

Dwayne De Rosario talking to some of the participants in the camp.



Sandals supporting sports programme

The Sandals Foundation has once again taken steps to invest in youth development in Barbados, this time by providing BDS\$21,000 to fund a team of coaches to conduct a year-long schools' sports and recreation programme.

The five coaches will work with over 150 children now set to benefit from afterschool and weekend activities at the Dover, Christ Church playing field.

The decision to invest in the weekly programme, which will be conducted by the Paradise Football Club, follows the success of the Game Changer Football Camp hosted in Barbados last April by Sandals Foundation and DeRo Foundation.

Over 53 children aged 4-16 years participated in the Easter camp and the positive impact it had on them has prompted the Foundation to extend the initiative and invite others with similar interest, who wish to hone their talent and actively pursue their dreams.

Augustin Jacob, vice president and coach of the Paradise Club, thanked the Sandals Foundation for the assistance.

"Over the years we have had companies who made us promises and never delivered or fell short, but not the Sandals Foundation.

"From our first meeting with Heidi Clarke, director of programmes at the Sandals Foundation, I knew they were serious and they

proved it by hosting the DeRo camp during Easter break and now allowing us to offer stipends to our hard-working coaches for this programme.

"We want to thank the Sandals Foundation and assure them that the contributions will not be wasted. We have already started the youth programme with the coaches as we look forward to seeing these teams compete in the Youth Tournament in 2017 with the goal of winning."

The parents of the participants were equally excited about the ongoing initiative and Jennifer Jones, whose eight-year-old son attended the camp, said: "My son was very impressed by the coaches and told me he learnt a lot. I thought it

was a nice gesture by Sandals.

"I was very impressed by the discipline aspect of the camp where they taught the kids to be respectful and spoke about things like drugs and even a pep talk session with Alison Hinds. I am pleased that something like this can continue throughout the year as it gives my son something positive to look forward to that he thoroughly loves."

The Paradise Football Club is an active group of parents and local coaches who volunteer their time for the advancement of children through sports. The programme is structured to build and develop players for the future.

Since 2016 the football partnership with DeRo Foundation has extended across the Caribbean impacting over 150 youths.

(PR)

CFU welcomes expanded World Cup

KINGSTON, Jamaica - Caribbean Football Union president, Gordon Derrick, believes the decision to expand the World Cup to 48 teams will augur well for regional sides but has warned this does not represent "a guarantee" of a spot at the showpiece.

Football's world governing body, FIFA, unanimously voted on the move a week ago, which will see the number of teams at the World Cup rise from 32 to 48, and the number of games leap from 64 to 80.

Currently, CONCACAF only has three automatic berths at the World Cup, with a possible fourth available through an inter-confederation playoff.

Derrick said while an increase in spots for the continental governing body was anticipated, this did not mean that CFU teams would automatically benefit.

"There are more spots, but there are no guarantees ... the only way we could have a guarantee for a Caribbean team getting to a World Cup could only happen if we had a Caribbean confederation, because if we were a confederation, we would have been guaranteed at least one spot, but that's a different discussion for a different time," Derrick said.

"But what I am saying in effect is that there is no guarantee for anyone, but that teams must prepare themselves and continue to work hard, as we have been doing, and try and advance, and if there are more spots

available, that can only benefit you."

The new move by FIFA will see 16 groups of three nations contest the preliminary round, with 32 teams qualifying for the knockout round. The changes will take effect from 2026.

Four regional teams have previously qualified for the World Cup - Cuba in 1938; Haiti in 1974; Jamaica in 1998; and Trinidad and Tobago in 2006. CFU sides are traditional weaker than their other CONCACAF counterparts from North and Central America, and often less likely to reach the final round of confederation qualifying.

Derrick said, however, that FIFA's decision would increase the likelihood of more CFU making it through to the World Cup finals.

"I think it (expanded World Cup) is a positive thing ... we have not yet seen the allocation of spots to the various confederations, and I assume each of the confederation will receive an increase in spots," Derrick explained.

"I have seen it being touted that CONCACAF could get six-and-half spots, but that does not guarantee you a spot from the Caribbean, but what it does is give you more opportunities and I think that can only be beneficial to CONCACAF.

"The Caribbean teams particularly, which I represent, will have a greater opportunity of qualifying for the tournament."

(CMC)



Ryan Morris (l) of Courtesy Garage presented the prizes to the winners (from second left) Eryn Blakeley, Algie Leacock, Trevor Tasker and Jon Layne.

Medal championship golfers rewarded

Twelve year-old Eryn Blakeley was among the winners when the Courtesy Garage Medal champions for 2016 were decided last weekend at the Barbados Golf Club.

Blakeley, a fast improving national junior who represented Barbados at the Caribbean Junior Golf Championships last year, won the women's division with a net 71 in the medal play-offs.

Players qualified for last Saturday's championship round of the Courtesy Garage medal tournament after collecting points over a 12-month period in 2016 when 12 competitions were contested.

Insurance executive Algie Leacock successfully defended the men's 13 and over handicap division, with a net 72, after leading the category for most of the year.

Retired banker Jon Layne, who also gave a steady showing over the 12-month period, played outstandingly in the final and won the

seniors division with a net 66.

Barbados Golf Association president Trevor Tasker emerged the champion among lower handicap players (0-12 handicaps) as he carded a net 75 in the face of stern competition from other seasoned players.

During the presentation ceremony, BGC assistant manager Robert McGuire thanked all players for their participation in the medal tournaments and also thanked the sponsors for their support in 2016 and over the coming year.

Monthly medal tournaments are being sponsored by Courtesy Garage for the second year running, through their Nissan and Hyundai brands, and another 12 are scheduled to be contested in 2017.

The Courtesy Garage medal tournaments are popular club competitions, played in four divisions, and usually attract in excess of 60 male and female golfers.

(BB)