



Members of the Class of 2003

Charlie Major Sr.

(1904-1984)

Let it be confirmed that the alpha of Bahamian Sports Power personified itself in the brilliance of Charlie W. Major Sr., the first Bahamian World Class Athlete. Such confirmation is easily substantiated by the dominance of his performances in the high jump during the 1920s and 30's highlighted by his capture and long-term retention of the record for that event in the United States of America. In the local context, his best effort of 6 feet, 8 inches, achieved in 1928, remained the Bahamian national record for fifty years. His dominance of his event was so complete that time and again even Olympic Gold Medallists submitted to his wondrous might.

Charlie's other telling achievement was that he readily repatriated The Bahamas all the enlightened training skills which he acquired as athlete and coach at St. Bonaventure University in New York. As soon as he returned home, he immediately concentrated his efforts upon training the eager, talented, but unexposed athletes who flocked to his call. As a result of his progressive thinking and strategic planning, The Bahamas was able to embark on its first international track and field foray featuring Chef Mission, Cyril "Cap" Richardson, and athletes, Cyril "Peep Sight" Johnson, Leonard "Skeeter" Dames and Irington "Rinky" Isaacs. It was Charlie who organized and then coached that first three-man team to the British Empire and Commonwealth Games in Vancouver, Canada in 1954.

Charlie was also an avid proponent of boxing and wrestling. His Nassau Stadium became the epicenter for countless legendary matches between local and international champions. He was the magnet which attracted many of the world's greatest fighters and their managers to The Bahamas.

Summarily, Charlie Major Sr. ascended to the world stage of athletes well before the average Bahamian could fathom its existence. Yet, it could rightfully be said that this great man was as comfortable interacting with the average man as he was with kings and queens. He was held in affection by all, especially St. Bonaventure, which named its track and field stadium in his honour.