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Members of the victorious Eastern team, which secured a 19-13 decision over the Western team, are pictured standing in the back of the dignitaries of the Caribbean Cup, held over the past three days at the Ocean Club Golf Course on Paradise Island. Seated in the front from left are Craig Flowers, FML sponsor and host of the awards presentation; Ambrose Gouthro, tournament director; Asraph Ali, president of the Caribbean Golf Association; Minister of Sports, Desmond Bannister; Glenn Archer, president of the Bahamas Golf Federation and an unidentified person.

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AFTER losing the initial Caribbean Cup by one and a half points in Puerto Rico, the Eastern team came to town and pulled off the victory with a 19-13 decision over the Western side.

The three-day tournament, featuring players from around the Caribbean in a Ryder Cup format, wrapped up yesterday with the awards presentation at the home of sponsor Craig Flowers at the Ocean Club Golf Course.

Sidney Wolf, president of the Eastern team, comprising of players from Puerto Rico, Trinidad & Tobago and the US Virgin Islands, said they basically were better prepared for this year's tournament and that was the main reason why they prevailed.

"We had a very good group of closely knitted players from the Eastern Caribbean," said Wolf, who hails from Puerto Rico. "During the week, we sat down and talked about our strategy."

"The condition of the golf course dictated the tournament and I think at the end, our players were better adapted to the wind because the wind factor played a key role in

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the outcome today."

Wolf admitted that they had a team with a little more young and fitted players, who rose to the occasion and got the job done. He noted that the Western team, although they had a lot of young players on their side, were not as experienced as his squad.

The Caribbean Cup, which offered the championship trophy known as the Cesar Rivera Cup, named after the longest-serving Executive Member of the CGA.

Each team comprised of 12 players matched against each other in match play.

Erick Morales from Puerto Rico said they performed exceptionally well and everybody contributed to their success.

"We just took one shot at a time. We were down one shot heading into the final day and we were confident that all of us had the game to win today," he said. "We displayed our talent and we won."

Morales, who has played on the past five Hoerman Cup teams for Puerto Rico, shooting the lowest score this year, said everybody communicated very well and that was why they were able to pull it off.

James Johnson from Barbados said their side had the best players in the Caribbean and it showed in their results.

"We knew coming in here that we would have a very strong team," he said. "It was just a matter of execute to win. Match play could be a little different format from stroke play."

"We don't play a lot of match play in the Caribbean, so I think some of our stronger players were not quite used to it. But we still managed to win."

The Eastern team beat the Western team, captained by Bob Slatter, that featured three young players from the Bahamas.

Oren Butler, who played on his second Caribbean Cup, said that while it was a good experience and he had a lot of fun, their team had "too many old men" on it.

"We had about five young guys and about seven guys who were over 50 years," he said. "You can't put a 50-year-old against a 25-year-old and expect to win."

"I played pretty good. I was solid throughout the week. But the majority of the players from the other team were in college. So they played much better than we did."

Butler, 24, attends the University of South Carolina. He's hoping to get ready for the upcoming season in February.

"I don't feel bad. I played good this week," he said.

Devaughn Robinson, playing in his first Caribbean Cup, said he wasn't too pleased with his individual performance, but the team played very well.

The 21-year-old student from Texas Southern University said any time he can home, it's more like a "vacation and a plus to play golf."

And 15-year-old Benjamin Davis, who attends the IMG Academy in Bradminton, Florida, said he was quite pleased with his performance because he only lost one match.

"The team held up pretty good. We struggled a bit today, but overall, everybody did well," said the six-time junior national team member. "It was just wonderful to come back home and represent your country."

Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture Desmond Bannister was on hand and he was honored for his contribution to the success of the tournament.

Photo captions

Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture Desmond Bannister (left) is presented with gift from Asraph Ali, president of the Caribbean Golf Association.

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