

SPORTS

National Sports Hall of Fame affair needs renewed focus of elegance

Minister Rolle faces challenges

At the present moment, the Ministry of Sports is gearing up for the next edition of the Bahamas National Sports Hall of Fame induction ceremony. It is to take place sometime in November.

One of the many challenges facing the new Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture, Lanisha Rolle, is finding a way to renew the focus on excellence and elegance for an event that pays homage to the prime contributors to nation building through their sporting endeavors over time.

I viewed the National Football League (NFL) Honors extravaganza staged in Canton, Ohio, where the latest stalwarts of the game were enshrined. With so many events having been observed while either physically present, or via television, I no longer get excited often.

The NFL's extravaganza on Saturday was a huge thrill. The new inductees, Randy Moss, Ray Lewis, Brian Dawkins, Brian Urlacher, Bobby Beathard, the seniors, Jerry Kramer and Robert Brazile were part of an incredible setting that verified the high status of sports in the world today.

(Terrell Owens did not show up,

in preference of having his own ceremony at the University of Chattanooga where he first drew attention, as a collegiate player. He was eligible two years ago).

The NFL has made its Hall of Fame induction ceremony one of the signature events on its calendar each year. To a great degree, the NFL Hall of Fame affair upstages the Pro Bowl and is second really, only to Super Bowl Week, in my estimation. I venture to point out, indeed, that the luminaries and others in the sport look forward to the Hall of Fame induction night with great anticipation and excitement.

More so for some, Hall of Fame night is special, because while on such occasions they receive invitations to interact with past colleagues of greatness, there are always limited amounts of prime seats for the Super Bowl. Even for the greats of the game, at times if they don't have the right hook-up, you never see them showcased at Super Bowl, because they are not there.

So, for the past field heroes of American Football, the Hall of Fame Honors occasion is highly anticipated.

It would be good if Minister Rolle could take our classic Sports Hall of Fame event to a similar level of significance and appreciation.

Two sports ministers ago, Dr. Daniel Johnson, re-arranged the Bahamas National Sports Hall of Fame into a product of pizzazz. He turned what was a drab, non-excitable affair into virtually a week of activities. I remember quite well the 2014 version.

I was fortunate to be in that class for 'sports administration and sports writing.' It was really a whirlwind experience that ranks right up there with the best of what I have been afforded in over 50 years of close association to the national and international sport stages. It was particularly a pleasure to give the Hall of Fame address on behalf of the inductees.

The inductees were treated to a series of daily events that enabled us to bond. There were re-introductions, renewal of friendships, networking with different era sports personnel, tours, a meet and greet session and of course, the grand finale at Government House in the presence of the esteemed first daughter of The

Bahamian soil, Dame Marguerite Matilda, Lady Pindling CCMG, Governor General.

Putting on the Hall of Fame blazer for the first time, is a unique experience and it ought to be the high point of a period of pure fanfare.

The template is there, left in place by Dr. Johnson. Minister Rolle also has available to her, sports officers who assisted Dr. Johnson in elevating the Bahamas National Sports Hall of Fame to one of the highlight sports/social events on the national calendar. Under Dr. Johnson, the ministry also crafted a platform for other sports awards to coincide with Hall of Fame Week.

He was on to something good, something big and quite befitting the national sports fraternity.

Surely, along the way to proving that she really belongs in the position of sports minister, this is one of the challenges, the Hon. Lanisha Rolle should tackle.

Best wishes to her!

(To respond to this column, kindly contact Fred Sturup at sturup1504@gmail.com or on WhatsApp at 727-6363).



LANISHA ROLLE
Minister of Youth,
Sports and Culture

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SPORTS SCOPE

BY FRED STURUP



JOANNA EVANS

GB's Evans, Thomas lead way for Bahamas at CAC Games

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Grand Bahama leads the way for Team Bahamas!

With a total of four gold medals, The Bahamas finished among the top 10 countries at the recently held Central American and Caribbean (CAC) Games. The four gold medals were won by Grand Bahamians.

With representation featured in eight categories, the country produced a total of seven medals - four gold, two silver, and one bronze over in Barranquilla, Columbia.

For Grand Bahama in particular, the nation's "Second City" can be proud that two of its very own led the way in the gold rush. Aquatics competitor Joanna Evans (3), and world class jumper Donald Thomas (1) collectively snagged all four gold medals for the country.

Swimming

Evans, the Texas Longhorn swimmer was responsible for collecting five of those medals for the country.

The triple-gold medalist got off to a hot start when she struck gold on the first night of competition in the women's 400 meters freestyle. She touched the wall in a time of four minutes and 16.63 seconds (4:16.63). She bested Mexico's Allyson Alba Macias who finished with the silver medal in 4:17.39. Puerto Rico's Kristen Romano

captured the bronze in that event with a time of 4:20.01.

Evans' momentum carried over into the women's 200m freestyle where she came away with a national record setting performance on top of securing her second gold medal. Evans lowered her own national record and personal best time of 1:59.19, with a new standard of 1:58.03. Cuba's Elisbet Gomez also turned in a sub 1:59 time of 1:58.55 to finish with the silver medal. Mexico's Liliana Ibanez took the bronze in the

time of 2:01.36.

She would later compete in the women's 800m freestyle where she landed her third gold medal for the competition. The aquatic standout paced to a first place time of 8:44.53. Mexico's Allyson Macias Alba trailed Evans to the wall to take the silver medal with a time of 8:45.92, while Costa Rica's Helena Hernandez Moreno settled for the bronze and clocked 8:48.11.

Evans also took part in the women's (Continued on Page 11)