

Volunteer coaches prepped on Special Olympics requirements

TWENTY-THREE Special Olympics volunteers are now better equipped to coach persons who are physically and mentally challenged.

This, after a one-day training workshop held last Saturday at the Conference room of the National Sports Council at the Arnos Vale Playing Field.

Workshop facilitator Bill Hauser, who has been a Special Olympics volunteer with 25 years of experience, told SEARCHLIGHT: "I was pleased to see the turnout of coaches and what I liked was that they had dialogue among themselves... They shared their stories, their experiences."

Among the areas covered on Saturday by Hauser in the theoretical session were protective behaviours, coaches' and athletes' conduct and responsibilities and unified sports.

Following the indoor session, the participants then participated in a practical exercise with



BILL HAUSER - Special Olympics workshop facilitator

Special Olympians in tennis, football and bocce.

The day's activities were capsuled as being rewarding by two of the participants. One such person who had his aspirations realized was Campden Park resident Alnif Williams.

"Since I was attending the Emmanuel School Kingstown, and passing the Special Needs School, I always wanted to work with these students, but never knew how to get involved," Williams, who is football coach, told SEARCHLIGHT.

Williams' moment of

realization came last Friday, when he saw an article in the SEARCHLIGHT newspaper, informing of the one-day coaches' training session.

"I said I am going to this, even though I am not invited, as it is what I always wanted to do," Williams revealed.

Williams, however, stated that although he was not officially invited, he was welcomed to the workshop by the organisers, a gesture he appreciates immensely.

He recalled that he chose to forgo the Digicel Kick Start clinic to attend the workshop and has no regret that he did so.

Arifa Ryan-Charles, a teacher at the School for Children with Special Needs, believes she has acquired a wealth of information from the workshop.

"It was a day well spent...It is for us all now to put what we have learnt into practice," Ryan-Charles summed up the workshop.(RT)