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1999 Holiday Issue
"Community Ties Through Sports"

Welcome to *Pacific Citizen*'s annual Holiday Issue.

This year it didn't take very long to decide on the theme of sports, more specifically "Community Ties Through Sports," for our 120-page H.I. Although in the past the staff has usually gone through a grueling process of discussing the pros and cons of a dozen or more themes, sports was the only and final choice this year.

And thus we bring you this issue filled with stories of sports in camp, women in sports, sport in Hawaii, and the traditional Japanese sports of kendo and sumo to the current popularity of Japanese American basketball and baseball leagues. Some of the articles that fill this issue include "Diamonds in the Rough" by Kerry Nakagawa of the Nisei Baseball Research Project; Sam Cacas' feature on Wat Misaka, the first Asian Pacific American to play in the NBA; a compilation of prominent JA women in sports titled, "The Girlz Got Game"; and "The Roots of Karate in Hawaii" by Charles Goodin.



The issue also includes a preview of the upcoming Japanese American National Museum exhibit, "More Than a Game: Sport in the Japanese American Community," that is set to open in March 2000. Exhibit curator Brian Niiya, and writers Yoichi Nagata, Joe Svinth, and Eiichiro Azuma have generously contributed their stories to our H.I.

As with every year, this issue was made possible by our generous advertisers who continue to support the *P.C.* We would especially like to thank the JACL chapters that continue to solicit advertisements year after year. A special acknowledgement of thanks can be found on page 5 in "*P.C.*'s People Who Count."

P.C. would also like to thank the many writers who volunteered their time and energy to contribute their pieces to our H.I. Without them, the issue would not have been possible.

And we would most of all like to thank our readers who have continued to give their support to the *P.C.* This year has been especially rewarding with the return of the newspaper to a weekly publication schedule. Although the weekly schedule has been demanding for the *P.C.* staff, the experience has been a satisfying one.

With the success of the *P.C.* weekly fundraising campaign, that more than surpassed our goal of $40,000, we are set for the year 2000. A *P.C.* weekly budget for the years 2001-2002 will be presented at next year's convention and we hope that you will continue to give your support.

As with every year, the annual H. I. would not have been successful without the staff and volunteers who put in countless hours, including evenings and weekends, to complete the issue. The *P.C.* would like to thank staff members Martha Nakagawa, Brian Tanaka, Harry Honda, Margot Brunswick, Tracy Uba, and Eva Lau-Ting. And thanks to our volunteers: Gayle Jue, Pang Kam Yuen, Alan Kubo, Juan Ramos, Raul Vasquez, Earl Varquez, Eric Uba, and Kerry Ting.

I hope you enjoy the issue and have a safe and enjoyable holiday.

Caroline Aoyagi
Executive Editor



Holiday Issue staff and volunteers

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Diamonds in the Rough



Photo courtesy of the Makiki Christian Church

The 1899 Excelsiors in Honolulu, Hawaii. Seated in the front row directly behind the baseball equipment is Reverend Takie Okumura of the Makiki Christian Church.

By KERRY YO NAKAGAWA

"In 1899 I formed a baseball team, made up of mostly boys in my home, and called it 'Excelsior.' Being the only team among the Japanese, its competitors were Hawaiians, Portuguese and Chinese. The team turned out to be a strong one and won several championship cups and pennants at Boy's Field on Vineyard Street in the Palama Settlement."

Recollections of Rev. Takie Okumura in Honolulu, Hawaii

For the last one hundred years, Japanese Americans have been playing baseball. They played the game around pineapple and sugar cane plantations, near grapevines, vineyards and cow pastures, deep in the forests and out near the corn fields. Their passion spread through the inner cities on church playgrounds and near backstops by the bay.

The "Asahi's" were in Vancouver, Canada, and on the Western Parallel of Hawaii. To the south were the "Tijuana Nippons" and in the eastern plains the "Nebraska Nisei's." All-star Nisei teams journeyed to Japan, Korea and Manchuria, China, to compete with the universities, merchant teams and even the all-stars from the Negro leagues in the early 1900s.

In the roaring twenties and thirties, great Nisei pioneers were competing at every level. They played in the Twilight and Midwest Leagues, American Legion Semi-pros and even against the Pacific Coast League clubs. Hall of Famers Lou Gehrig, Babe Ruth, Satchel Page, Jackie Robinson, Tony Lazzeri, Lefty O'Doul, Joe DiMaggio and many other major leaguers had their first encounters competing with the Nisei. Due to the prevailing prejudice of the times, baseball's commissioner, Kenesaw Mountain Landis, kept the blacks, Nisei and women in leagues of their own.

Some ballplayers had pro contracts canceled during World War II. Hope and optimism was replaced with shame, humiliation and disgrace. Barbed wire, sand and sagebrush became the new elements introduced into the detention camp stadiums; but they still played on, and kept the all-American pastime alive.

After the war, many became professional ballplayers across the Pacific. Sansei's Ryan Kurosaki and Lenn Sakata; Yonsei's Don Wakamatsu and currently Onan Masaoka brought the game to a major league level, with the future looking bright for the next millennium.

If we were to dissect a Nikkei baseball, we would find that the center epitomizes the core members and pioneers of the Issei and Nisei organization. The fiber and strings would represent the communities that tie their identities, loyalties and cultural affinities around the team's players. The leather skin represents the physical and mental toughness, developed by the Issei and Nisei who endured their settlement to America, and the eviction and detention of WWII.

The stitching bonds the Issei, Nisei, Sansei, Yonsei and Gosei together and seals these family spirits for future generations.

This symbolic baseball is being passed on to new generations with the knowledge, history, and pride of their ancestors. They in turn will hone and polish their skills, carrying on their own discipline, courage, determination and sportsmanship which may sparkle on and off the fields. With this 100-year legacy of Japanese Americans, we have made a sparkling discovery ... through a diamond.



Photo courtesy of Cappy Harada

San Francisco Seals Manager Lefty O'Doul greets young Prince Akihito in 1949. He is currently the Emperor of Japan.

Today in Japan it was a national holiday celebrating the Emperor's birthday and renamed as Cultural Day. The streets of Tokyo were very quiet as our motor coach of Nisei baseball pioneers approached the majestic Tokyo

Dome.

Inside the 'Big Egg' was Japan's mecca of baseball museums, the Japan Hall of Fame and Museum. As we entered the museum, secret service agents surrounded the perimeter of the Hall of Fame Gallery.

The room was packed to capacity and the noise and energy level was deafening. Looking down from the walls were the bronze immortal faces of Japan's professional baseball legends. Nisei Hall of Famers Bozo Wakabayashi, Hisashi Koshimoto and, in physical presence with his son and grandsons, Wally Yonamine. As I introduced Wally to our pioneers, the players reminisced about their playing days.

A sea of bodies parted as the Ambassador from the United States, Thomas S. Foley, took his seat. The commissioner to professional baseball in Japan, Hiromori Kawashima, welcomed the honored guests, officials, media, and especially the pioneering 13 Nisei ballplayers. Ambassador Foley said, "Thanks to the pioneering efforts of these players present and in spirit who are commemorated in this exhibition, they have helped to bring our two great nations closer together through sports."

President of the American Chamber of Commerce Glen S. Fukushima pointed out that "contributions in such areas as agriculture, business, politics, law, academia, journalism and sometimes entertainment are well covered, but rarely has there been attention given to Japanese American contributions to the profession of sports. Thanks to this marvelous exhibition to Japan, it will contribute to even closer cooperative ties between our two great countries."

As I sat and marveled at this occasion, it took on a very surreal quality. To think this idea, in less than three years, has progressed to the Hall of Fame in America and now Japan. What an extreme honor it was to have the U.S. Ambassador to Japan speaking on the theory that our exhibit is much more than a sport. It is a dynamic focused on diplomacy, culture, history and a proud 100-year legacy.

This year earmarked the 40th anniversary of the Japan hall of Fame and Museum. All the players were suited up in their Upper Deck jackets and caps looking very athletic.

Tar Shirachi shared some of his wisdom with us that he had accumulated for 92 years. He was on the 1938 tour with the "Stockton Yamatos." On their way to Japan, they picked up an outstanding pitcher from Hawaii named Bozo Wakabayashi. Bozo later became the first Nisei to reach Japan Hall of Fame status. He said, "Your body will change in the years to come and grow old ... but if you keep your heart young, you will stay young."

Tar, Wally and Commissioner Kawashima officially cut the symbolic ribbon to open the exhibit: "Diamonds in the Rough: Japanese Americans in Baseball." It was a perfect cultural gift we were sharing with the people of Japan and especially the Emperor on his birthday.

Nakagawa is the project director for the nonprofit Nisei Baseball Research Project (NBRP). He is the founding curator of the now -international traveling exhibition: "Diamonds in the Rough: Japanese Americans in Baseball." Co-produced with the National Japanese American Historical Society, it was displayed for three months at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum at Cooperstown, N.Y., in 1998. This exhibit opened at the Japan Hall of Fame and Museum on Nov. 3, 1999.

Nakagawa recently completed a documentary titled "Zeni, Dean of the Diamond," narrated and hosted by actor Pat Morita. He just finished writing a book that will be out in March of 2000 titled, "Through a Diamond: 100 Years of Japanese American Baseball," forward by Hall of Famer Tom Seaver. For information, contact NBRP at 4728 North Glenn Ave., Fresno, CA 93704, 559/222-5763, Fax: 559/222-5763, e-mail: NBRP.YO@worldnet.att.net



Photo courtesy of NBRP

Group photo of the Japan Hall of Fame Tour. Nisei Pioneers from left to right: Masao Iriyama, Mas Takaki, Bill Tsukamoto, Kay Kiyokawa, Yosh Tsukamoto, Nori Masuda, William "Wild Bill" Kagawa, Jim Tsukamoto, Dr. Tak Susuki, Harry "Tar" Shirachi, and Hiroshi Sakamoto. Not pictured are Kaz Ikeda and George "Tak" Abo.

> What an extreme honor it was to have the U.S. Ambassador to Japan speaking on the theory that our exhibit is much more than a sport. It is a dynamic focused on diplomacy, culture, history and a proud 100-year legacy.



Photo courtesy of Julie Lewis & NBRP

A photo opportunity at the Cooperstown ceremony on February 17, 1998 at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum. Front row from left to right: Shig Tokumoto, Yukio Tatsumi, Alice Hinaga Taketa, Henry Honda, Kaz Ikeda, Bill Tsukamoto, Yosh Tsukamoto, Masao Iriyama, Babe Utsumi. In the back row: Kerry Yo Nakagawa, Ted Spencer, Massy Tomooaka, Pete Mitsui, Bill Kagawa, Lefty Nishijima, and Minoi Ota.

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The Courier Leagues - Jimmie Sakamoto's Legacy

By BILL HOSOKAWA

In the years shortly after the end of World War I a wiry, fleet-footed little halfback, weighing not much more than 115 pounds, caught the fancy of fans at Franklin High School in Seattle. His name was Jimmie Sakamoto and he had learned toughness from his Issei father Osamu, who was skilled at judo.

Following graduation from high school Jimmie went East, ostensibly to study, but soon he was boxing as an amateur in a New York gym. He showed enough skill to turn pro and fought in a number of club matches in the area. Once he appeared in a preliminary bout at Madison Square Garden.

Sakamoto won his share of fights but perhaps he was too game for his own good. One day he discovered his eyesight failing. Doctors told him that blows to the head had begun to detach his retina from the optical nerve in both eyes. In those days the medical profession could do nothing for him. With blindness inevitable, Sakamoto returned to Seattle.

Suddenly serious about life, Sakamoto was distressed to find the Seattle Nisei community leaderless and faction-ridden. His experience in New York had given him new perspectives on life outside the Japanese American community and a new appreciation for his American citizenship. He felt he had to do something to help his fellow Nisei be more American, and for a blind man he chose a strange way to get it done. He started an English language weekly newspaper called the *Japanese American Courier*. The first issue was Jan. 1, 1928.

