it was also used as one of the practice grounds for the 2024 T20 Cricket World Cup.

For the first time in June 2025, the grounds play host to an international series between West Indies and South Africa women. The series including three one-day international matches and three T20 matches. During this series West Indies Captain Haley Matthews reach the milestone of

three thousand (3,000) one day international runs.

The picturesque and state-of-the-art facility has seating for approximately 700 spectators and also features an indoor cricket practice facility along with two outdoor practice pitches named after Barbados' and West Indies fast bowler Malcolm Marshall. On the eastern side of the ground is the West Indies Cricket Walk of Fame where the name of all the players who have scored centuries or taken five wickets are affixed to the walls. This leads to the hallowed gravesites of the 3 Ws (Sir Frank Worrell, Sir Clyde Walcott and Sir Everton Weekes) and a life-size bust of Sir Frank Worrell.

An imposing statue of cricket stumps with bails overlooks the Oval which leaves no-one in doubt as to the purpose of this ground. When a match is playing here, the

Oval is alive with excitement. However, it can also be a very quiet and peaceful place. Then, it is a place for reflection on the lives of three great cricketers and gentlemen, which reminds us of the importance of the game of cricket to Barbados and to all the people of the West Indies.

The Pavilion

The 3Ws Pavilion is a two-story building which compliments the lush grounds of the Oval, housing players, dignitaries and, other spectators. Upon entering the facility, persons are greeted with various photos of historical cricketing moments decorating the walls.

On the ground floor, cricketers take advantage of two spacious, fully-equipped dressing rooms which include lockers and bathrooms, and can sit comfortably as they encourage their teammates. A capacity of approximately 80 persons can be accommodated in the seating downstairs outside of the locker rooms.

Upstairs, the Pavilion features a secretariat, a bar and kitchenette for entertaining guests and an open air-conditioned space which can be used for press conferences, formal functions, and social events. The open area leads out to a breezy balcony which seat approximately 150 spectators. This balcony bears the name of former West Indies Captain Floyd Reifer, paying tribute to him for his contribution to UWI and West Indies Cricket.

The 'Now Value' of Sir Frank's Legacy

Thirty years since the inaugural Frank Worrell Memorial Lecture was delivered by former Prime Minister of Jamaica Michael Manley, the legacy of the West Indies' first, full-time, black captain continues to be highlighted.

Even if our celebration of his life and legacy appears to be a seasonal occurrence, perhaps a mature reflection on the people, places, and perspectives touched by Sir Frank might reveal his impact as being apt for all times.

A sense of purpose is the anchor of endeavours great and small, determined by one's strength of belief in and commitment to what is held dear. We often hear of the virtues and values that were held by Sir Frank throughout his august career. Values and virtues he would not eschew.

Perhaps the greatest strand of noble truth amongst the thickets of example from his life of service, concern his commitment to realising a vision. The essence of strategic thought, which we oft times forget precedes strategic planning and strategic management, begins with an intent to reach a specific destination – 'a vision'. Frank Worrell knew what he wanted to see and understood his assignment in walking toward that vision.

Strategic thinking, as surmised by O'Brien (2023), 'founded upon creativity and forward thinking is ... supportive of entrepreneurship and innovation, which are at the very core of competitive advantage in the emerging and extremely dynamic environment



of international sport'. The three-year full-time captaincy of Frank Worrell that began 65 years ago did not start when he accepted the role.

Success is forged in the fire of sacrifice, and while the contemporary literature tells us that 'sustainable strategic position requires trade-offs', when Sir Frank turned down the first offer to become captain in 1957, it may have been incongruent with our reading of the situation. However, reading for a degree at Manchester University while earning a living in the leagues in Lancashire cast the captaincy offer in a different shade, in light of the vision which he had for West Indies cricket and his role.

In defining strategic thinking, O'Brien (2023) references '... a way of solving strategic problems that combines a rational and convergent approach with the creative and divergent thought processes', (Bonn 2005). From this; we may surmise that Worrell was a man before his time, from whom our institutions of sport, even more than cricket, may benefit. That benefit however, does not rest on the proximity of the example to (that) of our reality but is more a factor of our commitment to vision, values and strategy. We would

do well, whether individually, communally or institutionally, to engender the clarity of purpose that underscored the various elements of Frank Worrell's life. A life lived with a clear vision of what he wanted to see and how he would contribute to making it a reality.

The vision he cultivated did not begin and end with himself, rather it encapsulated a belief in the dignity of the human personality that saw him respected, admired and embraced by those close to him. The values he held did not centre on his own enfranchisement, rather they were representative of the vision he cultivated that saw the excellence of the human personality as 'worth more'. Worth more than the material due calculated by others, worth more than what the holders themselves thought, worth more than the sum of any embodied collection of cheering voices or smiling faces. Worrell's commitment to strategic thinking codified his actions as deliberate markers of progress towards the fulfilment of his vision. His thinking was beyond himself, beyond his immediate influence and impactful beyond the imagination.

