

Promising Talent Discovered Through Scotiabank Kiddy Cricket Across the Caribbean

The Scotiabank Kiddy Cricket Programme has been unearthing talented players who are now representing their countries in various national junior cricket programmes across the region. The successful Kiddy Cricket ‘graduates’ are now playing key roles in their national under 15 and 19 programmes as well as forming part of their country’s regional championship teams.

Since its inception in 1998, the programme which has been teaching children the rudiments of the game including batting, bowling, fielding and catching has reached over 200,000 children across the region. In recent times, the programme has produced the likes of under 19 team players Brandon King and Jermaine Core in Jamaica; as well as several outstanding players in the Eastern Caribbean including Dalton Polius and Audy Alexander.

Meanwhile in the Eastern Caribbean, Keith Charley, the West Indies Cricket Board’s Territorial Development Officer in St Lucia has said that many young Kiddy Cricket Graduates have been coming up the ranks, most successful among them being Windwards players like Dalton Polius and Audy Alexander.

Dalton Polius is now on the Windward Islands Senior training squad preparing for the 2011 first class cricket season and has played for the West Indies under 19 squad in 2009. He has been declared junior cricketer of the year in St Lucia 2008 and 2009 and has received a cricket scholarship to attend school in the UK. He accredits his achievements so far to his roots in Kiddy Cricket “I would not have reached so far in cricket if it wasn’t for my exposure to the Scotiabank Kiddy Cricket programme at the Grande Riviere combined school in St Lucia. This programme taught me the basics of cricket in

a fun and relaxed environment which certainly developed my passion for the game. It also helped me developed many important qualities such as discipline and teamwork.”

Audy Alexander, another outstanding Kiddy Cricket Graduate from St. Lucia has captained Saint Lucia to victory in the Windward Islands national under 19 championship in 2010. He explains that in the absence of a primary school cricket programme in that island, Scotiabank Kiddy Cricket is the main catalyst for youngsters to get early exposure, which builds enthusiasm and helps them to aspire to become professionals. “I remember the excitement we felt as children in Kiddy Cricket, it was tremendous. Our teachers, coaches and everyone would prepare us for the big moments at the cricket venues and just seeing the big field, the professional at play and the huge crowd filled us with excitement and energy. Man, we couldn’t wait for our moment to become like them”

Christopher Wright, Kiddy Cricket coach in Jamaica, speaks with pride about the excellent players who have come up through the programme. “Many of our cricketers who were introduced to cricket here at the school have been doing well in the sport and are advancing in high school. They have gone on to be star players in senior club cricket, for example Jermaine Core who is a club player and has represented the under 15 and under 19 teams for Jamaica.” Mr. Wright went on to explain what he believes has led to this level of success.

“Kiddy Cricket stimulates their interest to start playing cricket. It teaches the game in a fun way and allows each player to develop specific skills in each area in a very exciting and interactive way which get everybody involved. On top of that, the exposure they get to the big leagues at Sabina Park when they go for the skills display event during home series is phenomenal.”

Brandon King, who had been a part of the Scotiabank programme while at Mona Prep has represented Jamaica twice on the national under 15 teams and looks forward to representing the island for the under 19 team. He also played in the recent under-15 level

in the regional championship in 2009 and 2010 and made his debut for the Kingston Cricket Club Super Cup team last year, 2010 at the age of 15.

Brandon fondly remembers his first time on the field at Sabina during the Kiddy Cricket Skills Displays session during a test match in 2004. “It was a very special experience for me; as it was the first time I was going on the field and Sabina, where all the big test matches were played. I felt like I was in the big league. Now I’m more used to it, but at that time, it was a great opportunity for me which I will never forget.”

Scotiabank has been the exclusive sponsor of Kiddy cricket and has signed a new contract with the WICB to continue its sponsorship as a sign of the Bank’s commitment to stay invested in youth cricket in the region. The 2011 sponsorship renewal will see both organizations expanding the existing programme to introduce a range of new initiatives aimed at enhancing the cricketing experience for primary school students.

-End-

For further information contact:

For more information, contact:

Simone Hull
Regional Sponsorship Manager
Scotiabank - English Caribbean
Email: simone.hull@scotiabank.com
Tel: (876) 932.0549 or mobile: (876) 322.3233

KJ Singh
Kiddy Cricket Project Officer
West Indies Cricket Board
Email: "Khushiyal J. Singh" kjsingh@windiescricket.com
Tel: (268) 720-9423