Sakamoto was deeply concerned with what he called the "second generation problem," by which he meant growing up in an American society that didn't always accept them. (Sakamoto stubbornly refused to use the word "Nisei" in his newspaper because it was foreign.) That led him to become one of the founders of the Japanese American Citizens League, and its second elected national president.

While Sakamoto's interest in JACL had largely to do with politics, economics and sociological matters, he retained an interest in sports. He saw sports as a way of physical development, honing athletic skills, competitive spirit and teamwork and an outlet to prevent delinquency. He also knew that most Nisei didn't have the physical assets to compete in sports at the high school level. So he got some of his friends together to organize athletic leagues within the community — the Courier Leagues — for Nisei kids of all ages from peewees to adults.

Eventually there was a baseball league, a basketball league and even a football league. The baseball and basketball leagues were divided into divisions depending on age and ability of the participants. Volunteers, like Kay Takayoshi in baseball (he picked up pin money as an umpire in local semi-pro leagues) and George Ishihara in basketball, directed the activity, drawing up schedules and arranging for use of city park playing fields and gymnasiums, assigning umpires and referees.

Organized Nisei sports clubs in Seattle — like Taiyo and Waseda which developed an intense rivalry — fielded teams in each of the divisions. The Japanese Baptist Church — which had a cheesebox-sized gym of its own — produced some of the strongest basketball teams. There was even a girls' basketball league played under the old rules which allowed only the forwards to shoot. During the ill feeling aroused by Japan's invasion of China, some Chinese Nisei were persuaded to join the league with a team of their own, which turned into a powerhouse. There was some muttering among the elders in Chinatown but no other repercussions.

Nisei from farm families in outlying areas like Bellevue, Green Lake, White River Valley, Auburn, Fife, Tacoma and Vashon Island also joined the leagues. These teams were particularly welcome because they had access to local high school gyms which eased the scheduling problem.

The Courier football league, which I directed for several years, had only limited success. Equipment was expensive and hard to get and almost no one had a helmet and few had pads. Parents were reluctant to let their sons get hurt. One year we instituted an insurance plan; each player paid 25 cents into an insurance fund which was available for doctors' bills until the money ran out. At the end of the season, which consisted of four or five games, there would be a banquet in a Chinese restaurant with some star from the University of Washington as guest speaker.

Courier League teams usually were more distinguished for their enthusiasm than skill. Few had competent coaches or the time and place to practice. In the late 1930s the Courier League invited the San Francisco Mikados for a series of games in the Northwest and the home teams learned some painful lessons about how to play basketball. Subsequently the University of California Students Club came to the Northwest and again showed the locals how basketball should be played.

Eventually teams like the Seattle Midgets, with high school quality players, became good enough to visit California and hold their own.

By the late 1930s Nisei boys were growing big enough, and skilled enough, to play on their high school teams, but the Courier League continued to thrive because it filled a need.

Sports in which youngsters could compete against peers helped develop a focus of intense community interest. The games drew hundreds of fans, and keeping them in the gyms kept them off the streets. Although there is no sociological study that I know of to prove the point, it seems the Courier's sports program minimized delinquency among Nisei teenagers growing up with little parental supervision in a far from ideal socioeconomic environment.

The *Courier*, never more than a half step ahead of bankruptcy, was suspended by the Evacuation in 1942 and never resumed. Not long after war's end, Jimmie was hit by a car and died on a foggy Seattle morning. The Courier Leagues might have been his most important legacy.

Several years ago some Seattle Nisei old-timers organized by Norio Wakamatsu, then living in Spokane, scheduled a reunion of men and women who had played in the Courier Leagues to remember the old days and honor Jimmie Sakamoto. Hundreds of Nisei, many now gray and bent and from far away, came to laugh and embrace, and even weep a little as a memorial to Jimmie was unveiled. ■



Pacific Citizen Archives

Jimmie Y Sakamoto, who helped establish the JACL and was its second elected president, poses for a photo in May 1954, wearing his JACL diamond pin

Asian Men Can Jump!





Wat Misaka

The NBA's First APA Player Remembers

By SAM CACAS

A little more than 52 years have passed since Wataru (Wat) Misaka stepped on a basketball court and became the first Asian Pacific American to play in the National Basketball Association. But to this 76-year-old native of Ogden, Utah, his shot at professional basketball "doesn't seem like a long time ago."

Recalling his NBA and college basketball career from his home in Bountiful, Utah, Misaka emphasized that he "always felt athletically talented." In high school, he was a four-letter man — in football, baseball, basketball and track. At the University of Utah, he led the Utes to a National Collegiate Athletic Association championship in 1944 and a 1947 National Invitation Tournament. At the time, the NIT championship was a more highly coveted and acclaimed accomplishment in college basketball than the NCAA championship.

The Nisei's forte was defense. "Though I was not much of a scorer, I defensed whoever I was guarding so they couldn't dribble around me and I was also good at denying a pass to the person I was guarding," he said, vividly recalling a 1947 game against Kentucky in which he was assigned what had become a familiar task: guarding the opposing team's highest-scoring player.

In typical "Wat" fashion, he completely shut down that Kentucky player, who was averaging 20 points per game at the time. Or almost completely.

"He scored one point on a free throw off a foul that I didn't commit," Misaka admitted.

The nation's first APA pro hoopster recalls that before the Second World War, the students, fans, and players generally treated him well. Since he lived outside of the western military exclusion zone, he avoided evacuation into a concentration camp, but he recalls visiting a friend at the Topaz, Ariz., camp. Although he kept playing through the war, he remembers playing a college game in which some fans screamed, "Get the dirty Jap!"

Such experiences were not uncommon in his day-to-day life growing up in Ogden, especially after World War II started. "People would say, 'You better get out of the way' when I walked near them on the sidewalk, and many of them would try to pick fights with me."

Misaka felt it was "quite a compliment" to be the No.1 pick of the Knicks in 1946, attributing the honor as well as his making the team to his collegiate reputation. But at the time it happened, he did not think much of it. "In those days, many players continued to stay in school to get more education and earn more money than they would playing pro basketball." In the three games Misaka played, he recalled playing about 10 minutes each game, and getting several steals.

"I was pretty much aware that I was the first Asian Pacific American to play in the league," he explained. "But my teammates were very cordial with me and thus I didn't dwell much on being a minority person." Misaka pointed out, however, that his NBA career was much too brief for him to make any judgment about his experience.



"Wat" Misaka

And 42 years after playing three games for the New York Knicks under the legendary coach Joe Lapchick, Misaka says it would be mere speculation to say he was cut because he was Japanese American. In retrospect, he says, "I'm more upset now about being cut than I was when it happened, because looking back and seeing the players who didn't get cut, I believe it was unfair for them to cut me."

He added that it was rare for a college player — especially a No.1 pick like himself — to be cut from a team. In those days, playing college basketball was the high point of any organized basketball player's career since the professional basketball leagues were not yet firmly established, explained Misaka. "It came as a complete surprise to me," he said. "While I have no evidence of any racial animosity on the part of the coach, I was given no explanation for being cut by the team owner — Ned Irish — who only told me that the coach made the decision."

Misaka later turned down an offer from basketball mogul Abe Saperstein to play for the Harlem Globetrotters in order to return to school, where he later earned an engineering degree. He went on to work for the Sperry Company in Utah for more than 20 years before retiring and working as a contract manufacturer in Bountiful.

Very few APAs have tried to follow in Misaka's NBA journey. According to league records, a Chinese national player made the Los Angeles Clippers in 1994 but chose to play on his country's Olympic team before the regular season started and has never returned; a few mixed-race APAs played briefly during the last 20 years. But 52 years after leading the way for future APAs, Misaka is "very hopeful that there will soon be another person of Asian descent playing in the NBA." ■

Sam Cacas is a contributing editor at Asian-American Village and can be reached at samwriter1@msn.bom.

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The Girlz Got Game!

Much ink has been spent on recounting the exploits of Nikkei male athletes over the decades. But what of Nikkei women athletes?

It came as no surprise that during our research, we discovered that Japanese American women have been virtually ignored by our community, not only in the sports field but in all aspects of Nikkei life except in beauty pageants.

What little material we were able to browse through was like stepping back into a strange, prehistoric era where male sports writers seemed compelled to describe how attractive and/or well-dressed women sports figures were. These same male reporters didn't seem to give the same "depth" of scrutiny to male athletes who escaped references to the color of their uniforms, facial features or marriage status.

We cite here a prime example of the sort of writing that passed for sports coverage. This appeared in the *New York Times* on Feb. 25, 1974. It was written by Robin Herman and entitled, "Japanese Politely Elbow Their Way Into Roller Derby."

"...But in acknowledgement of their more gentle traditions, all the Tokyo girls knot soft silk scarves of bright red around their throats. And when they speak of their careers, they lower their eyes demurely, and, true to form, bow from the waist when they say good by."

Times have changed since then. More female athletes are given the respect and recognition they deserve for their athletic prowess rather than for physical appearances. In particular, the passage of Title IX in 1972, which required schools to allocate equal resources to female and male students, opened more doors for women athletes. Today, these same women athletes are guiding the next generation of females, including many up-and-coming Nikkei girls.

In the following section, we take a few moments to recognize some of the top JA women athletes who have excelled and inspired others in their respective fields. This is by no means a comprehensive list since further oral interviews and archival research is required. But at the very least we hope this will serve as a reminder of where we've been and how far we still need to go.

'Nuff said.

Compiled by
Martha Nakagawa
and
Tracy Uba

1920s - 1930s

Prewar Nisei women's sports in Southern California: Since the 1920s, recorded material indicate that Nisei women in Southern California participated in baseball, softball, volleyball, basketball, tennis, aquatics, kendo, handball and ping pong in some form. There is also evidence that Nisei women held inter-ethnic competitions with non-Caucasians such as Chinese, Russian and Jewish females living in the East Los Angeles area. Religious organizations such as the Japanese Methodist Episcopalian and First Christian churches also supported female teams. Due to racist practices that limited Nikkei from using Los Angeles public pools, there were little opportunities for Nikkei to swim, but Sue Nomo, a member of a playground swim team with Olympian Sammy Lee, became the first and only Nisei to swim for the Los Angeles Athletic Club. In 1935, the Nisei Southern California Women's Basketball League formed a permanent women's athletic governing board under the Women's Athletic Union of the Japanese Y or the WAU. That same year, WAU held their first basketball competition, which included 18 teams. The WAU also sponsored 13 softball teams.

Prewar kendo/naginata in the Pacific Northwest: An estimated 10 percent of kendo students in Tacoma and Seattle during the 1930s were young girls, according to Joseph R. Svinth in his manuscript, "Taking Hold: Combative Sports and Muscular Theater in the Japanese and Korean American Communities of the Pacific Northwest, 1900-1950." Although girls trained with boys, they competed separately. In Seattle, girls usually trained with *naginata* or six-foot-long halberds. Prominent women practicing naginata in Seattle include Karuko Hayashi, Ruriko Ikeda, Masako Inouye, Nobuko Koba, Toyoko Kurokawa, Teresa Takizaki, Miyoko Tanaka, Emiko Yasuda, Tahako Yoshiga and Chiye Yoshimori. In Tacoma, the females were better known for their *kendo* skills. Well known female kendoists included Sachiko Yamamoto, Taeko Hoshiwara and Kai Nakagawa. In August 1937, Yamamoto received special distinction for winning against several California opponents.

1930s—**Kay Morimoto (golf)**: Little has been written of this Stockton native, who was an early prewar golf star, clinching at least one woman's golf championship during the 1930s.