We would do well, to ask ourselves the simple question: Why? Asking with the intention to adjust as necessary, those visions, values and strategies over which we have influence or perhaps, more importantly over which we have concern. Let the legacy of the life of Sir Frank Worrell go beyond memory, and let it spur you to action today.

By Mr. Javier Reid

Children Deserve to Play: The Danger of Early Specialization in Youth Sport



While having a conversation with the founder of a youth football program, he indicated that one of main objectives was to produce elite level players in 10 years by having the kids eating, sleeping, and breathing the football. In addition to producing elite players, many parents and coaches have a strong desire for early specialization in a single sport for a few other reasons. These reasons include providing their child with a competitive advantage over others in their age category, increasing their chances of obtaining sport scholarships, the chance to be classified as an elite athlete in the sport, and the possibility of reaching professional status (Feeley et al., 2015).

The mental and emotional strain of being dedicated to a single sport is often the largest price paid by many athletes in youth sports. Research suggests that early specialization increases the risk of burnout and withdrawal from sport, citing chronic stress (Wiersma, 2000). More

specifically, a loss of intrinsic motivation, increased levels of stress and anxiety, ineffective coping strategies, and a severe lack of enjoyment are symptoms of burnout among athletes (Goodger et al., 2007). This highly competitive environment is no longer enjoyable and fun for children. Ultimately, the lack of enjoyment and increase psychological pressure has long-term consequences as athletes often disengage from the sport and all physical activity by extension, eroding the benefits provided by the foundation of youth sports.

A key element of early specialization in a specify sport often overlooked by many coaches and parents are the physical demands placed on the body during a critical stage of the athlete's development. During adolescences, the human body undergoes a multitude of changes including puberty, growth spurts, hormonal shifts, and menstruation in the case of females. The combination of these changes on the body and the heavy training regime associated with

specialization leads to a host of physical developmental issues and injuries during teenage years. Research suggests that early specialization is associated with overuse injuries during the adolescence years (DiFiori et al., 2014). Growth spurts are one of the main factors resulting in these injuries, especially around the knees. According to Baker (2003), the accelerated bone growth of the tibia, femur and fibula is not match by the surrounding muscles and tendons leading to inflexibility and tightness around the knee, creating an imbalance in the joint. Excessive training puts tremendous strain on the knee joints making the athletes more susceptible to injuries that are capable of negatively affecting their development. Similar cases of overuse injuries have been recorded around the hip, ankles, groin, back and surrounding muscles as the imbalance affects the entire lower segment of the body. Serious or repetitive injuries during the adolescences phase are difficult to overcome; as a result, many athletes dropout of the sport.

Although specialization sounds good in theory, research provides a strong argument for sport diversification or sport sampling in the early years. Furthermore, parents and coaches are encouraged to let kids try many sports during their early adolescence years before gradually decreasing the number and ultimately specializing. It provides kids with more time and opportunities to play with friends and increases the likelihood of participation in sport more frequently and informally (pickup games). A diversified sport participation approach results in better performances long-term and increases the likelihood of lifelong enjoyment of physical activity and sport professionally or recreationally (Bahr, 2014). Additionally, kids are more likely to develop fundamental skills and instincts in other sports that can later be utilized in their main sport. Though this approach may seem risky to those who believe that success

requires early dedication to a single sport, many successful athletes played multiple sports as children. In interviews, basketball icon LeBron James frequently references his participation in American Football growing up and the impact it had on his overall love for sport. Similar, basketball legend the late great Kobe Bryant and former American footballer Chad “Ochocinco” Johnson were on the record highlighting the benefits of playing soccer on developing the footwork required for their respective sports.

Despite the multitude of evidence supporting a diversification approach in youth sport, there continues to be an increase in the number of specialized grassroots programmes and competitions throughout the region. As a result, athletes will continue to drop out of sport for lack of enjoyment, mental burnout and reoccurring injuries. Allowing

kids to try multiple sports allows for holistic development, transferable skills, increase occurrences of play-like games and overall enjoyment. Children who play sports are far more likely to remain active for life.

By Mr. Durae Padmore



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Shaping Beach Volleyball as a Catalyst for Beach Sports Tourism in Barbados



In June 2022, Rome hosted the FIVB Beach Volleyball World Championships, generating over USD 8.6 million in direct economic activity. The tournament captured more than 180,000 spectators and reached global audiences through broadcasts in over 130 countries (FIVB, 2022). With the 2025 World Championships on the horizon, Volleyball Australia is set to attract 96 teams from close to 50 nations, which is likely to produce an economic boost for the country (Volleyball Australia, 2025).

