

# An OLYMPIAN RECORD

The book, *Trinidad and Tobago at the Olympic Games: From Rodney Wilkes to George Bovell III* written by Basil A. Ince is a digest-size publication in both soft and hard cover editions. It has long been sought after by all those interested in knowing about the rich history of athletics in Trinidad and Tobago. Indeed the book is dedicated to this group and “all those Trinbago athletes who have toiled on behalf of their country.”

Unlike previous and disjointed attempts at recording our athletic history, this publication presents an integrated and chronological approach to the recorded performance of our athletic gladiators at various local, regional and international venues over a period of fifty- six years, from 1948 to 2004, covering fourteen Olympiads from colonial times to our current era of Independence and Republicanism.

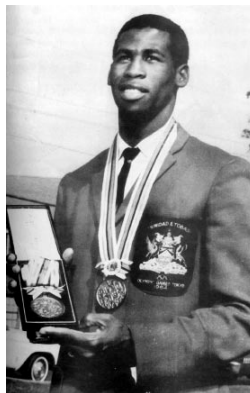
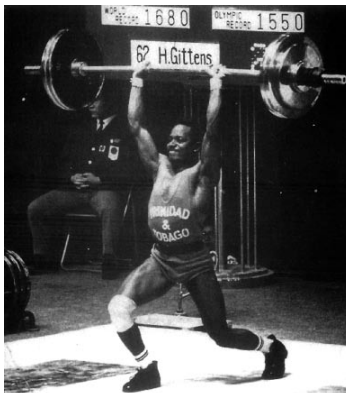


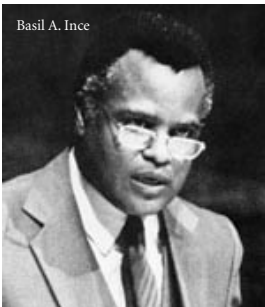
and a sense of history and current affairs, intended to inform and explain to the reader the prevailing social, economic and political situations that formed the backdrop to the unfolding sporting events and circumstances.

This approach is not unexpected from the author who has had a background and interest in International Affairs; served as a Minister of External Affairs and in an earlier life had also been a competitive athlete, winning gold and silver medals at the 1959 PAN AM Games.

The book consists of 207 pages, organized into 12 chapters including a Conclusion and five Appendices which contain a wealth of statistical material and includes our Olympic teams along with associated officials, medal winners, medallists at other major International competitions such as CAC, Commonwealth and PAN AM Games, all in chronological sequence. The writer records events in a free-flowing journalistic style, infused with anecdotes

The role of sport in cultural diplomacy and as an arena of ideological struggle, is constantly underscored and there are many examples given of the actions of Cold War politics intruding into the international sports arena. In the post Cold War environment the reader recognizes its continuing effects on both the flavour and attendance at international sporting events





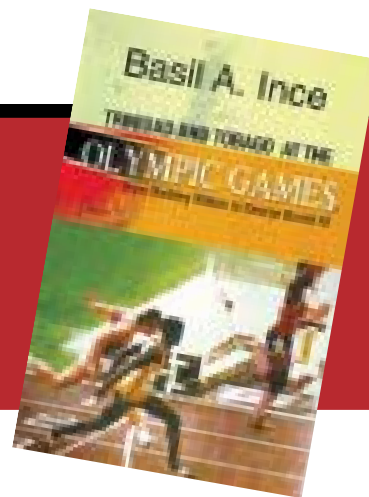
Basil A. Ince

## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AT THE OLYMPICS

*From Rodney Wilkes to George Bovell III*

by Basil A. Ince

SOFT COVER, 207 PAGES, PRICE \$91.00



as recently freed countries participated as separate entities.

Increasingly, Ince points out that, security and drug testing have become major issues at International sporting events. Recent calls in some circles for a combined West Indian athletic team seems to have forgotten that this experiment had occurred during the short-lived Federation era when such a team was selected for the *Rome Olympics* in 1960. In the existing post Independence period one does not know if CARICOM countries will once

national pride and prestige that flow from their achievements. When these events occur they provide nationals at home and in the Diaspora with a window of opportunity to collectively experience the euphoria of oneness and patriotism that seems to elude us at other times.

*Trinidad and Tobago at the Olympic Games* is filled with many interesting photographs of varying quality interspersed throughout the twelve chapters. These pictures, in some cases, give a face to a name that one has heard about but never seen,

rhetoric offered, but against the accuracy of the information offered in this publication which will serve as an *aide memoire* to fans and patrons.

Consequently, I unhesitatingly recommend this book to all sports fans both at home and in the Diaspora; to owners and patrons of bars, both sport and otherwise; members of sport and athletic clubs of various levels and disciplines; sport store

“...this publication presents an *integrated and chronological approach* to the recorded performance of our athletic gladiators.”

again have any real desire to replicate this process. I suspect that this may not happen any time soon.

On the other hand, *Trinidad and Tobago at the Olympic Games* gives a detailed and insider account of our athletes at the 1976 *Montreal Olympics*, especially that of Hasely Crawford who won our first and as yet only Olympic gold medal.

The book also provides insight and hopefully brings closure to some persistent issues such as E. Mc Donald Bailey’s decision in 1952 to run for England in the *Helsinki Olympics*. It also describes in several chapters the persistent problem of funding, team selection, pre meet preparations and the angst occasioned by the uncertainty of last minute travel arrangements for several groups which we all hope will be relegated to the past.

It must be noted as well, that the size and composition of our teams have become larger over time especially since our nationhood, due no doubt, as Ince indicates, to the success and impact of our athletes in the international arena and the

although the person may be now deceased. Other pictures are a bit blurred; a few too small to discern much detail, while others give the reader a glimpse of the sporting attire of the day, or a snapshot of an athlete at his prime in full flight, or the sartorial elegance of the competitors in mufti.

In my view this book is timely, relevant and long overdue. We can now in one place and at a reasonable price, obtain a treasure trove of information: pictorial, anecdotal, and statistical on our sporting heroes from a bygone era and almost up to the present time.

This publication also has other uses, intended or otherwise. It can be used as a convenient reference document and as an impeccable source for arbitrating on the many disputes which inevitably erupt when Trinidadians and Tobagonians gather at their various liming spots and other watering holes where sport is invariably discussed or enthusiastically debated. Then, opinions will have to reluctantly give way to facts and differences of opinion and recall can now be resolved, not by the volume of the

owners; gymnasias; libraries and to all other interested groups and members of the general public.

The reviewer takes this opportunity to thank Dr. B. A. Ince and his assistants for their enduring contribution to sport and country as exemplified by the publication of this book.

I trust as well that existing typographical errors will be expunged from the prose and that there can be a better design and layout for such an important work as this.

It is therefore my fervent hope that the life of this book *Trinidad and Tobago at the Olympic Games* can be enhanced and extended by regular updates.



Neila Todd

*nostalgically remembers with pride our achievements at the Montreal Games and her boast to Mayor Jean-Claude Drapeau on the eve of the event that we would win the 100 metres final.*