1931—**Alice Hinaga Taketa (baseball/basketball)**: Taketa, one of the earliest female standout sports stars, excelled in baseball at a time when there were no Nikkei women's baseball teams. The only other Nikkei woman living in the Northern California area who was good enough to play with Taketa was Asaye Sakamoto Honda. During her junior year at San Jose High School in 1931, the 5-foot Taketa was recruited to pitch for the semi-professional baseball team, the Night Ball Association of San Jose. Thus, Taketa became one of only a handful of Nisei women recruited to play on a Caucasian women's baseball league during the prewar era. Thereafter, Taketa had the luxury of choosing which teams to play for since various teams recruited her. Between 1934-1938, Taketa became the celebrated player for four teams: three-time champions Premier Paint Girls, Red and White Store, California Prune and Apricot Growers and the Muirson Label teams. But Taketa's talents weren't limited to baseball. She also lettered in basketball and played with the San Jose Young Women's Buddhist Association Purplettes basketball team. As an all-star forward, Taketa led her basketball team to numerous regional championships. During World War II, Taketa and her husband, Clark whom she married in 1938, moved to Denver after a short stint at the Heart Mountain Relocation Center. In Denver, Taketa played basketball for the last time while her husband organized various Nisei basketball programs. After the end of the war, Taketa graduated from the Don Lux Beauty Academy and opened a beauty shop in her own home. During the 1950s, she picked up bowling, and in the 1970s, she learned to golf, eventually joining the Royal Dots Women's Golf Club in 1977. In 1992, she was inducted into the Santa Clara County Softball Hall of Fame for her participation in night league sports and as one of the best pitchers in the league, as well as a top hitter. Taketa isn't the only one in her family who excelled in baseball. Her brothers — Russell, Chick and George Hinaga — also played for the San Jose Asahis.

1940s - 1950s

1949—**Faye Tazoi Toma (softball)**: Tazoi, an outfielder and catcher for Ken Garff's Utah Shamrocks from 1949 to 1955, helped lead her team to four state championships from 1949 to 1953. In 1952, she was honored as an All-State Player by the All-State National Softball Congress of America. Toma graduated from Weber College with a degree in business administration and worked as a stenographer for Security Division. Tazoi's sister, Mickey, also played for the Shamrocks in 1949. The Shamrocks, which disbanded in 1978, are considered the oldest organized amateur team in Utah sports and the second oldest softball organization in the world. Their games date back as far as 1935.

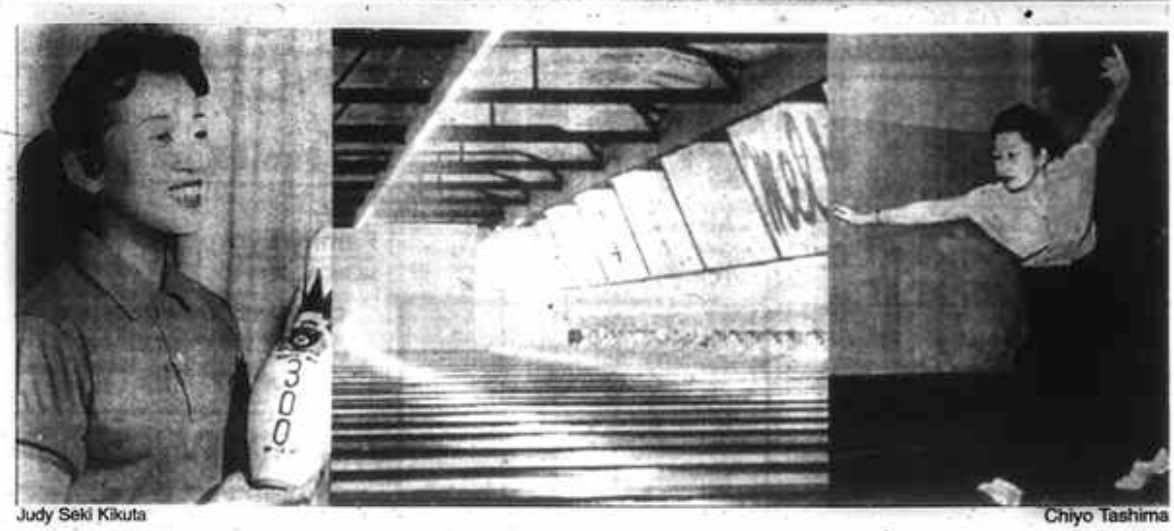

Evelyn Kawamoto

1952—**Evelyn Kawamoto Konno (swimming)**: Two bronze medals at the 1952 Olympic Games in Helsinki, Finland, were earned by U.S. swimmer Kawamoto, who placed third both in the women's 400-meter freestyle event and in the women's 400-meter U.S. relay team event. At an early age, the Aloha state native was enrolled in the Hawaii Swimming Club and dominated meets in the individual medley throughout high school. As a teenager and only a couple of years after the war, Kawamoto tried out for the 1948 U.S. Olympic squad. Although a finalist in the trials, she did not make the top three in the 400 meters. But by 1951, prior to her successful Olympic debut, she competed in the National AAU Women's Swimming Championships, in which she tied for the gold with Marge Huston in the 200-meter freestyle event. Each was given a medal made of half gold and half silver. At 22, Kawamoto married fellow JA Olympiad swimmer and McKinley High School alumnus Ford Konno, co-captain of the men's U.S. swim team at the 1956 Melbourne Games and himself the winner of multiple Olympic medals in 1952 and 1956.

1955—**Nancy Ito (softball)**: Considered one of the foremost catchers in women's fast pitch and perhaps the greatest female Nisei sports figure, Ito was voted into the National Softball Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City in 1982, making her only the third woman catcher to be elected. Ito also earned the Amateur Softball Association's All-American honors 13 times. This multi-sport athlete's physical prowess was evident from an early age, but it was in softball that she really excelled, playing in the top amateur leagues in her hometown of Denver by the time she was 14 years old. At age 18, the 5-foot-7, 148 pound Ito was a pro shortstop with the Chicago Bloomer Girls, where she ranked sixth in league batting averages and second in home runs. In 1955, Ito was voted Denver's best woman softball player by the *Rocky Mountain News*, one of six top women athletes rated nationally in their respective sports fields. In 1959, she moved to Southern California where she played with the Orange Lionettes from 1960 to 1974, during which time she participated in 18 national tournaments and was a member of four national championship teams. In 1966, she received the Kay Rohrer Memorial Award for her outstanding defensive play, making only 10 errors in 1,401 chances in 222 games in the Pacific Coast Women's League. In 1972, she went errorless, and from 1967 to 1974 she had a .242 batting average. Although Ito passed away on Dec. 19, 1987, five years after becoming a national hall of famer, she remains a pioneer in the history of women's athletics.

1955—**Chiyo Tashima (bowling)**: Tashima, who was then rolling a 189 average with a 279 high game and 687 high series, catapulted into bowling fame when she won a brand new T-Bird in the 1941 *Los Angeles Examiner* tournament. She was city singles champion in 1951-1952, rolled with city and state team championship squads in 1952-1953 and represented Southern California in the National All-Star Match Game Tournament in Chicago in 1953-1954. She was the women's all-events champion during the 1961 National JACL Bowling Tournament, one year after the women's division became an official part of the tournament. In 1953, she won the JACL women's singles division with a score of 588, and from 1953 to 1955, she and partner June Jue, also of Los Angeles, won

A History of Notable JA Women Athletes Has Begun to Emerge



Judy Seki Kikuta

Chiyo Tashima

the women's doubles championship in the same annual tourney. She also competed for 11 weeks on TV, longer than any other competitor at the time. In the Crenshaw 935 Men's Classic, Tashima bowled with Hyatt House, the only women's team in the league.

1957—**Royal Dots Golf Club**, the oldest known Nikkei women's golf club in the Northern California area, came into existence under the leadership of Michi Onuma, the club's first president. Onuma, who worked for the *Hokubei Mainichi* newspaper in the 1950s and for the *Nichi Bei Times* since 1972, used her journalism skills to ensure that the accomplishments of the women's golf group reached a broader audience. Original founders still active today include Nae Fujita, Barbara and Nancy Nagareda, Mary Negi and Masaye Hiura. In 1958, a year after the Royal Dots formed, the Sacramento-based Kagero Women's Golf Club formed. That same year, the Royal Dots and Kagero held a joint tournament, a tradition which continues to the present day.

1957—**Irene Urashi (badminton)**: In April 1957, this 22-year-old from Minneapolis competed in the national senior women's badminton tournament in Philadelphia, already the winner of over 20 state and regional tournament titles. Urashi first began taking lessons in 1950 and since 1951 competed and won in numerous tournaments in the East, Midwest and Canada. She graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in physical education.

1957—**Judy Seki Kikuta (bowling)**: During the Southern California Women's All-Star Eliminations in October 1957, Seki, then a 22-year-old, 5-foot-3, 122-pound Nisei from Los Angeles became the first woman on the West Coast to bowl a perfect 300 game in a Women's International Bowling Congress (WIBC) competition; she took home a brand new T-Bird as her winning prize. This JA bowling pioneer was also a member of the Holiday Bowl team in the L.A. Major Traveler's League, which included fellow Nisei bowling stars Dusty Mizunoue, Chiyo Tashima and Nobu Asami. Seki bowled a 723 series (247-228-248) towards a team 3022 series. She was named the 1957 Southern California bowler of the year by the *Los Angeles Examiner*. Her first appearance in the National JACL Tournament was at the 10th annual competition in Salt Lake City, where she placed second in the Women's All-Events with 1575 and placed third in doubles with 557. It was once reported that Seki's motto was, "Be happy, bowl good, don't think."

1950s-60s—**Dusty Mizunoue (bowling)**: This Inglewood, Calif.-born Nisei, who competed on the national pro tour, won the Western Women's Bowlers Open two consecutive years in a row in 1970 and 1971, and was, thus, inducted into the Southern California Bowling Hall of Fame, joining fellow keglerettes and teammates Chiyo Tashima and Judy Seki. She also won several national JA titles, in addition to being inducted into the Los Angeles Women's Bowling Association in July 1987. During her career, she rolled a high average of 186, top series of 671 and a high game of 272, and credits Tashima, Norm Meyers and Max Gartdener for encouraging her.

1959—**Michi Yamamoto (parachuting)**: Of the 21 members of the Albuquerque Parachute Club, Yamamoto, who works as a secretary for an attorney, was the lone female to join the group shortly after it formed in 1958. At the time, the club was one of only three in the entire state of New Mexico.

1960s - 1970s

1963—**Sharon Ozeki (track skating)**: When Ozeki joined the Los Angeles Thunderbirds, she became the first JA to compete in a pro track skating (aka roller derby) league. At 5-foot-11, 110 pounds, the Nisei began skating as a junior at Los Angeles High School. She joined the amateur ranks in March 1963, and then a few months later, in May, made her pro debut.

1965—**Joey Hamasaki (surfing)**: Hamasaki upset defending champion Joyce Hoffman in the Oceanside, Calif., third annual U.S. Invitational Surf event in 1965. Around 1968, Hamasaki was somewhat of a short board pioneer, which was just beginning to replace the long board. Her Weber Performer was about 5 feet 2 inches long, 26 inches wide and 24 inches wide around the nose and tail. In Australia at the time, male surfers Ted Spencer and Wayne Lynche were trying out similar boards to the one Hamasaki had.

1969—**The Southern California Women's Athletic Union** was founded by Harumi Inouye, Seiji Isomoto, Mickey Kataoka, Roy Matsuda, Amy Miyakawa, Mitsuo Sakaniwa, Hiroshi Taniyama and Bob Yamashita. The following year in 1970, the organization held their first competition at Los Angeles Trade Technical College with a seven team league. The original seven teams were the Gardena F.O.R. Club, Lakerettes, Los Angeles Showa, Norwalk, Tigerettes, Wanjettes and West Covina. By the 1990s, the group expanded to include more than 50 teams and 600 participants.