Imagine that kind of momentum brought to Barbados, an island already known for its incredible beaches and warm weather. But this isn't just about sport; it goes beyond the sand and sun. This is about unlocking economic opportunities outside the traditional tourism playbook.

Filling the Off-Season Gap

Tourism remains the main industry of Barbados'

economy. Visitors in large numbers flock to the island's shores from December through April, with cruise ships, flights, and hotels operating at near full capacity. However, as May approaches, numbers decline when the cruise season comes to an end and flight arrivals are reduced. It's a seasonal cycle that continues to challenge the island's efforts to maintain steady tourism activity year-round.

In 2024, government ministries and key tourism and sport stakeholders, including the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment, the Ministry of Tourism and International Transport, the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc., and the Barbados Olympic Association, gathered to discuss a draft sports tourism policy. Their aim: to increase the level of tourism activity during the off-season by tapping into the growing potential of sports tourism, an area where Barbados has natural advantages, especially

in the realm of beach sports.

The Global Rise of Beach Sports

Beach sports have surged in popularity over the past decade, from the ANOC World Beach Games, which debuted in Doha in 2019, to the 2022 CAC Beach Games in Santa Marta, Colombia—all drawing international crowds, media attention, and visibility for host nations.

Beach volleyball, in particular, stands out. It's fast-paced, exciting, and visually appealing. The FIVB Beach Volleyball Pro Tour continues to attract top international talent, while NCAA beach volleyball has become one of the fastest growing collegiate sports in the U.S.A., with scholarship opportunities increasing every year (NCAA, 2023).

Why Barbados Is the Perfect Fit

Barbados is perfect for outdoor competition along the island's pristine coastline.

It possesses ideal venues without the need for extensive land development. Barbados also boasts a well-established tourism and hospitality industry, with accommodations ranging from budget-friendly guesthouses to 5-star luxury resorts.

From a logistical standpoint, the island benefits from direct air and sea networks to key markets in the Caribbean, North America, and Europe. The warmth and friendliness of the Barbadian people, paired with a growing pool of young athletic talent, make for an encouraging and dynamic environment. Simply put, Barbados already has the foundation that many host cities spend years trying to build, and it is primed and ready for a beach volleyball spike.

What It Takes

To truly become a top beach volleyball destination that offers a return on investment, the focus needs to be on three key aspects: facilities, funding, and visibility.

The ongoing construction of a sand court at the Sir Garfield Sobers Sports Complex is a forward-thinking approach, but to host international-caliber events, multi-court setups with lighting, shaded spectator zones, changing rooms, concession stands, and media-friendly setups—just to name a few areas—are needed. These facilities don't have to be permanent, but they must meet professional standards.

Next, funding is key. Hosting international tournaments isn't cheap and requires strong financial backing. Support resources are available through grants from international governing bodies

like FIVB and NORCECA, but government and corporate partners, such as airlines and hotels, are critical. With the right partnerships, investment becomes a win-win.

Finally, branding and promotion are paramount. Barbados is already a recognized tourism brand; now, it's time to position the island as a hub for beach sports. Campaigns that feature beach volleyball front and center, backed by athlete ambassadors, content creators/influencers, and dynamic digital content, coupled with tailored travel packages and integrated event promotions, can propel the island's reputation as a go-to destination for beach volleyball in the region.

What Barbados Stands to Gain

If executed correctly, direct economic activity will be derived from hotel stays, dining, transportation, shopping, and leisure spending. Media coverage from international broadcasts can elevate the island's brand, not only in sport but also in tourism and culture. Hosting sporting

events can provide jobs, foster youth development through volunteerism and training programs, and create new career pathways in coaching, sport management, and event production.

By focusing on the traditionally slower months from May to October, beach volleyball, along with other beach sports, can help stabilize the tourism calendar, reducing the lull effects of seasonality. Sport tourism can be a driver of economic transformation and national identity. Beach volleyball offers Barbados the chance to diversify its tourism offering, build capacity within its sports ecosystem, and draw global attention.

With the right vision, strategy, and investment, Barbados can position itself as the Caribbean's premier destination for beach volleyball, and in doing so, convert beach sports into an economic game changer.

By Ms. Anicia Wood



Governance and Regional Cricket

Governance is a critical aspect of the operations within organizations as it concerns the strategy and direction for its performance (Ferkins, Shilbury, and McDonald, 2005; Hoye, 2006; Hoye and Auld, 2001). With an appropriate governance framework in place, the institution's activities can be monitored to deliver benefits to the organization, members and society (Hoye, 2006; Bricklayer, Thibault, and Misener, 2006). In fact, the inability to have suitable and relevant governance procedures to control and oversee organizations can bring about withdrawal of sponsorship, decrease in enrollment numbers and support, and conceivable intercession from external organizations (UK Game, 2004). Good governance continues to be the main ingredient for the effective and efficient management of organizations (Hoye & Auld, 2001).

