

From the Editor: 2007: Let's move forward...

As we usher in a New Year, with new beginnings come the opportunity for reflection and growth. For our organization, the Soca Warriors Supporters Club, this new beginning offers us the chance to reflect on the great strides which were made in 2006.

On February 20, 2006, eight days ahead of the friendly clash between the Soca Warriors and Iceland in London, I had the unique opportunity of announcing to the football world, the formation of the Soca Warriors Supporters Club. A process which began in December 2005, with our registration as a non-profit organization in the USA, finally took the world stage. With a Board of Directors in place, and Charter Members making the club's launch possible, the Soca Warriors Supporters Club was ready to take supporting Trinidad and Tobago football in an entirely new direction. For the first time in T&T's footballing history, supporters had formalized their interaction and love for the game in our part of the world. All of this arising out of the many heated discussions, moments of camaraderie and just plain passion for local football on the socawarriors.net forum developed by Flex Mohammed. From the onset our members were able to see that organization reaps significant benefits for all involved. Through the benevolence of the Trinidad and Tobago Football Federation and the Local Organizing Committee, we were able to secure valuable tickets for our members to view the Soca Warriors as they made their debut on the world stage.

As 2006 progressed, we were able to take the support of the team to an entirely new level. Not only were our members present at the World Cup in Germany, but we were able to galvanize support for not only the Senior Team, but also for all national teams at all levels, and assisted in the memorable display of patriotism that arose out of the senior team's World Cup appearance, with the unveiling of the massive 60 feet by 30

feet Trinidad and Tobago flag at the T&T vs Peru send-off game in May, garnering much needed publicity for our organization. The year was not without its challenges, but as with everything else in life, we were able to weather the storm and are still standing.

Likewise, Trinidad and Tobago football has seen similar ups and downs in 2006. Qualification for Germany 2006, while highlighting the ability of sport to unify an otherwise divided and unpatriotic society, also brought to the forefront the many inefficiencies in the hierarchy of local football organization. For the first time, the local organization's ability to perform at the highest level was tested before the glaring eyes of the world media, and we failed miserably. From ticket allocation and distribution, to sourcing funds and the distribution of profits to the team, qualification for Germany 2006 failed to inspire the organization of the game at the local level to re-engineer itself, and take full grasp of this opportunity to set higher professional standards for the entire society.

As 2007 unfolds, much of what is required is merely a willingness to objectively review all that occurred in 2006, taking into account the views of supporters as well as those of critics - realizing that success not only augurs well for the organizations involved, but also lays the foundation, one brick at a time, for a return to the glory days of local football and the involvement of supporters from all corners of the world.

It is time that a line is drawn in the sand, and as supporters we demand that we be valued as the much needed consumers of the game that we are, and the local hierarchy puts people before profits, since profits appear to be forbidden in the Federation's accounting anyway! 🙏

I AM A SOCA WARRIOR!

by Anthony Valley

On October 31st 2006 the Soca Warriors Supporters Club honored Maximus Dan for his contributions to the Soca Warriors World Cup 2006 campaign. The Club prides itself on identifying and rewarding the efforts made by individuals who assist in the advancement of Trinidad and Tobago football. In this particular instance, the club members recognized that there was no other artiste more deserving of this accolade.

During a live broadcast of Synergy Sports, Maximus was presented with a plaque and a Warrior Nation T-shirt that symbolized his honorary Club membership. This honour is also shared by Olympic medallist Ato Boldon for his ground-breaking “Boldon in Bahrain” DVD and Inshan “Flex” Mohammed, the founder of the T&T football information hub SocaWarriors.net.

Maximus’ musical contribution “Fighter”, a pulsating soca track, rallied the supporters of the Soca Warriors from

the last qualifying stage of the World Cup to the final, and broke new ground when it was featured on EA Sports’ FIFA ’06: Road to the World. When asked by the Warrior Nation Media if he was surprised by the local and international acclaim his song received, Maximus replied that he is seldom ever surprised by anything. “If you work hard and accept the hardship that comes

with success there is no need to be surprised, just be thankful.”

The hardship Maximus is referring to in this instance directly stems from the Trinidad and Tobago Football Federation’s disregard of his efforts in recording the



Maximus Dan is presented with a plaque on behalf of the Soca Warriors Supporters Club by Brian “Patriot” Springer, recognizing his contribution to local football.

mega hit. According to Maximus, he was contracted by the T&TFF to record the song for the Soca Warriors campaign, but did not charge the organization for the recording. His only stipulation was that the producer and studio fees be paid. However, upon the song’s completion, the T&TFF decided to endorse another fellow soca artiste,

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