1973—**Keiko Fukuda (judo)**: By the age of 60 and standing only 5 feet at 115 pounds, this Japan-native was the highest ranking woman judoist in the world and one of only three women to hold a sixth-degree black belt. Fukuda is the granddaughter of Hachinosuke Fukuda, from whom judo founder Jigoro Kano studied jujitsu. Fukuda received her early training from Kano, and by 1937, she was appointed as an instructor at the Kodokan world judo headquarters in Tokyo. In 1955, she began introducing the sport to women in Northern California. In 1966, she moved permanently to San Francisco, where she served as technical adviser for the women's U.S. Judo Association and eventually opened her own Soko Joshi Judo Club. Fukuda, who has taught in the United States, the Philippines and Australia, is also the author of a book titled "Born For the Mat," which was published in 1973.

1974—**Janis Ogawa (billiards)**: This Boise State University sharpshooter was a three-time national collegiate runner-up before finally winning the national championship at the U.S. Women's Collegiate Pocket Billiards tournament as a 21-year-old senior. She beat Lucy Valiunas of the University of Texas by a score of 50-29. The year before, she had lost the title by the slimmest of margins, 50-49, to Marcia Girolamo of Syracuse, N.Y. Ogawa was a 1970 graduate of Caldwell High School and learned most of her pool from her coach Stan Robison and her father Yosie Ogawa, a realtor who formerly owned Caldwell Pocket Billiards. Just prior to winning her national championship, she swept four regional games in Portland, with a scoring average of 2.54 balls per inning, making her the No. 1 seed at the 1974 national meet held at Kent State University. Ogawa went on to compete in the U.S. Open tournament against some of the top pro players.

1974—**Ann Kiyomura Hayashi (tennis)**: The first Nisei woman to win multiple Wimbledon titles, Kiyomura took home both the 1974 junior women's singles title as well as the 1974 senior women's doubles title with partner Kazuko Sawamatsu of Nishinomiya, Japan. She joined World Team Tennis as a pro player that same year with the Hawaii Leis. In 1975, she played with the San Francisco Golden Gaters and spent the next couple of years with the Indiana Loves. In 1976, Kiyomura was inducted into the Northern California Tennis Hall of Fame, and by 1979 she was ranked No. 15 in the world. Throughout her junior career, she was ranked No. 1 in

See GIRLZ GOT GAME/Page 105

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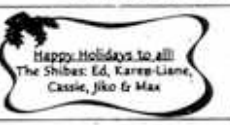
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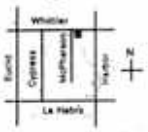
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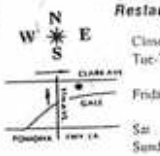
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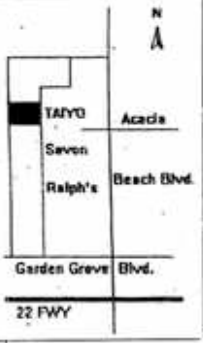
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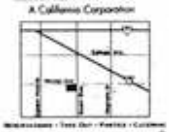
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Lords of the Ring



By RAYMOND NAKAMURA

On a thankfully sunny Sunday afternoon in early August, in the centre of Oppenheimer Park at the heart of Vancouver's old Japan Town, I joined the crowd gathering for the amateur sumo wrestling tournament, a highlight of the annual Powell Street Festival. My ears still echoed with the visceral rhythms of taiko drumming, my eyes still danced with the delightful images of artistic handiwork and my tongue still tingled with the sweet and savory Japanese treats whose names I always forget.

In professional sumo tournaments, the ring is a raised structure made of special earth blessed by a Shinto priest. For this tournament, organizers nailed curved wooden planks into the grass to form two rings, each abut ten feet in diameter. We sat on the grass around the rings, but not so close that a catapulted contestant might land on us. The crowd was a mixture of young and old, Japanese and not. Seniors sat on chairs under a nearby tent, some curious, some just enjoying the rest and shade.

"Have fun and watch your head," said the chair of the Vancouver sumo club, reminding the contestants that this was a friendly tournament. He thanked the Japanese stores that donated prizes and then they were ready to rumble.

The announcer, a slender woman with porcelain skin, a brown bob hairdo and an elegant brimmed hat and sunglasses, explained the rules in English, "You win by pushing your opponent out of the ring or making him touch the ground with any part of his body other than the soles of his feet."

The tournament was open to anyone. I heard that even women were allowed, but if any women were in it this year, they were doing some serious steroids. Many but certainly not all of the 26 contestants seemed to be of Japanese ancestry living in the Greater Vancouver area. They ranged in age from their late teens to one man in his 70s! They ranged in size from under 5 feet to over 6 feet and perhaps 300 pounds. And they ranged in skill from absolute novices to well-trained veterans. The smaller entrants probably knew some kind of martial art unless they were just suicidal. The tournament was set up as a round-robin in which each person had at least three or four bouts. The top sixteen moved on to the elimination rounds.

Each wrestler wore only shorts with a cloth wrapped around his groin and waist. Maybe this is why no women participated. A few of them wore only the cloth, the way professional sumo wrestlers do. By the end, some of the guys probably wished they'd gone with the traditional thong because their shorts got ripped to shreds. Each wrestler had a letter and a number code written on his bare back for the judges to keep track of who was who. Fortunately no one was too hairy.

The head referee wore a white robe and black tights, with a black hat that resembled the dorsal fin of a killer whale. The other referee wore a bright yellow robe with Japanese characters on it and striped bloomers but no dorsal fin.



For the qualifying rounds, the matches alternated between the two rings. The combatants entered from the east or west side of the ring and then squatted facing each other. They spread their arms out with their hands open to show that they had no weapons. This was not the World Wrestling Federation. Unlike the sumo you see on TV in Japan, they didn't do the elaborate stomps to wake up the gods or throw salt to purify the ring — these guys got right down to business.

The referee held up a butterfly-shaped fan to signal the beginning of the match. The wrestlers faced each other, like linemen in football. They timed it so their fists touched the ground at the same time, and at that moment they lunged at each other. Some matches ended in an instant, others went on and on. One strategy for small wrestlers was to leap out of the way so the larger wrestler would fall down with his own momentum. More often, they would grapple with each other and try to push the other out of the ring. Leverage becomes very important. Sometimes, ones who knew some judo might try a flip. Once they began, the referee shuffled nimbly from side to side in his sandaled feet, shouting *"Nokotta!"* over and over, which the announcer explained means "Keep at it!"

From outside the ring, two judges watched for infractions. One time a judge called a guy for hanging on to his opponent's pockets. This is probably not an official rule because usually no one has pockets. They stopped to make sure each wrestler was grabbing the right bits and then let them go on from there. The judges also helped decide who won in close finishes. When it was too close to call, they didn't have video replay, so they re-played the whole match. In these cases, the result usually came down to survival of the fittest.

The range in the size and ability of the contestants made the matches in some ways more entertaining than professional ones. The man in his 70s was a crowd favourite. People in the crowd yelled, *"Gambatte!"* (do your best!). But despite his valiant efforts, he was unable to make it into the next round. Another fellow had his name written in Japanese punctuated with a heart, in what looked like lipstick. Despite this extra support, he did not make it past the qualifying round. Perhaps love does not quite conquer all.

The announcer proclaimed the winner of each bout in English, and a wizened Japanese man with a salt-and-pepper beard beside her announced them in Japanese. In professional sumo tournaments, they also announce which of the 70 recognized moves was used to win. In this tournament, perhaps the techniques were harder to classify.

Between rounds, a female volunteer circled the ring with a big white banner indicating which round was beginning, like in boxing matches except that the woman wore a round white hat, a T-shirt, shorts and running shoes instead of a bikini and high heels.

For the semifinals, they used only one ring, so the crowd moved in closer, heightening the intimacy and excitement. At the beginning of these matches, the referee in the bright yellow robe melodically called out the names of the contestants, which reminded me of the Buddhist priest who chanted at my grandfather's funeral.

The finalists were all of Japanese descent, some post-war immigrants, some born here. In the consolation final for third place, a young body builder fought an older, small wiry man. The smaller man taught the novices the basic rules of engagement at the beginning of the tournament and led them in warming up. He had won the tournament several times before. The match was close and they fell together. The younger man had just fought a long, close bout and looked tired. In the re-match, the wily veteran ultimately prevailed with a deftly placed foot swipe.

The final pitted a tall guy with horizontal claw marks on his back from an earlier bout against a stocky guy with short hair and a goatee that made him look like Random Task, the Asian assassin in "Austin Powers." Both had been to the finals before.

The match was close, with lots of twisting and grabbing and pushing. Finally the tall man managed to push the stocky man out of the ring to become the Yokozuna, the grand champion, the lord of the ring. He raised his hands jubilant in victory, unlike the stoic formality of professional sumo wrestlers. His long arms were handy not only during the bout but after. Soon they were filled with a sack of the finest quality rice, bottles of saké and soya sauce, as well as a big trophy.

The other finalists also each received a trophy, rice, saké and soya sauce, but of decreasing size and quality according to their position.

I heard that all the contestants received some kind of prize. So maybe I should start training for next year. I could always use some more soya sauce and I'm sure I have a pair of shorts that are ready for the rag bin. ■

Dr. Raymond Nakamura is a marine biologist at Science World British Columbia in Vancouver.

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An Overview of Sport in the Japanese American Community

By BRIAN NIIYA

On March 4, 2000, an exhibit titled "More Than a Game: Sport in the Japanese American Community" will open at the Japanese American National Museum. I have had the privilege of curating that exhibit over the past few years and have had the chance to learn a lot about Japanese American sport history from the beginning to the present.

Accompanying the exhibit will be a series of video pieces on JA sport, a full slate of public and educational programs, and an exhibit catalog featuring some of the best research on JA sport that has appeared in recent years.

As a preview to the exhibit and the catalog, I thought *P.C.* readers might enjoy some selections from the exhibit catalog. This essay, which presents an overview of JA sport, is a much shorter version of my overview essay in the catalog. The other pieces — Eiichiro Azuma on sumo and kendo; Joseph Svinth on the combative sports; and Yoichi Nagata on the Los Angeles Nippon — are also abridged versions of their contributions to the catalog.

In addition to the full versions of these pieces, the catalog will feature seven other pieces on topics from AJA baseball in Hawaii to NAU basketball to the 1932 Olympics.

I hope you enjoy these pieces as well as this entire issue on JA sport. And if your interest has been whetted, be sure to come check out the exhibit and catalog when they premiere next March.

Sport looms large in the history of JAs. In every period of JA history, from the arrival of the first migrants to Hawaii in 1885 to the present, sport has been part of the fabric of JA life. Over time, the role of sport in the JA community has changed. It has, however, always mirrored the issues confronting the JA community as a whole. As such, one might trace the social history of JAs through the lens of sport. This essay is one attempt to do just that.

Sumo and Baseball

The two most important sports of the Issei era were clearly sumo and baseball. Each was played by Issei and Nisei alike and each had substantial draw as spectator sports.

Though sumo had 2,000-year-old roots in Japan, it would change in the wayit was practiced in the American context. For one thing, the religious and ceremonial overtones which sumo carried in the Japanese context gradually dissipated in America, where it began to be more of a grappling sport akin to American wrestling. Never really a team sport in the Japanese context, JAs in a given community formed sumo "teams" which competed against teams from surrounding communities. And in deference to American aesthetics, Nisei youth were often allowed to wear swimming trunks under their *mawashi* so as not to expose too much of their posteriors.

As for baseball, it turns out that America's national pastime was gaining popularity in Japan at about the same time as it was in America. By the 1890s, college and high school baseball had substantial followings in Japan. The legendary Ichiko/Meiji Gakuin rivalry was in place by 1891 and the hugely popular annual National High School Baseball Summer Championship Tournament (*Koshien*) was started in 1915. And while baseball's symbolism may have had an "Americanizing" influence on some Nisei, the fact that most Nisei played America's national pastime in a segregated JA context probably overshadowed any such influence.