Sport governance can be defined as the structure and processes used by organizations to develop and determine strategic goals and direction (Hums and Maclean 2004: 5; Hoye and Cuskelly 2007:9; Kikulis, 2000). Moreover, (Hoye and Cuskelly, 2007:9) sport governance monitors an organization's performance against objectives and guarantees that its board acts to the greatest advantage of the members. As part of governance structure in sporting organizations the executive or board is the highest level in the decision-making process. The effectiveness of



the board is measured by its ability to carry out the mandate as set out by the various stakeholders. According to Ferkins and Shilbury (2012), this may be assessed by the strategic capability of the board which speaks to the individual and collective capabilities of the board members. It is also essential to have board members who possess not only sport-specific knowledge but also objectivity, focus, and intellectual curiosity. For a regional board to succeed, it must have capable professionals, a guiding framework, effective decision-making processes, and strong regional relationships with stakeholders and stakeowners (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2012).

It is vitally important to understand that stakeholders are also an important part of the decision-making process. The executives or the boards are the elected members who make decisions on behalf of and represent the stakeholders or stakeowners. The concept of Stakeowners versus

stakeholders as introduced by Ferkins and Shilbury (2015) is way of recognising the stakeholders, the unofficial stakeowners, while remaining loyal to the Stakeowners and the organization. Stakeowners are seen as the legal 'owners' of the organization whilst stakeholders are all persons with an interest or involvement in the sport or organization at any level. Understanding this approach is important to the governance of any sporting organization as it seeks to improve its governance capabilities and further enhance the sporting product. Suggestions to reorganize, transform and restructure the governance of cricket specifically and sport generally in the region and similar small island states, must take into consideration good governance principles.

Good governance in sport is based primarily on transparency and the establishment of clearly defined roles for all of the stakeholders and stakeowners involved in the sport. The Actions for Good Governance in Sport Organizations (AGGIS) created by sports governance observers provides a set of homogeneous principles to foster good governance in sporting organizations. These principles have been adopted from the best governance theories in the fields of management and business, but adapted to be used in sport. They are categorized as: Transparency and Public Communication, Democratic Process, Checks and Balances, and Solidarity (Geeraert, Alm, & Groll, 2013).

West Indies Cricket, its affiliates associations, clubs and other sporting organizations should utilize these principles as a means to establishing a good governance tradition within their administrations.

Transparency and Public Communication with the stakeholders, members and the general sporting audience are important aspects of governance. The rules, laws, plans, minutes, reports, and financial position of the organizations should be easily accessible to all associated with the sport. In this age of information technology, these should be easily accessible online and this should be the mainstay of any sporting organization. The information provided should contain matters related to the operations of the organization including official statements, any benefits accrued to stakeholders and stakeholders and the organizational structure and procedures. As suggested by the Patterson Report (Cozier, 2016) “the board should be so comprised and its affairs handled in a manner where conflict of interests do not determine or influence the conduct of its business.”

As with all organizations the **Democratic Process** is an integral part of its existence and sustainability. The rules and regulations governing this process should be readily available to the constituents and should be as fair and transparent as possible. Gender equality and accessibility of the diverse constituents must be a part of this process. Annual membership meetings should be an important aspect of the democratic process as it

provides the stakeholders with updates on matters pertinent to the operations of the organization. It is important to involve all stakeholders in this and other processes as it will increase the effectiveness of the organization and provide more sustainable solutions, whilst reducing corruption and the concentration of power (Global Corruption Report, 2016). Mutual control procedures are paramount, to prevent the concentration of power and ensure that decision-making is robust, independent and free from improper influence (Global Corruption Report, 2016).

The doping scandal associated with some Caribbean athletes was a prime example of the need for adequate checks and balances to ensure justice within the sport. Utilizing Checks and Balances is the means by which organizations ensure that they provide some level of self-regulation. Specific procedures should be implemented to facilitate transparency and accountability, particularly as it relates to the financial and ethical procedural management processes of the organization. These may include the establishment of audit and accounting control systems, conflict of interest rules, and ethical and governance codes. Additionally, the recognition and acceptance of an internationally established authority on arbitration and adherence to internationally recognized rules, regulations and standards such as WADA guidelines, would be important to the regulation of proper governance procedures.

