

Skateboard coaches celebrated

by **NICK MAITLAND**
nickmaitland@nationnews.com

SKATEBOARDING'S newest crop of coaches now have all the tools needed for the continued development of the sport on the island for generations to come.

Five new coaches have completed the International Skateboard Certification Programme, which was led by instructor Jay Mandarin of Canada on behalf of the Skateboard Association of Barbados (SAB).

This has so far been reprised in over 35 countries as skateboarding continues its global rise as a sport.

The new coaches explored several topics such as child, physical and social development; preparing lesson plans; and first aid. They were presented with their certificates of completion at the course's conclusion on Saturday at the Kaitif Skatepark in Wildey.

Mandarin, with over 35 years of experience in the business and instruction of skateboarding across the globe, praised the participants who showed great commitment to the course.

"This is the first in-person programme we have done since the COVID-19 pandemic. The whole team

here and the conditions were great. The attitude is the same in the entire skateboarding community. Everyone is passionate and wants to give back," he told **MIDWEEK SPORT**.

"We were learning things you wouldn't normally think of in skateboarding. We covered a lot of information, and the course was eight hours in total. Everybody stayed, enjoyed it and did well."

Vice-president of the SAB and caretaker of the Kaitif

Skatepark, Paul Wilson, also shared his thoughts on the programme.

"The course was well done. I was a little nervous because we had to sit an exam at the end of it and the last time I sat one was at school," he said.

"Jay [Mandarin] made it very easy to take part in the course and I think a lot more people should get involved in the programme. The future of skateboarding is very bright, especially with the facility we have here. It is a world-class facility and we think professionals from overseas can

come here to train in their winter months as well."

Director of sport at the National Sports Council (NSC), Neil Murrell, was on hand for the event and extended his congratulations to the participants and the association.

"This initiative is important as it gives us qualified coaches to help our



THE NEW COACHES displaying their certificates after the presentation. From left: Stephen Austin, business development officer of SAB; NSC director of sport Neil Murrell; junior participant Erin Stanley; SAB president Adrian Bowen; Johnathan Austin; vice-president Paul Wilson; executive officer Jade Nicholls; Ashan Haynes; and facilitator Jay Mandarin. (Picture by Nick Maitland.)

charges reach the pinnacle in the international sporting world," Murrell said.

"The establishing of this skatepark in 2019 was important as it gives us an outlet for young people to showcase their skateboarding talents. Coupled with the fact that skateboarding is now on the Olympic [[Games] calendar, having been introduced this year in Tokyo, it provides the opportunity for young Barbadians to develop their craft and perhaps be Olympians in the future."

Following the presentation, the association held their **Gromfest Competition** for Under-13 and

Under-19 competitors. Participants were judged on difficulty and variety of performed tricks, quality of execution, use of the course and individual obstacles, flow and consistency and repetition.

In the Under-13 category, Alexander Young was the winner, while Nathan Barrow placed second and Sam Didier was third. Tarryn Alleyne was the Under-19 winner. Luke Stanley was second, while Didier took third again in this category.

In the **Bowl Open**, Shane Hackett was the winner, while Hayley and Amy Godson finished second and third, respectively.



UNDER-19 WINNER Tarryn Alleyne performing a trick during the skateboard competition. (CP)



**BECOME A
 CERTIFIED
 SKATEBOARD
 INSTRUCTOR
 IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

www.goskatzboarding.com