And if JA sumo took on some distinctly "American" elements, JA baseball took on some "Japanese" features. According to Michael Okihiro, JA baseball on the island of Kauai took on the sumo custom of awarding star players "bags of rice, tubs of *miso*, *saké*, *shoyu* and even bolts of cloth. As in Japan, the "trophies" for the event were prominently displayed with the pomp and glory accompanying such events.

II. The World War II Years

JAs' worst fears materialized when in 1942 President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which paved the way for what would become the mass exclusion and internment of all JAs on the West Coast.

In both the "assembly centers" and "relocation centers," sporting activity played an important role in the lives of many internees. From the point of view of the camp administrators, sport and recreation programs were important in providing a wholesome activity to alleviate the boredom, which could lead to more serious problems if left unchecked. For JAs themselves, sport was an enjoyable way to pass time, a link to prewar communities, and a means of continuing at least one aspect of JA culture in the desolate setting of American concentration camps.

Though only in the "assembly centers" for a few months, JAs wasted little time in setting up sport programs in the summer of 1942. According to Samuel Regalado, at the Merced "Assembly Center," there was a ten-team baseball league, along with girls' volleyball and softball leagues, men's and women's basketball, and sumo matches. "We took our uniforms along with us and we played at the Merced County Fairgrounds which had a nice [baseball] stadium there," remembered Fred Kishi of the program at Merced. "I'm telling you the intensity of competition was very great and well organized."

The sport programs were even more organized at the ten "relocation centers" administered by the War Relocation Authority. Though the general tenor of sporting activities at each camp seemed to be similar, details differed. Newspapers at each camp detail the day-by-day and season-by-season results of baseball, basketball, football, sumo, and the many other sports which took place in camp.

Though the sports programs were similar at the different WRA camps, differences in emphasis emerged depending on local conditions and on the camp population. For instance, the basketball program at the Amache camp in Colorado flourished in part because the league could use the nearby Granada High School gymnasium less than a mile from the camp. At Gila, baseball was king, thanks in large part to Fresno Issei baseball pioneer Kenichi Zenimura, who masterminded the construction of "Zenimura Field" out of scrap lumber. Sumo was practiced at some camps but not at others. Because it housed many JAs from the sumo heartland of California's Central Valley, the sumo team at the Gila River, Arizona, camp was particularly strong. At the Tule Lake camp, a weight lifting club was started due to the presence of Hawaii native Emerick Ishikawa, a future four-time national champion weight lifter.

As many of the younger and more able-bodied began to leave the camps in large numbers in 1943-44, the sport programs began to wind down. But they had



Photo courtesy of the Japanese American National Museum

Zebra baseball team at Heart Mountain concentration camp, 1944. (92.10.2DF)

done their part to make the camp experience more bearable for the interned JAs. As the title of a contemporary book about baseball in camp puts it, "Baseball Saved Us."

Soldiers

Athletes were seemingly over-represented among the Nisei soldiers. Many of these athletes were part of the various sports teams of the 100th and 442nd which served as ambassadors for Nisei soldiers and for JAs as a whole. Sadly, several top athletes were among those who lost their lives in the war. In fact the first member of the 100th to be killed in action was baseball star Joe Takata, who had starred at McKinley High and with the Asahi of Honolulu prior to his induction.

The 442nd Regimental Combat Team was activated on Feb. 1, 1943, and went overseas in May of 1944, where they incorporated the 100th. The 442nd went on to compile a sterling war record. The 442nd teams in various sports including baseball, basketball, volleyball and boxing competed against other service teams, breaking down barriers between themselves and the many American servicemen who had never seen a JA before.

If the 100th was known for its baseball team, a group which called itself the "Chowhounds" was best known for its boxing team. The all Nisei 1399th Engineering Construction Battalion spent the war years in Hawaii, performing vital construction tasks. Due in large part to boxer "Tiny" Tommy Murota, many top amateur fighters ended up as part of the "Chowhounds."

III. Resettlement and Beyond

In the years after WWII, mainland JAs tried to rebuild their lives after the trauma of internment. In Hawaii, JAs were adjusting to a new society, where returning Nisei veterans weren't about to take a back seat to anyone anymore. In both places, sport would be an important part of the adjustments being made by resettlers and returning veterans alike to the new world order.

It seems clear that the most important community-level sports among JAs in the first couple of decades after WWII were basketball, baseball, bowling, and golf. In both Hawaii and on the mainland, a people trying as hard as they could to be "American" and to downplay those parts of themselves that were "Japanese" led to the inevitable decline in "Japanese" sports such as sumo and kendo in the immediate postwar years. While judo would eventually rebound (due in large part to its adoption by the U.S. military, thereby validating its "American-ness") and even kendo would come back, the war essentially killed JA sumo, with some small exceptions.

If sumo carried the wrong symbolism, then each of the other four represented some aspect of the American dream JAs so badly wanted to be a part of. Baseball remained "America's national pastime" and continued to play a major role in JA communities as teams and leagues formed and reformed after the war. In Hawaii, the wartime changes in the Hawaii Baseball League and in the AJA leagues remained intact and led to baseball's period of greatest popularity in the decade after the war.

If baseball evoked nostalgia and lazy Sunday afternoons out in the field, basketball was the city game which represented the city's faster and more aggressive pace in the cramped quarters of the playground or gymnasium. As the mainland JA population became more urbanized after the war, basketball came to eclipse baseball in popularity among JAs. Tightly organized basketball leagues formed in all the major mainland cities with substantial JA populations, including former outposts such as Salt Lake City, Chicago, and Denver, which now swelled with JAs who had resettled there out of the camps before the West Coast had been reopened. A league even formed in Seabrook, New Jersey, where several thousand JAs from the camps resettled to starting in 1944. Before long, Northern and Southern California champions were playing each other in an annual championship game and an "Oriental American" basketball tournament was an annual event by the late 1940s. Teams like the Nisei Trading Lords, led by USC players Kaz Shinzato and Dickie Nagai, and the San Francisco Chinese Saints became notorious in JA basketball circles.

Bowling and golf represented other aspects of the American dream for the post-adolescent. If the leisure class symbolism of golf was what everyone aspired to, golf's cost, its hours, and its overt racism put it beyond the reach of most. This is not to say it didn't have its adherents among JAs. Issei golf clubs, such as the sardonically named "Yoji Oki" ("Get up at 4 a.m.") club, go back to well before the war. The JACL organized its first annual national golf tournament in April 1938, drawing 300 golfers. After the war, a network of Nisei golf clubs formed by the mid 50s and by th late 50s, an annual "Nisei Open" tournament was being held at the famed course at California's Pebble Beach.

But for the produce stand workers, gardeners, farmers, and the like who made up the bulk of the JA population, golf was out of the question. "You know, I always wanted to golf," said Gardena flower shop owner Shozo Hiraizumi. "But my hours didn't allow it. That's when I started bowling."

He surely had company. According to the *Pacific Citizen* newspaper of Sept. 10, 1949, "bowling is the biggest team sport among the Nisei." It estimated that there were 300 Nisei bowling teams on the mainland in about 40 leagues. As Harry Honda wrote in *Nisei Vue* magazine, "This pastime is strictly U.S.A. ... the indoor game embracing automatic pin-setters, sleek maplewood alleys and boon companionships is in the same classic American ranks as baseball and hamburger sandwiches." By 1947, the JACL was sponsoring an annual national bowling tournament for male and female bowlers from all over the country. By 1949, three mainland Nisei bowlers had rolled 300 games, the mark of perfection in bowling. By all appearances, JA bowling was booming.

There was just one problem. The American Bowling Congress, bowling's ruling body, had prohibited membership by people of color. Nisei were thus prohibited from bowling in ABC sanctioned tournaments, effectively locking them out of top leagues across the country. While JA leagues and tournaments took up part of the slack, the prohibition gnawed at many.

Despite stubborn opposition by ABC hard-liners, a string of lawsuits and other challenges to the ban led the ABC to capitulate less than a year later. By September of 1950, the color ban in bowling was dead.

While the ending of overt discrimination in bowling and other sports led to JAs bowling in mainstream leagues and tournaments — and to a few Nisei entering the professional ranks — it didn't kill the JA leagues. On the contrary, JA sports leagues continued to flourish through the 50s, 60s, and 70s, demonstrating that, while they may have been founded as a response to racism, they continued because many JAs wanted to associate with others like themselves. The leagues also may have served another function as a place where JA men who lacked the ability to star in mainstream leagues could validate their masculinity and identity as Americans.

It wasn't only men and boys who played either. From well before the war, there were JA sport leagues for women and girls as well. Formed in part as a reaction to discrimination, the JA women's teams and leagues also served the social function of allowing young Nisei women to meet and socialize with other young Nisei in other communities. "It was a thrill, it was something of an outing for us," recalled Miyoko Enokida of her days as a member of the Monterey Bees/Alphadites in the 1930s. "So basketball was the nucleus of, you know, of us getting out of town and meeting other people."

Women's leagues formed with renewed vigor after the war in the major population centers as well as in the newer resettlement communities. In Denver, for instance, a JA women's softball league formed which included holdovers from Denver's prewar women's league as well as newcomers from the coast who had left the camps for the Denver area. A Nisei women's team was the 1948 Cumberland County [New Jersey] softball champion for 1948 while a Seabrook basketball team once played a preliminary game before a Philadelphia Warriors/Minneapolis Lakers game in 1949. Bowling and golf leagues for JA women also formed in many JA population centers.

And there were a number of prominent Nisei era women athletes as well. Alice Hinaga Taketa was recruited out of high school to play baseball for the Night Ball Association of San Jose in 1931. A number of Nisei women bowled professionally and on local television, including Chiyo Tashima, Dusty Mizunoue, and Judy Kikuta. And a group of Nisei women swimmers from Hawaii would become national and world champions.

But the greatest Nisei woman athlete was undoubtedly Nancy Ito. In 1950, the 5-foot-7-inch Denver native played forward for the Hudsonettes in the Women's National AAU basketball tournament in St. Joseph, Missouri. Ito once scored 25 of her team's 30 points in a basketball game.

But it was in softball that Ito made her mark. A top amateur player by age 14, she played in a semi-professional league in Chicago by age 18. In 1959, she left Denver for the West Coast and joined the Orange Lionettes, one of the country's best amateur softball teams. In her 15 years with the Lionettes, Ito was the starting catcher on four national championship teams. She was a first or second team all-American 18 times. She was elected to the National Softball Hall of Fame in 1982.

In both Hawaii and on the mainland, a people trying as hard as they could to be "American" and to downplay those parts of themselves that were "Japanese" led to the inevitable decline in "Japanese" sports such as sumo and kendo in the immediate postwar years.

IV. At the Top of Their Game: JA Sport Stars

Opportunity

It has become almost a truism that JAs haven't excelled in mainstream sports in large numbers because (a) they lack the necessary size and (b) their culture values education and more practical pursuits and discourages the pursuit of sport — and the arts, humanities, and other "impractical" ventures — as an occupation. Indeed, there is a grain of truth to each.

But the first explanation doesn't address such sports as boxing, wrestling, and other fighting sports where weight classifications eliminate any advantage or disadvantage due to physical size. It also doesn't address such sports as tennis or auto racing where size isn't a large advantage, not to mention racing horses, where

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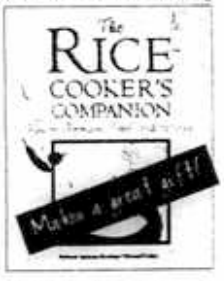
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OVERVIEW

(Continued from page 23)

being small is a necessity.

As for the second explanation, who can say? There is substantial anecdotalevidence to suggest that there is something to it. For instance, Nisei basketball star Wat Misaka turned down an offer from the Harlem Globetrotters to finish off his engineering degree. A memorable Pacific Citizen headline proclaimed "Johnny Kuroda Turns down Pro Ball for Optometry."