Solidarity within sporting organizations speaks to the responsibility of these organization to the internal

and external stakeholders and stakeholders. “Given the socio-cultural value of sport, sports federations have the potential to make a positive contribution to social cohesion, cultural understanding and global dialogue” (Global Corruption Report, 2016). More specifically, solidarity establishes a degree of social responsibility within the organization towards its stakeholders and stakeholders. This may involve developing a social responsibility strategy, establishing a community or grassroots programmes, and implementing antidiscrimination policy. As suggested by the Patterson Report (Cozier, 2016), any major sporting organization should have some form of representation from all stakeholders, territorial boards, players and officials, women, government, the private sector and civil society. Unfortunately, this aspect of governance is often overshadowed with the focus on the delivery of the sporting product, while maintaining the power base.

It is therefore important for regional sporting organizations, specifically Cricket West Indies (CWI), to remain current in their processes, progressive in their planning and developmental in their approaches for the sport. Good governance must be central to the operations of the organization for it to be effective. Simultaneously, the responsibility and relationship of the organization to its stakeholders and stakeholders is of utmost importance, equivalent to that which exist within the corporate world. The overall value which cricket brings to Caribbean society in the many spheres, cultural, social,

political, and economic, must be underscored. This further underpinned the value and importance of good governance within the management of our regional game, and squarely places the responsibility of the management of the sport on the shoulder of those who oversee and contribute to its operation.
By Dr. Rudolph Alleyne

West Indies and South Africa Women Meet at the Hallowed 3Ws Oval

June 2025 was a historic month at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados. For the first time in the campus' history, an official international cricket series was played at the 3Ws Oval. Cricket West Indies hosted the South African Women's Team in three (3) One Day Internationals (ODIs) and three (3) Twenty20 (T20) matches.

The West Indies won the first ODI by four wickets in a rain-affected game after sending South Africa in to bat. South Africa scored 323/9, with Tazman Brits contributing 57 runs. The West Indies replied with 180/4 (DLS Method) to win the match. Opening batter Qiana Joseph scored a half-century (60 runs) and was ably supported by Hayley Matthews, who made 40 runs. Those 40 runs took Hayley Matthews to 3,000 ODI runs, giving her the third-highest run tally in ODIs for the West Indies Women's Team.

In the second ODI, the South African team leveled the series with a 40-runs victory over the West Indies. This win was led by half-centuries from Sune Luus (76) and Nondumiso Shangase (55), while Nonkululeko Mlaba took 4/33. On the West Indies side, Hayley Matthews (56) and Shemaine Campbelle (53) both scored half-centuries, with Afy Fletcher taking 4/64 in a losing effort. This set the stage for an exciting, series-deciding final ODI.



Photo by Mr. Randy Brooks

The South African Women's team defeated the West Indies Women in the third ODI to clinch the series 2-1. After being invited to bat and scoring 278/6, the South African team bowled out the West Indies for 121. Tazmin Brits scored 101, and Laura Wolvaardt scored 75, while Masabata Klaas took 4/25.

In the first T20, West Indies won the toss and chose to field. South Africa scored 183/6, with Tazmin Brits making 98 and Jahzara Claxton taking 3/39. The West Indies replied with 133/6, losing the match by 50 runs.

The West Indies women leveled the series in the second T20. Sent in to bat, South Africa scored 113/6. In reply, the West Indies reached 116/4 with four balls remaining, led by an unbeaten 63 from Hayley Matthews. With the series tied, the third T20 would determine the winner.

For the first time in the series, South Africa won the toss and decided to bat. Their leading batter, Tazmin Brits, was dismissed cheaply for 20 runs, but Miane Smit made an unbeaten 59 in their total of 146/6. In response, the West Indies scored 148/4, with captain Hayley Matthews contributing 65 runs. The West Indies thus clinched the T20 series.

By Dr. Rudolph Alleyne

Clicks, Cheers, and Sponsors: Powering Sports through Social Media



Barbados' sporting clubs are discovering that success today isn't just about who crosses the finish line first or scores the winning goal, it's also about who captures hearts and screens. Social media has emerged as a game-changer for fan engagement and sponsorship, especially for clubs looking to grow both their audience and financial sustainability.

Recent research into local clubs tells a compelling story. Social media isn't just a luxury, it's a necessity. Clubs that participated in the study highlighted how platforms like Facebook and Instagram allow teams to reach fans directly, regardless of age or background. These platforms serve as a digital home, where fans not only watch the action but become part of it as well. This has long been realized by sporting teams in regions such as the U.S, across Europe, and in Asia.

Facebook was the platform of choice for one of the clubs, while another preferred Instagram. This did not divide feedback, however, as a common thread was clear: engaged fans meant

heightened visibility, and heightened visibility attracted sponsors. One club painted the simple picture of "more eyes, more engagement, more interest from sponsors." Another highlighted a ripple effect: "more fans lead to more popularity, more popularity leads to more interest, and ultimately, more potential sponsorship."

