

**SPORTS**



JIM DENT TALKING WITH INDUCTEE AND VETERAN SPORTS JOURNALIST FRED STURRUP.



FRED STURRUP WITH AAGHOF PLAQUE

# African-American Golf Hall of Fame body has lofty regional objectives

Before there was a Tiger Woods, the phenomenal black golfing superstar, there were several prominent players of the same ethnicity. I refer to those of the pioneering circle, in particular Charlie Sifford, Lee Elder, Jim Dent, Pete Brown, Jim Thorpe and Calvin Peete.

Well, one of those golfing luminaries graced the proceedings of the 14th African American Golfers Hall of Fame (AAGHOF) induction ceremonies the weekend of May 24-28 in West Palm Beach Florida.

It was certainly a great pleasure to interact with the legend, Dent. His demeanor is quite in contrast to the determined approach utilized in playing the game at a time when his ethnic background was still very much a great disadvantage. His low voice also belies the awesome, booming drives that characterized him as he was winning 16 times on the Professional Golfers Association (PGA) tour (4); and the Senior PGA Tour (12).

Dent spoke easily about playing a sport and interacting with the likes of Jack Nicklaus, Lee Trevino, George Archer, Bob Murphy, Larry Gilbert, Kermit Zarley, Al Geiberger and Bob Charles.

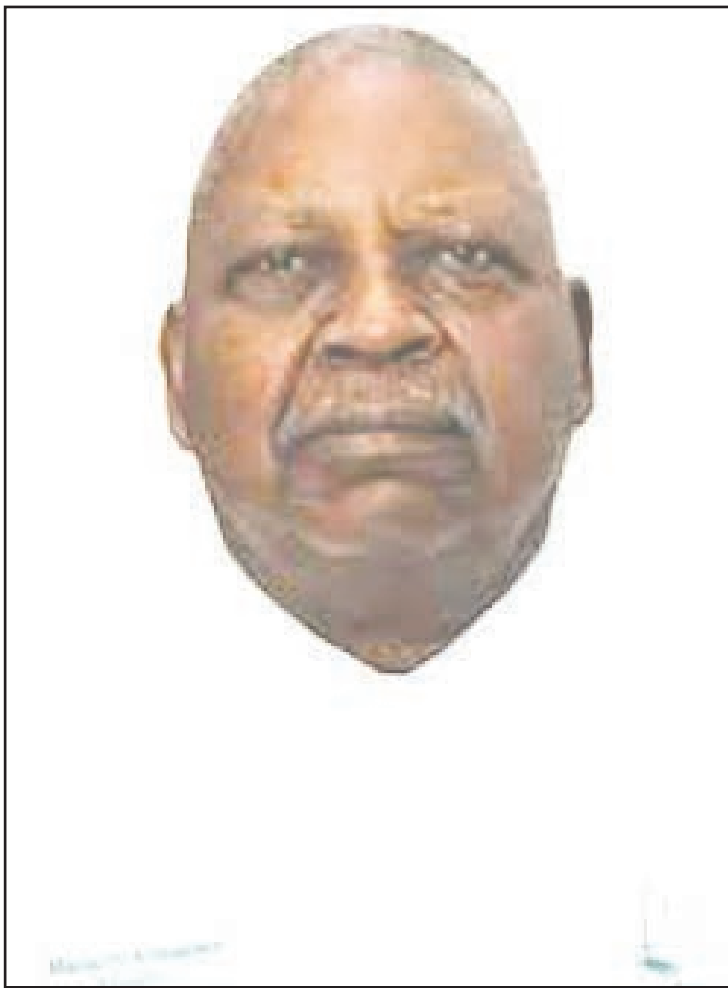
“Oh yes, I admit that as a boy growing up in Augusta, Georgia, I never thought I would one day play the game at the level I did, and compete in major tournaments. But, you know, I just went out there and played. I blocked everything else out other than what I had to do on the course. I never let anything bother me. I was there to play golf and that’s what I did.

“Yes, they make a lot more money now that when I played (he turned pro in 1966) but that’s to be expected. I just did what I had to do and worked hard. The young folks today, they complain about putting in seven hours on the course in a day. Man, I would go on the course in the morning and be out there all day and into the night.

“We concentrated on the game quite a lot. I suppose in their own ways today’s golfers do the same, but it’s a bit different,” said Dent.

He was a special element in the backdrop to the recent induction activities of the transcendent organization founded by the Bahamian-rooted, Malachi Knowles.

What Knowles and his associates are about is revolutionizing the development process of the game in our region for young



MALACHI KNOWLES THE AAGHOF FOUNDER.



PAUL FARQUHARSON former High Commissioner in Great Britain



INDUCTEES FRED LIGHTBOURN AND FRED STURRUP

## SPORTS SCOPE

BY FRED STURRUP



golfers and those who aspire to play the game.

The AAGHOF has already broken ground for the Inner City Youth Golfers (ICYG) Learning Center and Museum. The opportunity exists for exchange opportunities for Bahamian golfers through the outreach program to be orchestrated by Knowles. The Bahamian connection to the AAGHOF has been cemented by past inductee, His Excellen-

cy Paul Farquharson, the former Bahamian High Commissioner in Great Britain and also past Commissioner of Police.

Joining him in the AAGHOF (inducted last weekend) were this journalist for golf writing and more recently for organizing golf tournaments; and also Frederick Lightbourn (of Poop Deck fame) through his charitable endeavors through golf. Farquharson brought remarks

at the induction ceremony and spoke about the significance of the opportunities that will now be presented through Knowles and company for the sport in The Bahamas to grow.

“I am happy to be associated with the African American Golfers Hall of Fame and emphasize the opportunities that we in The Bahamas can take advantage of to grow the sport,” said Farquharson.

The AAGHOF’s 14th annual celebrations that coincided with the collegiate and youth segment were collectively a distinguished affair with a distinct Bahamian flavor. I am appreciative and humbled to be included in the mix.

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