If in fact these stories were typical and top Nisei athletes were in fact turning down the opportunities for professional careers for more practical pursuits, one has to wonder why. And while family pressures undoubtedly had something to do with it, one can't help but think that the expectation of discrimination was a reality for Nisei in nearly every aspect of their lives, from what jobs they could reasonably hope to get, to which neighborhoods they could live in, to whom they could marry. And as of the late 1940s, the major professional sports were pretty much white-only. Even participatory sports such as golf and bowling had implicit or explicit racial barriers, as we have seen.

But the biggest argument that perceived opportunity, or the lack of it, was as important a factor in JAs pursuing sports careers as lack of size or cultural considerations is in the counter examples. In two sports in particular, JAs and other ethnic minorities were encouraged to participate in the 1940s. In both sports, JA athletes became champions in disproportionate numbers.

Weightlifters

In the obscure sport of competitive weightlifting (obscure at least in America; in other parts of the world, it is quite popular), JAs have enjoyed tremendous success. Part of that success is undoubtedly due to the perception of opportunity, as key figures in the sport actively encouraged the participation of ethnic minorities.

The first JA to emerge on the national scene was Maui born Emerick Ishikawa. Journeying to the mainland in 1940 to pursue a national title, he ended up at the Tule Lake "relocation center" in the spring of 1942, where he began a weightlifting club. Resettling in Chicago in 1943, he won a state competition which became his ticket to the weightlifting mecca of York, Pennsylvania, where an entrepreneur and weightlifting enthusiast named Bob Hoffman was building a world weightlifting powerhouse.

The owner of York Barbell Company and publisher of Strength and Health magazine, Hoffman surely had selfish reasons for building up American weightlifting. But he also believed that race should not be a barrier to athletic competion and built a national team which looked like America.

Hoffman's teams would come to include Eastern European immigrants, African Americans, and Asian Americans at a time when one rarely saw them in other sports.

As part of the York team, Ishikawa was an immediate sensation, winning both the junior and senior nationals in 1944, setting a world record in the latter. He would go on to win three more senior national titles and compete in the 1948 Olympic games.

Before leaving for the mainland, Ishikawa had become friends and training partners with Kona native Harold Sakata and Honolulu native Richard Tom. Once Ishikawa left, the latter two headed a group who began to train at the Nuuanu YMCA in Honolulu; this group soon began to dominate local weightlifting competitions.

In 1947, Nuuanu YMCA athletic director Henry Koizumi approached the pair about forming a weightlifting team which might be sent to national competitions. In June, that team was sent to Dallas for the junior nationals, where both Sakata and Tom won titles. After a disappointing showing at the senior nationals in Chicago a week later, the pair journeyed to York, where they visited Ishikawa and ended up training with the York team for three months, until the world championships in Philadelphia.

At that meet, Tom took second and Sakata took fourth. Tom and Sakata trained with the Nuuanu YMCA group with renewed enthusiasm, knowing they had a good shot at the 1948 Olympics. They, along with Richard Tomita and Ishikawa, all made the 1948 American team. At the London Olympic Games, Sakata won a silver medal at 181 pounds and Tom a bronze at 123. Along with Korean American diver Sammy Lee and Filipino American diver Victoria Manalo Draves, they became the first Asian Americans to win Olympic medals.

After the Olympics, they returned to Hawaii and Tom and Ishikawa went into semi-retirement, while Sakata went on to professional wrestling. Tomita continued to compete and won a senior national title in 1949. Other nationally ranked Hawaii lifters in this period included Donald Uchimura (the "Outstanding Lifter" of the Hawaiian Territorial Tournament in 1949) and George Yoshioka (senior nationals champion at 132 pounds in1951).



Photo courtesy of the Japanese American National Museum

The 1952 Olympic weightlifting team, from left to right, Emerick Ishikawa, Richard Tomita, coach, Harold Sakata, and Richard Tom. (96.62.1)

Then in 1951, Korean American physician Dr. Richard Yoo approached the Hawaii lifters about reforming a team in order to make a run at the 1952 Olympics. That team would come to include Tomita, Ishikawa, Tom Yoshioka, John Odo, and Ed Bailey. At the senior nationals and Olympic trials in New York City, the Hawaii/Nuuanu team defeated the York team for the team title, ending the latter's two-decade-long winning streak. Tom, Tomita, and newcomer Tommy Kono all won national titles. Kono would go on to an Olympic gold medal in Helsinki, while Tom and Tomita were alternates on the team. This was just the beginning for the Sacramento native Kono, perhaps America's greatest weightlifter. Between 1952 and 1960, he won eight straight world championships and two Olympic gold medals and a silver medal, each in a different weight class.

Swimmers

The story of Coach Soichi Sakamoto and the "Three Year Swim Club" bears some similarity to that of the weightlifters. As with the weightlifters, there was a leading figure in the sport who encouraged the participation of JAs and other people of color. Also like the weightlifters, there was an early group from Hawaii whose ambitions were thwarted by the war, but who paved the way for later swimmers who would go on to Olympic gold. Perhaps symbolizing the similarities is none other than Emerick Ishikawa. The first JA national champion weightlifter was also an original member of the "Three Year Swim Club" in Maui.

The story of the TYSC has become a legendary one in Hawaii. A high school science teacher at Puunene School on Maui in 1937, Sakamoto saw his students playing in plantation irrigation ditches running by the school only to be chased out by plantation police. Feeling that this was good recreation for the kids, he volunteered to supervise them if they were allowed to continue swimming in the ditches. To inspire the students, he announced in his homeroom class the formation of "The Three Year Swim Club." — a group whose goal would be to swim in the 1940 Olympics three years away. One hundred students signed contracts vowing to abstain from liquor, tobacco, gambling, and profanity, and to promote loyalty, bravery, good sportsmanship, and other good stuff.

The Olympics were about as audacious a goal as one could imagine, since Sakamoto had no formal training in swimming. "I knew nothing about the sport but I came from the old school of thought that believed in common sense," he recalled. "So I took a common sense approach to coaching." His method made use of his observation of animals, his study of currents, and principles of music. He filmed his swimmers and analyzed it. A year later, the team attended their first competition in Waikiki. Kiyoshi "Keo" Nakama beat Olympic swimmer Ralph Gilman in the 400-meter freestyle, foreshadowing future success. In 1938 in Detroit, his team won the national team championship, as Nakama won his first national title in the 200-meter freestyle and took second in the 800- and 1,500-meter freestyle events.

Over the next few years, Sakamoto's Hawaii teams dominated American swimming. He took twelve teams to the national championships and won six team championships. The 1940 Olympics were canceled due to WWII; had they not been canceled, it is likely that many members of the American team would have been Sakamoto's swimmers. The team may have peaked in 1941 in St. Louis, when the Maui group won eight out of the 10 events en route to their third national championship.

With the resumption of the Olympics after WWII, Bill Smith of Hawaii won two gold medals. In 1952, Hawaii's Ford Konno won two gold medals and a silver medal, Yoshinobu Oyakawa won one gold, and Evelyn Kawamoto won two bronzes. Konno picked up another silver in 1956. Sakamoto went on to coach swimming at the University of Hawaii for 25 years.

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OVERVIEW

(Continued from page 26)

Into the Mainstream

Though they often faced barriers, the list of JA athletes who have made their mark in mainstream American sports is a long one. Though most are not household names, each made his or her mark.

In the major American sports of baseball, football, and basketball, dozens of JAs have played at the college level and a select few have had professional careers. In baseball, the major leaguers include RyanKurosaki, Lenn Sakata, Atlee Hammaker, Don Wakamatsu, and Onan Masaoka. While Kurosaki and Wakamatsu played just a few games in the majors, Sakata and Hammaker played for eleven and fifteen years, respectively. Hammaker even played in an all-star game as a member of the Giants in 1983. Masaoka currently plays for the Los Angeles Dodgers.

In women's softball, there have been a number of star players besides Ito. In the late 40s and early 50s, the Tagbi sisters, Mickey and Faye, starred for the Utah Shamrocks, one of the country's best amatuer softball teams. More recently, Megumi Takasaki completed a stellar career at the University of California Berkeley and played professionally for the Carolina Diamonds of the Women's Professional Softball League this past summer.

Among the many JAs to play college football are Joe Nagata, who played for Louisiana State University in 1943 in the Orange Bowl and Art Matsu, a quarterback at William & Mary in the 1920s. No less than 13 JAs played for the University of Hawaii in 1949. Chad Morton is a current star tailback at the University of Southern California.

Aside from Wally Yonamine's stint with the San Francisco 49ers, the only JAs to play in the National Football League are Arnold Morgado of the University of Hawaii in the 1980s and Johnny Morton, the former USC star who now plays for the Detroit Lions.

Among JAs to play college basketball, the best known was certainly Wat Misaka, who starred at the University of Utah in the 1940s. Misaka was a key player on both Utah's 1944 NCAA championship team and their 1947 NIT champs. He later played briefly for the New York Knicks. In the 1970s. Eddie Owens was the leading scorer for the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Runnin' Rebels first final four team. Rex Walters starred at Kansas. While Owens played just a few games in the NBA, Walters is now in his seventh NBA season and with his third team, the Miami Heat. Among the women, Lindsay Yamasaki is a current star at Stanford.

Though a native of Canada, hockey player Paul Kariya has starred in the National Hockey League as a member of the Anaheim Mighty Ducks. Jamie Storr has been a goaltender for the Los Angeles Kings.

Many JAs have excelled in the Olympic sports besides swimming and weightlifting. In volleyball, Eric Sato was part of the gold medal winning

1988 Olympic team, his brother Gary was an assistant coach on that team, and sister Liane was a member of bronze medal winning teams in 1988 and 1992. Also on the 1992 team was Yoko Zetterlund. Gymnast Makoto Sakamoto was one of America's best in the mid 60s and a member of the 1964 and 1972 Olympic teams.

Another notable Olympic athlete is fencer Peter Westbrook, who has qualified for every U.S. Olympic team since 1976, a record-setting total of six Olympic teams. He is a 13-time national champion, two-time Pan-American games gold medalist, and an Olympic bronze medalist in 1984.

Though neither made the Olympic team, track stars Henry Aihara and Rick Noji were both among America's best in their events. Aihara won the 1945 NCAA long jump championship while at the University of Illinois and starred at USC in 1949 and 1950. Noji was the 1992 Pac-10 high jump champion and was a member of three U.S. track and field world championship teams. The 5-foot-8-inch Noji has a career best highjump of 7 feet 6-1/2 inches.

As one would expect, many JAs have excelled in judo, since its introduction as an Olympic sport in 1964. Paul Maruyama was a member of the inaugural U.S. Olympic judo team and was the coach of the 1980 and 1984 teams. Kevin Asano was a silver medalist in 1988. Other judo Olympic team members include Craig Agena (1984), Sandra Bacher (1992), Patrick Mitsugi Burris (1976), Keith Nakasone (1980), Liliko Ogasawara (1992), Tony Okada (1992) Steven Seck (1980), Clifton Sunada (1996), and Nicki Yonezuki (1980).

Of course the most famous JA athlete of them all is figure skater Kristi Yamaguchi, 1992 Olympic gold medalist.

In the world of horse racing, jockeys George Taniguchi and the Kunitake brothers, Jon, Larry and Ernest, starred in the 1950s and 60s, while Corey Nakatani is one of the top jockeys in America today. As is often pointed out in profiles of Nakatani, he has won many races at the Santa Anita racetrack, where his father and grandparents were once interned during WWII.

Many JAs have attained some measure of fame in golf and tennis after the war. In tennis, the best known may be 1970s star Ann Kiyomura, one of the top doubles players of her time and a doubles champion at Wimbledon in 1974 (with Kazuko Sawamatsu). Kimberly Po (her mother is Nisei) was a professional player in the 1980s. In golf, Kauai's David Ishii has played professionally in both Japan and the United States, while Lenore Muraoka Rittenhouse has won an LPGA tour event. Kim Saiki and Pam Kometani also currently play on the LPGA tour, while Guy Yamamoto won the U.S. Public Links championship in 1994.