Digital engagement is beneficial to clubs in other ways too. When fans feel involved, they're more likely to support clubs financially. This support could be demonstrated through buying tickets, signing up as members, or promoting events within their circles. Athlete recruitment is also possible through this engagement. The research shows that fans are drawn to stories of winning, profiles of their favorite athletes, and behind-the-scenes content that humanizes the sport.

It's not as easy as posting occasionally, though, and clubs agreed that quality matters. Clear visuals, consistent updates, and meaningful content are all essential. Furthermore, engagement often drops during off-season lulls, so clubs must

be intentional about maintaining interest with strategic posts. Planning is key. Without strategic planning, even the most loyal fans can scroll away.

What makes this especially important is the context: Barbados is a small island developing state. With limited resources but high enthusiasm for sport, social media helps to level the playing field. It provides a low-cost, high-reward way to connect with the community, foster loyalty, and open the door to corporate partnerships that were once out of reach.

The takeaway?

In today's sports environment, social media is more than a marketing tool - it's a lifeline. For Barbadian clubs, embracing digital engagement isn't optional. It's the most direct route to growing the game, building the brand, and attracting the support that can take them to the next level. In the age of likes and shares, every post is a chance to score.

By Mr. Nevin Roach



Mr. Nevin Roach
Technologist, UWI Cave Hill



The Unsung Pillar: The Vital Role of the UWI Combined Campuses and Colleges in West Indies Cricket

In the ever-evolving world of West Indies cricket, one team stands as a quiet but crucial force for development, opportunity, and academic-athletic balance: the Combined Campuses and Colleges (CCC) franchise. While it may not command the same fanfare as traditional territorial teams like Barbados or Jamaica, the CCC has carved out a vital niche that deserves greater recognition and respect.

A Vision Rooted in Development

The inception of the CCC team in 2007 was a progressive step by the West Indies Cricket Board (now Cricket West Indies (CWI)) and the University of the West Indies (UWI), aligning sport with academia. This was not merely an experiment in blending education with athleticism; it was a visionary move that acknowledged a critical gap in the regional

structure — the need to nurture late bloomers, overlooked talents, and students passionate about cricket and education who might otherwise fall through the cracks. CCC was the vision of the late, great, Sir Frank Worrell, West Indies player and captain. The UWI Vice-Chancellor, Professor Hilary Beckles was instrumental in ensuring that Worrell's vision was realized and impactful, as shown in CCC's 18-year journey since its entry into regional first-class competition.

Unlike the established territorial franchise teams that often rely on historical structures, government funding, and pipelines, CCC is about meritocracy. Players from across the Caribbean, regardless of their island of origin, are given a chance to prove themselves in the competitive regional scene. This democratization of opportunity is essential in a region as diverse and

widespread as the West Indies.

A Launchpad for Talent

The list of players who have worn the maroon after sharpening their skills at CCC is growing. CCC's crowning moment was winning the Super 50 Competition in 2018, defeating all territorial franchises in the West Indies. This victory demonstrated that over time the CCC program could realize tangible results on the field of play, and that student-cricketers could measure up to any other regional franchise player. CCC has produced leaders in cricket and cricket administration. Five past players- Rovman Powell, Jason Holder, Carlos Brathwaite, Chadwick Walton and Kraigg Brathwaite- have come through the CCC system. More recently, Kavem Hodge, Matthew Forde and Amir Jangoo progressed to the international level out of the CCC project. Furthermore, the newly appointed CWI Director

of Cricket, Miles Bascombe is a past CCC player. Approximately 50 players have represented CCC and transitioned towards regional franchise teams, West Indies A and Senior teams. This is testament to the impact and legacy of the CCC program. Their successes underscore the CCC franchise's ability to both identify and refine talent that may not have been prioritized in their home territories.

It is worth noting that CCC's contribution is not limited to flashy performances or individual brilliance. Their style of play, often driven by discipline, strategic clarity, mentorship, quality coaching and the hunger of underdogs, has resulted in memorable victories and highly competitive campaigns including the earlier mentioned historic triumph in the 2018 Regional Super50 tournament and more recently the unforgettable win against Jamaica Scorpions in the 2025 West Indies 4-Day Championship.

Academic-Athletic Excellence

What truly sets the CCC apart is its unique structure, merging academic pursuit with elite sport. This model reinforces the principle that athletes can and should, be scholars too. It cultivates individuals who are not only skilled on the field but are also prepared for life after cricket — an essential consideration in a sport where professional longevity is never guaranteed. In my experience, both as a player and cricket analyst, this dual-track development shapes more mature, grounded individuals. The CCC system encourages personal responsibility, critical thinking, and long-term planning,



Mr. Daren Ganga
Project Officer at the UWI Faculty
of Sport and CCC Chairman of
Selectors

traits that benefit players on and off the field.

