

**JADEN PAYNE** (right) with then Deputy High Commissioner **Alphea Wiggins** and **Akeem** and **Amari** at a function in 2014. (Picture by Tyrone Roach.)



**JADEN PAYNE** on his 18th birthday. (GP)

# Big dreams as Jaden comes of age

by **TYRONE ROACH**

**JADEN PAYNE** turned 18 on July 8. He has a permanent traumatic brain injury; hence he is registered disabled and is classed as having a hidden disability.

His life is full of challenges, but he is not allowing this to affect his goals or aspirations.

"I have endured a lot of intense therapies during the last three years and will continue to do so. They have, however, helped me to get to where I am today, living my life to the best of my capabilities, also achieving what I can in all of the circumstances," Jaden said.

Three years ago, he was involved in an accident that left him with a severe head injury. This caused several small blood clots on his brain, which became one large and life-threatening clot.

Because of his injuries, he had to be placed in an induced coma for 13 days and had a five-hour operation. Jaden pulled through.

His dad, Shawn, could relate well to his son's emotions as he also had spent time in hospital when he was hit by a bus in Rock Hall, St Andrew, back in 1987.

Jaden had been looking forward to his big birthday, but COVID-19 made a tremendous impact on the celebrations, but not on his studies. Before the closing of all educational establishments, he had decided to finish college early. This was based on his underlying medical condition as he has a trait of sickle cell disease. Considered to be in the vulnerable category, he was already receiving his college work online and was able to complete his course.

All the plans for his coming of age party did not come to fruition.

"My parents had already booked the venue, caterers, hall dresser, DJs, photographer, video man and the limousine for my big 18th birthday party," Jaden said. The celebrations were also to be continued in Barbados at **Crop Over** with family and friends.

"It did not happen but I give thanks that I am alive and living the dream and was able to reach the tender age of 18."

Jaden's intention now is to attend university.

Following the accident, he had returned to school on a part-time basis and was able to take his exams in 2018 and gained eight GCSEs.

He then enrolled at Bournville College in Longbridge and studied a BTEC Level 3 Extended

Diploma in Sport (Performance and Excellence) for two years.

Despite his disabilities, he was able to complete work experience, shadowing physiotherapists at Birmingham Children's Hospital. This took place in the ward where he had been cared for during the six weeks of his stay. Jaden was able to share his experiences with a patient, allowing them to gain confidence in the process.

Further work experience at the University of Birmingham and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham allowed him to observe the different aspects of physiotherapy from paediatric through to adults, as well as the various fields of oncology, orthopaedic, neurology and respiratory.

So, like most students, he is anxiously awaiting his exam results in August. These will help him secure a place at university to study either physiotherapy or sports rehabilitation.

In February 2017, Jaden was training at the Birchfield Harriers Academy, in Birmingham.

"It has been a dream of mine to be an athlete," he said.

Unfortunately, due to his accident, he was unable to resume his training for over a year. His coach treated him like the rest of the able-bodied athletes, constantly pushing him hard to regain fitness.

It was in January 2019 when Jaden transitioned from training with the Birchfield Harriers Academy to the Birchfield Harriers Club. Since August 2019 he has been classified as a T38 para athlete and competed in his first competitive race. He ran a personal best of 15.63 secs finishing fourth. Currently ranked 17th in the UK in the Power of 10 rankings for the 100m in the U20 age bracket for 2019, his dream to represent Team GB at a future **Paralympics** is still in focus.

Jaden was a lively child with a cheeky smile and attended most Barbadian events alongside his mum Suzanne. He gave a presentation at the Midland Barbados **Independence** service in 2015 along with Akeem and Amari Phillips in the presence of Deputy High Commissioner Alphea Wiggins.

Whether it was playing dominoes, cricket, football, or any games that the others of his age were involved in, he was always a part of it.

His smile still shines through and he has an appreciation that whatever he does in life, it will be harder for him to accomplish than his peers. Since the accident, his parents have never given up and continue to fight in his corner. They have encouraged him throughout his life in everything he wanted to do, instilling confidence in him, coupled with

manners, respect, and belief in the "Lord God Almighty".

He quoted **Philippians 4: 13**: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

*Remembering Our Precious Jewel*

**Rudolph  
Reynold Nicholls**

Affectionately known as 'Rudy'

Sunrise 18th May 1942

Sunset 26th July 2018

Formerly of the United Kingdom and  
Wavell Avenue, Black Rock, St. Michael.

*You never said I'm leaving*

*You never said goodbye*

*You were gone before we knew it*

*And only God knew why.*

*In life we loved you dearly*

*In death we love you still*

*In our hearts you hold a special place*

*No one can ever fill.*

*It broke our hearts to lose you*

*But you did not go alone*

*For part of us went with you*

*The day God called you home.*

Lovingly remembered by

wife Marva;

children;

grandchildren;

other relatives

and friends.