Though not as many JAs have excelled in the winter sports, in part because they tend to be concentrated in warm weather areas, there have been a few. Hank Kashiwa, a native of upstate New York, was a member of the U.S. Ski team in the late 60s and early 70s was world champion in 1969, the world professional champion in 1975, and a member of the 1972 U.S. Olympic team which went to Sapporo, Japan. Ryan Shimabukuro was a member of the U.S. national speed skating team in the 1990s. What is most remarkable about Shimabukuro's story is that he is from Hawaii.

Finally, there are the extreme athletes. Though the term "extreme sports" is of relatively recent vintage, the concept is certainly not. There have always been those willing to test the limits of the possible just for the thrill of doing it. Whether Issei daredevil pilots or race car drivers of the 1910s, surfers of the 1950s and 60s, or skateboarders and rock climbers of the 1990s, one suspects the impulse to do what they did was much the same. What has changed is the commodification of such sports in the last decade or two. As such, the names of those Issei pilots and racers will remain mostly obscure, while some of the Yonsei skateboarders have managed to attain a measure of fame and fortune. In particular, Christian Hosoi and Steve Caballero were among the skateboard world's biggest stars in the 1980s, while Tom Inouye was a star in the 1970s. And Wayne Miyata, a surfing pioneer of the 1950s and 60s, appears in the legendary surfing movie "Endless Summer" and has inspired a generation of Sansei surfers and board shapers in the 1970s and 80s.

***

As we approach the year 2000, the JA community is still here and sport still plays an important role in it as it always has, Given this history, the future direction of the JA community no doubt can be glimpsed in some of the current trends in sport. Of course one would only be able to say which trends those are if one could predict the future. But lacking that, there are some intriguing possibilities.

One is the beginning of overt pan-AA sport leagues. As we've seen, there have been threads of pan-Asian Americanism which date back to the 1920s and 30s, when we saw Japanese-Filipino tennis tournaments and Japanese-Chinese football games in the San Francisco area. Chinese and Filipino American teams played in at least some JA basketball and bowling leagues in the first decade after the war and an "Oriental American" basketball tournament started in 1947. But by the late 1950s, this early pan-Asianism seems to have mostly vanished. After the 1970s, we've again started to see a small number of non-Japanese AAs allowed to play in some leagues.

It's only been in the past few years, however, that we've seen explicitly AA sport leagues, first in the Seattle area and most recently in Orange County, California. That Seattle, which has a smaller concentration of JAs than Hawaii or Northern and Southern California, should be the first to have AA leagues — indeed, they also seemed to be most inclusive in the 1940s as well — suggests that this might be one direction JA communities will take as their population spreads out and shrinks relative to other AA groups. But the fact that communities in places like Denver or Salt Lake City did not go this route — in those places, JA leagues have gradually faded away and not been replaced by anything else — suggests that it is far from certain this will happen elsewhere.

Though they often faced barriers, the list of JA athletes who have made their mark in mainstream American sports is a long one. Though most are not household names, each made his or her mark.

In both Hawaii and Southern California, we've seen a resurgence of trips to Japan by youth all-star teams over the past couple of decades. The makeup of these teams is suggestive. In Hawaii, high school all-star teams have been making the trip for nearly four decades. No special attempt seems to be made to make sure JAs are on these teams, though given the ethnic makeup of Hawaii, there have always been at least a few.

On the mainland, explicitly "Sansei" and more recently "Yonsei" basketball teams have been touring Japan for the last 20 or so years. But in most cases, a couple of outstanding non-JAs are added to the team to make the team stronger and to insure victory in Japan. No pretense is made that these players are partly of Japanese descent or that they have special ties to the JA community. Interestingly, this practice mirrors what some of the Issei era teams did in pre-WWII tours of Japan.

Whether any of these current trends tells us anything about the future of the JA community is an open question. But whatever the JA community of the future ends up looking like, it seems safe to say that sport will be an important part of it. ■

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The Los Angeles Nippons Baseball Club, 1926-1941



Photo courtesy of the Japanese American National Museum
Los Angeles Nippon baseball team, April 1935. (92.100.33)

By YOICHI NAGATA

Birth of a Nisei Team

The 1920s and 1930s witnessed phenomenal growth in baseball in all sections of the United States. This was likewise reflected in the growth of Japanese American baseball in Southern California.

There had been a team consisting of Issei and older Nisei ballplayers in the early 1910s. But it wasn't until 1923 that baseball really took off among JAs in Los Angeles, when Kenichiro Zenimura, an Issei player in Fresno, brought a team made up of Hawai'i Nisei to play a local Los Angeles pick-up team.

At the time of the Immigration Act of 1924, the Issei community was concerned with educating their sons and daughters as to what they should be and how they should act. However, they were separated by barriers of language, custom and viewpoint. This became known to Issei as "The Nisei Problem."

A *Rafu Shimpo* columnist wrote on Feb. 6, 1926, "Mental and physical toughness is above all needed for Nisei. If possible, Nisei should learn the essence of judo and kendo from Rafu Dojo masters. However, those American-born youngsters don't show an interest in either of them, so it is impossible for us to initiate them into judo and kendo ... Rather we should prompt them to take whatever sports they like. Baseball is it!"

In a sense, baseball became an answer to "The Nisei Problem."

The *Rafu Shimpo* reported in 1926 that approximately 12 Nisei teams with 120-130 players were active in the Los Angeles area. It was the year that the Southern California Japanese Baseball Association organized a strong Nisei baseball team to represent the JA community against other American athletic teams.

At the time, the Diamonds, made up mostly of gardeners in uptown Los Angeles, and the Olivers, the Nisei club organized by kindergarten teacher Nellie Grace Oliver, were contenders for the top JA baseball team. The two soon merged to form one team called the Los Angeles Nippons Baseball Club. The L.A. Nippons were the only Japanese semi-professional team to play against white and black semi-pro teams.

Japanese All-Stars

In 1927, however, a rival emerged — the Grand Central Market team — which arose out of a local downtown retail market on Broadway. Broadway was dubbed the "Los Angeles Ginza" by the Issei. The Market team participated for the first time in the 1927 Japanese League spring competition and easily won the championship over the Hollywood No. 1, Hollywood No. 2, Higashi Hongwanji, Nishi Hongwanji, Methodist Episcopal Church and Uptown teams. The Market team left the league and followed the suit of the Nippons as an independent semi-pro team.

Inevitably, the Nippons clashed with the Marketeers for the first Nisei championship. In 1927 and 1928, the Nippons easily defeated the upstart Markets.

Then came their 1929 encounter. The Market team, under coach Rod Murphy, former catcher for the Vernon Tigers in the pro Pacific Coast League (PCL), had added a slick-fielding and power-hitting outfielder from Maui, Jimmy Horio, as well as Harry "Tar" Shirachi and Tbshi Kuwata of Northern California.

On Oct. 27, 1929, the major league World Series had been over for two weeks; however, the Little Tokyo World Series was about to raise its curtain. Busloads of fans were transported to the MGM ballpark in Culver City. The crowd of 2,000 overflowed the stands and fans were sitting on the corners of the field.

The game started with a two-run homer by the Nippons' Min Watanabe against Market ace Tar Shirachi. By the bottom of the third, Shirachi surrendered two runs and was relieved by 19-year-old newcomer George Matsuura. Fans thought the game was over. But he surprised everyone by calming the Nippons' bats with his breaking balls. The Market team rallied to score six runs in the fifth and beat the Nippons in a 9-5 victory.

Game two, on Dec. 8, was decided in the bottom of the eighth with two outs. Matsuura committed a balk with a man on third and the deciding run crossed the plate. The Nippons prevailed in a close 8-7.

The rubber game was to be held at Wrigley Field on Jan. 12, 1930, but the Market team asked to postpone the game due to the illnesses of several regular players.

Two months later, on March 2, 1930, a new best-of-three series was opened between the Nippons and the Markets. This time, the Nippons swept the series, 9-4 and 8-1.

While the Nippons secured their throne, the Market team soon disbanded, after which several players were recruited to the Nippons team, including Jimmy Horio, George Matsuura, and shortstop Yozo Kobayashi. The Nippons were virtually the Southern California Nisei All-Stars. Other additions included Sam Takahashi from Hawaii, shortstop for the 1929 Nippon Athletic Club in Seattle, and Beans Yamamoto, the San Pedro Skippers pitcher in 1934.

1931 Japan Tour

The year of 1931 opened with the deepening Depression. On Feb. 18, the L.A. Nippons embarked upon their first three-month tour of Japan, after being invited by the *Osaka Mainichi* newspaper. Prior to World War II, starting with two Seattle teams in 1914, more than 20 West Coast JA teams had crossed the ocean to play games in Japan.

Three Caucasian players were on the traveling Nippons team. The Japanese sponsor had requested them so that the team would be stronger and the games would draw more fans. However, the Nippons almost always regularly carried white players on their squad anyway, which was unusual for a Nisei team. University of Southern California pitcher Jimmy Crandall, 17-year-old major league prospect Red Frazier and former PCL and Western Leaguer Bucky Harris were all looking forward to seeing Japan.

The L.A. Nippons arrived on March 21 at Koshien Stadium in Osaka to play against the Hoyu Club (Hosei University). In the third inning, Kondo drove in a run, and in the fourth the Nippons' attack knocked out the Hosei starter, lefty Kozo Suzuki, forcing Henry "Bozo" Wakabayashi, a Hawai'i Nisei, to take the mound. Wakabayashi came in with one out and runners on first and third and retired Crandall on a fly to left for a second out. But Horio doubled in another run. Again in the sixth, Takahashi hit a triple off Wakabayashi, his old playmate in the pineapple plantation village, driving in a run, and the Nippons celebrated their first win, 3-1, on Japanese soil.

The following day the Nippons out-hit the Hosei team again for an 8-6 victory.

The L.A. Nippons swept their first ten games in the Osaka and Nagoya areas against college and middle school teams. Throughout the trip, the visitors received more cheers from the crowd in the stands than the home teams. Their first loss came in the eleventh game when the rookie team of Hosei upset the Nippons 5-2.

Baseball was at a fever pitch in Japan as Ken Matsumoto described in his trip diary: "There is no place for children to play, save in the street or the narrow path between houses. But how the populace of Japan takes to baseball. Even kids that are barely able to walk are throwing balls around — everywhere you go they are playing baseball.

See L.A. NIPPONS/ page 38

Nikkei in Combative Sports: Judo, Boxing and Freestyle Wrestling

By JOE SVINTH

Judo

Judo is a system of jacketed and belted wrestling first developed during the 1880s by the Japanese educator Jigoro Kano. The word "judo" means "the gentle way." While judo is hardly gentle, the name meant, as Kano would later say, that "what I taught was not a dangerous thing, nor would it needlessly injure any person."

Judo first came to international attention in April 1888, when Kano and British missionary Thomas Lindsay presented a paper called "Jiujitsu: The Old Samurai Art of Fighting Without Weapons" to the Asiatic Society of Japan. Kano emphasized a theme to which he would return again and again, "Its main principle being not to match strength with strength, but to gain victory by yielding to strength."

In October 1903, Kano's student Yoshitsugu Yamashita introduced judo into the United States. By 1904, Yamashita's students included President Theodore Roosevelt. Meanwhile, Yamashita's wife Fude taught judo to wealthy Washington socialites.

By 1907, American perceptions of what most people called "jiujitsu" began souring. The reason was partly a rising distrust of Japan and partly the antics of Japanese professional wrestlers then touring North America. Many of these wrestlers were competent judoka, including Katsukuma Higashi, who was the subject of several books by Irving Hancock; Eisei Maeda, who upon moving to Brazil started what would become Gracie jujitsu; Tokugoro Ito, who is often (wrongly) credited with establishing the Seattle Dojo, the oldest Kodokan judo club in the United States; and Taro Miyake, a pioneer of British judo. But as wrestling promoters were mostly interested in exploiting racial stereotypes, the skills of these men were usually minimized.