The CCC's Role in the Broader Cricket Ecosystem

For West Indies cricket to truly thrive, our structure must be inclusive and forward-looking. The CCC provides a safety net for cricketers who mature later, who are pursuing education, or who need an alternate path to elite cricket. Without this franchise, the regional cricket ecosystem risks becoming too narrow, too rigid, and unable to

accommodate the full spectrum of Caribbean potential.

The continued existence and support of the CCC are not just important — they are essential. In an age where we are striving for excellence, equality, and sustainability in sport, the CCC stands as a blueprint for how to balance talent development with holistic growth.

Conclusion

The CCC may not have the fan base of a Guyana or a Trinidad, but its impact runs deep. It is a franchise built on merit, academic ambition, and unyielding belief in potential. It is all-encompassing and embodies the spirit of the Caribbean: diverse, determined, and dynamic.

As we look toward the future of West Indies cricket, let us ensure that the CCC is not just sustained, but celebrated. For in nurturing tomorrow's stars while educating them today, it plays a role that no other team quite can.

By Mr. Daren Ganga



Artificial Intelligence (AI), Sports, and Entrepreneurship: The Future of Innovation



Artificial Intelligence is no longer just a behind-the-scenes player, it's becoming the MVP across sports and business alike. Where raw instinct and repetition once ruled, AI now delivers game-changing insights, acting like a super-intelligent coaching dream team. It analyzes patterns, predicts outcomes, and helps athletes train smarter, not just harder, thus, giving them an edge that a lone coach simply can't.

Step onto the pitch, and you'll see AI in full stride. In football, it tracks each dash and direction change, reading players' movements, fatigue levels, and on-the-fly decisions with uncanny accuracy. Over on the cricket field, AI dissects a bowler's spin or a batter's stance with laser focus, breaking each play into data-rich moments that help teams optimize tactics. And in car racing, where fractions of

a second matter, AI is the silent strategist, calculating pit stops, analyzing tire performance, and streamlining aerodynamics in real time. Whether it's a goal, a cover drive, or the perfect roller coaster turn, AI's watching, learning, and improving every beat of the game.

But it doesn't stop there. AI is transforming injury prevention and performance optimization by detecting early signs of fatigue or strain and customizing workouts to match each athlete's physiology. This means faster recovery, stronger conditioning, and longer careers. At the same time, entrepreneurs are tapping into this momentum, launching AI-powered sports tech that's redefining how we train, compete, and stay game-ready. The field of play has gone digital, and the opportunities are mind boggling.

That momentum extends beyond the athletes

to the stands. Fans are no longer passive spectators; with AI-driven apps, they receive highlight reels tailored to their favorite players and real-time stats that enhance the thrill. It's an immersive front-row experience, anytime, anywhere. Meanwhile, on-field decisions get a precision boost from AI tools like VAR and Hawk-Eye, ensuring fairer outcomes when the pressure is on.

It all comes together in a new era where raw talent merges seamlessly with smart tech and advanced sports science. Athletes blend physical power with mental agility and machine-aided precision. From biomechanics that perfect every movement to data-driven recovery protocols, training is now a high-tech art form. Every sprint, swing, and strategy is backed by insight, turning human potential into peak performance. The game has changed, and it's only just begun.

What was once identified as natural skills and athleticism now meets cutting-edge intelligence, creating a thrilling fusion of physiological capacity, cognitive strategy, and computational enhancement. This powerful triad elevates athletic performance through biomechanical optimization, mental acuity, and data-driven precision, redefining the science and art of sport in the modern age. Whether it's perfecting performance, thrilling the crowd, or keeping the game clean, AI is

redefining the rules and rewriting the playbook of modern sport.

As the sports tech industry evolves rapidly, entrepreneurs are charging ahead to meet the growing demand. With the global AI sports market projected to surpass \$40 billion by 2030, opportunity is knocking at every corner of the game. From wearable gear that tracks heartbeats and footwork in real time to AI-powered coaching platforms offering instant, pro-level feedback; innovation is rewriting the rules of athletic training. And it's not just about individual performance; this tech wave is transforming entire sports from the inside out.

Take cricket, for example, a game steeped in tradition is now syncing with futuristic precision, thanks to AI. The same tools driving smart coaching in startups are redefining cricketing strategy: ball trajectory predictions fine-tune LBW calls, while player-tracking sensors decode bowling accuracy and batting technique with pinpoint accuracy. These insights don't just elevate performance; they fuel smarter game plans and deeper player development.

That depth of intelligence also reduces the prevalence of injury. With GPS tracking and motion analytics, teams can monitor athlete workloads, detect fatigue early, and reduce risk before it becomes reality. It's a shift from reactive to proactive, all built on data. But as we hand over more decisions to machines, we also open a Pandora's box of ethical concerns.

