

Jangoo's balancing act

PORT OF SPAIN

Roger Seepersad

roger.seepersad@trinidadexpress.com

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO Red Force wicketkeeper/batsman Amir Jangoo has been doing some juggling, but not with the cricket ball.

It has been a balancing act for the 20-year-old Jangoo – managing school and professional cricket – but the former West Indies Under-19 player is up to the task.

The left-hander was awarded a Red Force retainers contract for the ongoing 2017/18 Professional Cricket League season after impressing with knocks of 32 and 71 on his first-class debut against the Barbados Pride, at Kensington Oval in Barbados earlier this year.

And yesterday, Jangoo delivered once more for the Red Force, reaching a half-century in the final session of the opening day against the Leeward Islands Hurricanes at Warner Park in St Kitts.

A student of the University of the West Indies in St Augustine, Jangoo also represented the Combined Campuses and Colleges in the



TOP T20 AWARD: Merry Boys cricketer Amir Jangoo, right, collects the T20 Festival Cricketer of the Year trophy from feature speaker Justice Joseph Tam during the T20 Awards ceremony at Brian Lara Cricket Academy in Tarouba on Saturday night. —Photo: ROGER SEEPERSAD

Regional Super50 in January, and has been balancing his cricket career and academic careers very carefully.

Although he was unable to attend classes due to clashes with Red Force training and regional matches in the Cricket West Indies Digicel Regional 4-Day tournament, Jangoo said he was committed to both endeavours and is willing to put in the extra effort necessary, both on and off the field.

“It has been hard, balancing cricket and University, but it is something once you put your mind to it, you can get it done,” said the former Fatima College opening batsman. “I did not want to sacrifice my academics at the expense of cricket, so I am putting in the extra work that is necessary.

“I have been going to training every day and school right after,” he added as he gave an insight into his daily

routine this season.

“Training usually runs from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and then I have to get to St Augustine for classes which are normally from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. It can be taxing at times because traffic or an accident on the road can prevent me from getting to class on time.” But time is not the only hurdle in his path.

“Some of the challenges are that I do not have much time to study, as I am physically and mentally drained. Getting group work done is challenging because of my schedule. I might be in another island playing cricket or on Red Force duty when we have group meetings or work, and it is very cumbersome,” he explained.

Despite the challenges, Jangoo remains focussed and is thankful for the help he has been getting from UWI.

He said that his faculty has been proactive in facilitating academic concessions, which allows him to pursue academics and cricket.

“My Faculty of Food and Agriculture has helped me with keeping this balance, as I have extended dead-

lines on assignments. Also, I am allowed make-up exams, which has prevented my GPA from suffering. I am thankful for the help from the faculty thus far,” said Jangoo.

“Having lecture notes and the slides online has been very helpful. I am able to look at these when we are playing matches and have an idea of what is going on in class,” he added.

He is also getting some encouragement on the field of play.

Jangoo has been the Red Force first-choice wicketkeeper this season, with skipper Denesh Ramdin giving the Merry Boys cricketer the chance to hone his skills both in front of and behind the stumps.

Jangoo scored his second first-class half century – 63 against the Pride – in the first game this season and Ramdin feels he has more to offer.

“It is good to see that he (Jangoo) has gotten some starts but he has not been able to carry on to get a big score, so hopefully, he can do it quite quickly and get a big score under his belt,” Ramdin said of Jangoo’s performance so far this campaign.