

## Marshall sets up \$1 million football fund



Stephen Wright

A \$1 million fund has been established by former top referee Charlie Marshall to help the growth of Bermudian football.

Marshall and his wife Lesley have set up a family fund in an effort to raise the standard of the local game and will be handing out grants before the start of the season.

Giving back: Charlie Marshall, the former BFA president and the island's longest-serving FIFA referee, and his wife Lesley have set up a \$1 million football fund for the island

Harvey and Shervin Dill, the North Village president, deciding on the grants for the year. They expect to give away up to \$35,000.

The Bermuda Football Association has been asked to advise its affiliated clubs and entities to make applications for funding, with the Marshalls, along with former Dandy Town player Troy

Marshall, Bermuda's longest-serving Fifa referee, said he still remembers when the island was almost suspended from international competition because of a shortage of funds in 1992.

Bermuda had reached the second phase of qualifying for the 1994 World Cup in the United States and Marshall was the BFA president at the time.

"It was a proud moment; Bermuda was as close to getting through as it ever had been but we were desperately short of money," Marshall said.

"The value of sport to the general good health of the community was not generally appreciated in those days, so funding it was not a national priority.

"We owed \$80,000 — and if we didn't come up with it, we would receive a fine of \$70,000 and suspension from international competition for up to five years.

"I resolved then that if I ever had the means, I would set up a fund for the island to assist players reach their potential and Bermuda to achieve its best on the world stage."

After a successful career in electronics and telecommunications, Marshall was true to his word. The fund is now managed by the Bermuda Community Foundation.

"The Marshalls are a wonderful example of thoughtful, strategic philanthropy," said Dr Myra Virgil, the chief executive and managing director of the BCF.

"They are assisting others to benefit from their success, and are supporting something they care deeply about.

"Mr Marshall has given an immense amount of time and effort to further Bermuda sport because he believes passionately in its importance to the health of the community.

In 1992 he was awarded an MBE for his achievements — but he did not rest on his laurels. Now he is continuing his work, in a different way."

Virgil added that clubs could apply for assistance to purchase gear, youth registration fees, youth referee education and training.

Applications for 2018 funding must be submitted by 5pm, July 16