While AI brings razor-sharp precision, it still lacks the human nuance that defines

“Talent sparks potential. Drills refine skills. Diagnostics unlock greatness”

sport at its core. Questions arise: How much data is too much? Can algorithms truly stay unbiased? Can machines ever grasp the empathy of coaching? AI systems must strike a balance between innovation and integrity, upholding privacy, transparency, and accountability in decision-making. A comeback isn't just a data point, it's a story, an emotion, a connection. As innovation accelerates, the goal isn't to sideline the soul of sport, but to elevate it. True progress merges intelligence with empathy, ensuring that every breakthrough empowers people, not replaces them.

That's exactly where the next chapter begins. The future of sports is being written in code, and it's rewriting the rules in thrilling ways. Picture AI-powered training plans so hyper-personalized they align with your DNA, crafting workouts tailored to your biology and performance goals. Stadiums are transforming into smart ecosystems, where ticketing, concessions, and immersive Augmented Reality (AR) experiences turn each game into a personalized spectacle. And

the boundaries of sport itself are expanding, as AI helps imagine brand-new competitive formats blending physical prowess with digital wizardry.

For athletes, coaches, and entrepreneurs alike, this is your moment. A wave of possibility is rising and it's fueled by data, driven by vision, and anchored in human ambition. The imperative is no longer to anticipate change, it is to cultivate the agility to adapt and the vision to architect it. In an era defined by rapid technological transformation, the distinction between passive participation and proactive leadership is critical. Those who merely respond risk obsolescence; those who innovate shape the trajectory of tomorrow. The locus of influence belongs not to those who wait, but to those who reimagine, disrupt, and lead with intention.

By Prof. Paul Pounder



Prof. Paul Pounder
Department of Business and
Management, St. George's
University

UPCOMING EVENTS

Caribbean Sport Conference

Date: April 9 - 11, 2026

Location: Usain Bolt Sports Complex



Get ready—The Caribbean Sport Conference is back at UWI Cave Hill, igniting the region with the bold theme **“Sport for All: Access, Inclusion, Opportunity!”** This year, we’re turning up the energy as we explore how sport can drive real social change, break barriers, and open doors for everyone. From electrifying keynotes to powerful panels and hands-on sessions, join the movement to make sport a force for unity, empowerment, and opportunity across the Caribbean and beyond!



Professor Roper is a trailblazing multidisciplinary researcher and visionary leader in sport and exercise psychology, sport sociology, cultural studies, and gender studies. Her groundbreaking work explores how gender shapes experiences, cultural narratives, and societal structures in sport and physical activity. Her influential research has been featured in leading publications such as *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, *The Sport Psychologist*, *Sex Roles*, *Research in Dance Education*, *Women in Sport and Physical Activity Journal*, *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, and *Athletic Insight*.

KEYNOTE: PROFESSOR EMILY ROPER

UPCOMING EVENTS

2026 UWI Hockey Scrimfest Championship

Date: February 18 - 22, 2026

Location: Usain Bolt Sports Complex



stakes, the skill level, and the spotlight on Barbadian hockey like never before.

This isn't just a tournament. It's a movement, a celebration, and a showdown that the entire Barbados hockey community has been craving.

For more information contact:

Organizer: Mr. Shane Lewis

Email: shane.lewis@uwi.edu

Call: (246)-417-7405

Get Ready, Barbados!

The 2026 UWI Hockey Scrimfest Championships are coming and this 16th edition is set to be the biggest, boldest, and most electrifying one yet!

What started as a spirited clash between UWI, BCC, SJPI, and Combined Schools has exploded into a national spectacle, now featuring top-tier local clubs and custom-built dream teams. And this year? We're turning up the heat even more.

For the first time ever, we're opening the gates to international teams, raising the



UPCOMING EVENTS

UWI Relay Fest & Track Extravaganza

Date: February 27 - 28, 2026

Location: Usain Bolt Sports Complex



relays, fun challenges, and a dedicated entertainment segment that will keep the energy soaring between races.

Whether you're a die-hard track fan or just in it for the vibes, UWI Relay Fest promises unforgettable moments, fierce competition, and a festival atmosphere like no other.

For more information contact:

Organizer: Mr. Aundrea Wharton

Email: aundrea.wharton@uwi.edu

Call: (246)-417-4212



On Your Marks - Brace yourself for two electrifying evenings where the thrill of track and field meets the pulse of live entertainment! The UWI Relay Fest & Extravaganza is not just a meet, it's a celebration of athleticism, rhythm, and pure adrenaline.

From the tiniest titans in the Under-9s to the seasoned warriors in the Seniors, this event will showcase non-stop action across all age groups. Expect high-octane