

THE RELAY RACE

When we think of the standard relay race, the average man sees a four man team running in succession to skillfully pass on the baton to their next successor, in order to complete the finishing line. Do we stop to analyze the craft and preparation, the training and precision, not to mention the skillful transition for continuity?

Fast forwarding do we truly comprehend the Relay Race that we participate in each day, the tactics that we need to employ to successfully execute the changing of the guards to make the "Race" sustainable.

This hit home recently for a cousin of mine who lamented of the fact that predecessors in our FitzRitson family have never gotten the credit for their role and contribution they played over the past 150 years to nation building. I think she was surprised that I did not react so vehemently as I have long known that history books are written to suite the objective of the writer and the cause – some facts are lost in translation. The beauty about history however is that the truth will always be revealed no matter what, because there will be those spectators on the side lines recanting how the facts should have been recorded. So I said to her the moral of the story is that each of us have a responsibility to run that race and effectively pass on that baton. The trick however is to ensure that the Baton never falls so that the race will continue.

When I examine the Baton in my hand, I fully understand the carefully crafted strategies that my predecessors have passed down through the generations starting with William (for the development and infrastructure of the town of Falmouth), William Jnr. (his role in agriculture and animal husbandry in Jamaica), Donald (constitutional changes for a post independent Jamaica, social development through Boys Town and the Boys Scout Association of Jamaica and his unyielding dedication to service through the many boards he sat on), Paul (scouting, trade union, politics, community service, Chairman of National Sports), and then that Baton was passed on to me.

I will not use this time to define my role - history will judge me, but while I am running this marathon and looking at that long journey ahead, there are some clear messages that my predecessors constantly whisper in my ear, "Do Your Best!", "Make that Mark!" "Look Ahead!" "Play the Game Fair!" "Never take your Eye off the Prize!"

So what's the next charge? Firstly never to drop that Baton as there is 150 years of rich history that has helped in a small way to mould and shape Jamaica to where it is today. Add to this rich history to make our legacy fulsome. Have a social conscience for the betterment of a modern and sustainable Jamaica.

Therefore this Baton will be carefully handed to its next successor who has the fire and the passion burning in their belly to the seek truth and always play the game fairly for the upliftment of others.

This Baton will continue to blaze brightly for another 150 years as this Relay Race is not yet over.