

Walsh gets top award

VETERAN West Indies fast bowler, Courtney Walsh, was named Cricketer of the Year by the Jamaica Cricket Board of Control (JCBC) at its annual awards function on Wednesday night.

Walsh, who was given Jamaica's third highest national honour, the Order of Jamaica last month, was recognised for his sterling contribution to the West Indies team.

He was also praised for his performance which helped Jamaica to win the recently-ended 1999 Red Stripe Bowl 50-over championship under his captaincy for the first time.

The lanky Walsh, 37, has taken 423 Test wickets and needs 12 more to overhaul India's Kapil Dev's world record 434 in Tests.

Exciting middle-order batsman, Ricardo Powell, was named Young West Indies Cricketer of the Year.

Powell was specially singled out for his blazing 93-ball 124 against India in the recent Singapore Challenge tournament.

Lucas Cricket Club were the toast of the night, as they won the major awards — the Surrey Senior Cup title, the National Championship trophy and the County Championship crown.

Lucas' star batsman and West Indies one-day cricketer, Chris Gayle, received six individual awards. He was voted Most

Valuable Player in the National Championship, with a bowling best of five for 10 and a top-score of 271, the highest individual knock for the season.

Gayle, who is representing the West Indies "A" team against the touring India "A" in Trinidad and Tobago, scored the most runs (514) and took the most wickets (29).

He also had the highest individual score (214 not out), the best bowling analysis (seven for 27) and was named Most Valuable Player in the three-year-old County Championship.

Lucas' captain, Andre Coley, the former Jamaica and Young West Indies wicketkeeper, won the Collie Smith trophy for displaying the highest level of contribution and displaying leadership qualities on and off the field.

The season's leading team also won the Unifruitico Cup for fielding, which went to Ryan Wellington, as well as the Wilson James Cup for the best fielding team.

West Indies Youth team cricket, Marlon Samuels, who is recuperating from knee surgery, was awarded the George Headley trophy for excellence in youth cricket. He scored 397 runs in the recent NorTel youth tournament, including a century.

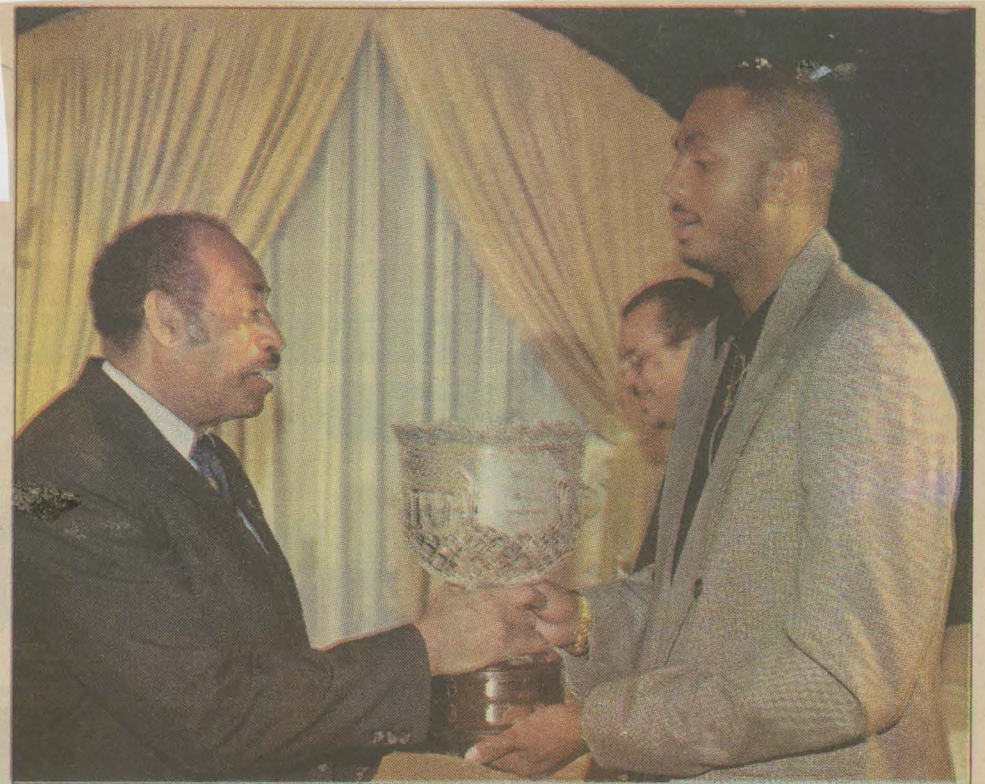
Young fast bowler, Jermaine Lawson, won a prize for his 27-wicket bowling performance in the NorTel tournament.

Lawson also won the EA Rae cash award for the national youth player, who in the opinion of his colleagues set the best example on and off the field.

Jamaica's wicketkeeper, Matthew Sinclair, won a prize for batting in the Middlesex Senior Cup, while Jamaica's Under-15 team member St Clair Searchwell took the award for most runs scored in the regional Under-15 tournament.

Guest speaker, radio talk-show host, Barbara Gloudon, said that cricket in the region was being played without conviction.

"Everybody has their own agenda. We are smitten by the bug of individualism. There is no sense of oneness and if the West Indies are to return to the glory days, the process of team commitment must be emphasised," she said.



Jamaica's captain, Courtney Walsh is presented with the Cricketer of the Year trophy by George Sterling. (Photo: Joseph Wellington)

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B/p Walsh, Courtney