Kano was well aware of these problems, and as a result he emphasized to foreigners that judo was not what one saw in professional wrestling rings. Whenever he visited Europe or the United States in his role as Japan's representative to the International Olympic Committee, he always gave English-language speeches on judo to the press. As these speeches were invariably punctuated by demonstrations of judo techniques and principles, the novelty ensured him far better media coverage than might be expected.

Meanwhile, the Japanese Ministry of Education began associating judo with building character in boys, and after World War I, Japanese teachers trained in the philosophy (and in jūdo) came to North America to teach at Japanese language schools. By the late 1920s, judo clubs started becoming common in Washington, Oregon and California. (Hawaii, meanwhile, had its own style, Danzan Ryu jujutsu, that was essentially a local offshoot of Kito-ryu jujutsu.)

At the same time, people who were not of Japanese or Korean ethnicity began studying judo. The pioneers here were mostly British and German, although one African American competed in a Los Angeles judo all-star tournament in 1936. That said, most North American judoka between 1928 and 1948 were Nisei or Sansei. Calculations based on the Nisei male population in 1940 and the membership of the twenty judo clubs in Washington and Oregon in 1940 suggest that about 13 percent of Pacific Northwest Nikkei boys practiced some judo during their youth and that nearly 5 percent eventually earned black belt ranking.

During World War II, the War Relocation Authority often hired adult Nisei judoka to provide internal security in the concentration camps. Meanwhile, Issei and younger Nisei judoka taught classes to juniors. Outside the camps, Nisei judoka taught judo to U.S. military personnel and to civilians living in Chicago and other Midwestern cities with large JA populations.

In February 1943, judo gained considerable notoriety when a 143-pound Chicago judo teacher named Masato Tamura defeated a 200-pound pro wrestler using a standard jacket choke.

Until the 1950s, most judoka were male. Still, in 1923, Danzan Ryu jujutsu teacher Seishiro "Henry" Okazaki began organizing girls' self-defense classes at the Hilo YWCA, and 13 years later, 20-year-old Shizuo Osumi of Hawai'i became the first Nisei woman to earn black belt ranking in Japan.

Following WWII, more girls and women began doing judo. Not everyone was happy about this, and when Rena Glickman defeated a male opponent during an AAU-sanctioned judo meet held in New York City in 1961, the AAU banned women from competing in all future judo tournaments. This didn't change until 1971, and it wasn't until 1973 that the AAU allowed women to compete against other women using standard rules.



Photo courtesy of the Japanese American National Museum
Boxer "Homocide" Hal Hoshino, ca. 1939. (86.21.1b)

Boxing

Western-style pugilism was among the first avocations of Japanese immigrants to the United States. For instance, Tokujiro "Charley" Sasaki started boxing in San Francisco during the late 1870s. Sasaki's East Coast contemporary was Sotokichi Uriu, a midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy who started boxing at the Annapolis YMCA in 1881.

An Issei named Otani was the first to gain regional reputation. Entering Seattle around 1905, Otani later moved to San Francisco where he came out second in a bar fight, after which someone suggested he join a boxing club.

He met a promoter named Eddie Robinson who dubbed him "Young Togo." Robinson managed another "Young Togo," this time Young Togo Koriyama of Fort Smith, Ark. In Oklahoma in 1911, Koriyama went 15 rounds with former bantamweight champion Harry Forbes. In February 1912, Koriyama met former world champion Oscar "Battling" Nelson. Koriyama weighed 116 pounds, while Nelson weighed about 142. Although the odds were bid at 100-1 against him, Koriyama again went the distance.

Koriyama fought another former world champion, Frankie Conley, in August 1913, as well as first-rate fighter Mexican Joe Rivers. Promoter Jack Doyle said they were some of the best four-round fights he'd ever seen.

Yujiro Watanabe, generally regarded as the father of Japanese boxing, was another California pugilist of the 1910s. By 1921, it was reported that he'd won 30 matches, lost six and tied the rest.

The most famous Nisei boxer of the 1920s was probably the future JACL leader James Y. Sakamoto. Born in 1903, Sakamoto learned judo from his father. While in college, he found a job as the English-language editor for a New York newspaper called *Japanese-American News*, and on the side he taught boxing at the Japanese Christian Institute. In 1925, Sakamoto took up professional boxing, and by 1927, Honolulu papers considered him a major contender. Unfortunately, he suffered detached retinas in the ring and went blind instead.

Jiro "George K." Ishii, the Japanese Phantom, was another early Seattle pro. A former varsity football player, the 110-pounder started his boxing career in 1920 while working in an Alaskan salmon cannery. Over the next 10 years he fought more than 100 four and five-round fights in Washington, Oregon and British Columbia. As Ishii later recalled it, about two-thirds of these fights resulted in his being declared the winner.

See COMBATIVE/ page 38

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Kendo and Sumo in the Continental United States

By EIICHIRO AZUMA

The history of Japanese martial arts, including kendo and sumo, can be divided into two phases: the mid-1920s Issei-era and the Nisei age.

Kendo: A Martial Art for the Urban Issei Elite

Before the late 1920s, kendo was favored by an elite group of Issei from upper class families or by those who had received training at school or in the military in Japan.

Having originated from feudal militarism, the "Way of the Sword," or kendo, involved a high degree of mental and physical training, with emphasis on the development of inner character rather than mere skill or physical strength.

Most immigrants coming to the United States had farming backgrounds, and since kendo required a large expense for purchasing protective gear and bamboo swords, this limited the general population from participating in kendo.

In America, early kendo was an urban phenomenon because the cities had a high concentration of immigrant students and professionals, who were most receptive to kendo. One immigrant writer recalled a kendo fever emerging from a small student laborers' group and intellectuals in San Francisco and Seattle around 1894, the year when Japan engaged in its first foreign war with China. However, this "fever" did not seem to have lasted long since many returned to Japan, and those who remained were quickly outnumbered by new laborers from rural Japan.

In Los Angeles, the first organized kendo activity formed in 1914, when several Issei intellectuals and professionals created the Los Angeles Youth Kendo Club.

Sasamori Junzo, a graduate of Waseda University, spearheaded a kendo "boom" among the Japanese in Denver, Colo., during the 1910s. Sasamori's parents were former samurai from Tsugaru (present day Aomori Prefecture). Although Denver had a small number of Japanese as compared with West Coast cities, Sasamori's leadership made this city the center of Issei kendo on the continental United States.

When Sasamori's Hokubei Budokai (North American Martial Way Association) held an inaugural kendo demonstration in 1913, the local hotel's grand ballroom was filled with more than 1,000 people, including a large number of white spectators.

On July 4, 1913, Sasamori and 40 other kendo enthusiasts were invited to give a special demonstration at the official Independence Day celebration sponsored by the City of Denver.

In 1920, Sasamori's move to Southern California and revived the then-defunct Los Angeles kendo group. Until his return to Japan in 1923, it was Sasamori who organized biannual kendo tournaments there.



Photo courtesy of the Japanese American National Museum

Sumo team with some Nisei wearing shorts under their mewashi, July 4, 1926. (97.14.2)

Issei and Sumo

Unlike kendo, sumo was popular among rural farmers and laborer because it was rooted in the Shinto religion practiced in many rural Japanese villages. It became a part of Japanese immigrant life from the very beginning.

In rural Japan, where the majority of Issei originated, sumo was not a sport. It was a ritual in which gods were thanked for the year's good harvest. During summer and/or autumn festivals, villagers made a sumo ring around a local Shinto shrine. The men presented their mental and physical purity by taking off all their clothes except for their *mawashi* (loincloths) and competed against each other while others watched and celebrated with sake and food.

In America, many Issei continued this practice at the end of the harvest. Though there were no Shinto shrines, they expressed their gratitude to the harvest gods through sumo.

In 1907, a group of professional sumotori from Japan visited Washington D.C., to deliver a commemorative sword to President Theodore Roosevelt as appreciation for America's support during Japan's war against Russia. After performing the ancient ritual in front of the White House, some Japanese wrestlers remained in California where they taught sumo. The resulting sumo "boom" led to inter-community tournaments from Los Angeles through the San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys.

Sumo became an important social event in JA settlements, rallying communities and strengthening Nikkei identity. This was the beginning of the "Americanization" of sumo.

In Sacramento, neighboring communities held an annual sumo tournament on Independence Day, after the asparagus harvest. There was fierce competition among Sacramento, Courtland, Walnut Grove, Isleton, Vacaville, Woodland, Elk Grove and Stockton.

At the tournament held at a downtown Sacramento ring, each community was represented by the local *yokozuna* (grand champion) and *ozeki* (second-rank champion) who strove to defend the honor of their families, friends and neighbors. Volunteers formed cheer leading squads with drums, gongs and banners, while spectators rooted for their favorite wrestlers, throwing money and presents into the ring when they won. Some of the best sumo wrestlers were even given elaborate *kesho mawashi* (decorated sumo aprons).

Local leaders donated expenses and prizes, while others offered time and labor. Everyone — regardless of age, occupation and prefectural origin — cooperated to put on this event. It was one of those rare occasions when farmers, merchants and migratory laborers communed together. It is significant that sumo made a place for the working class Issei, who tended to be marginalized within the Japanese immigrant society.

In 1924 and 1927, the "American Hawai'i Joint Sumo Tournaments" were held in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo. This entailed the best Southern California sumo wrestlers competing against a group from Hawaii. According to Chaplin Matsumori, a popular Hawaiian *sumo-tori* (sumo wrestler), mainland wrestlers overwhelmed the Hawaiian delegates in both tournaments.

In 1925 and 1927, Japanese college sumo wrestlers visited San Francisco and Los Angeles. In the wake of the 1920 Alien Land Law and 1924 Immigration Act, these visits bolstered many Issei morale. But other Issei, such as kendo leader Sasamori, were so angered by the passage of these anti-Japanese legislation that they returned to Japan.

Kendo and Sumo in the New Era: From Issei to Nisei

With the passage of the 1924 Immigration Act, new Japanese immigration was terminated. At the same time, there was an exodus of Issei returning to Japan, resulting in a decreasing Issei population.

By 1930, the Nisei was more than 50 percent of the entire JA population. While the majority of Nisei were in their early teens or younger, most Issei males were in their late 40s or older.

Given the discrimination the Issei faced, JA society increasingly became Nisei-oriented, since they presumably enjoyed the same rights and privileges as other American-born citizens.

Kendo and sumo underwent a transformation as well. By the late 1920s, the majority of kendo participants were Nisei.

Many Issei found the martial arts not only beneficial in instilling the Yamato spirit but also useful in deterring moral degeneration and Nisei delinquency, a growing trend that horrified Issei parents throughout the 1930s.

The Issei's interest in the Yamato spirit mirrored the changing meaning of Japan to Issei parents. The Issei, rejected by the United States, took pride in their native land, which they viewed as ascending in the hierarchy of nations.

Indeed, after World War I, Japan became a major world power. This was encouraging to many Issei who believed this proved the Japanese were just as competent as Westerners. By the same token, they believed the Nisei with their American citizenship would be able to excel in American society if they maintained the heritage that made Japan strong.

Many Issei also felt their children could act as a bridge of peace and understanding between Japan and the United States.

In order to facilitate Nisei education through kendo, Issei leaders in Los Angeles expanded their modest coterie, while establishing branches throughout Southern California.

Starting around 1929, immigrant kendoists recruited Nisei, both male and female, and taught them not only the necessary skills but also a set of values. In 1931, the group attained an overseas branch status from the Japan Kendo Federation in Kyoto. At its peak, the Los Angeles organization boasted more than 2,500 members. This group had a sister organization in Seattle.

The most influential group was the Hokubei Butokukai, or the North American Martial Virtue Society (hereafter Butokukai). Organized by Nakamura Tokichi, the Butokukai flourished with 41 branches and more than 10,000 members throughout the West Coast, except the strongholds of its rivals in Southern California and Seattle.

After establishing the Butokukai headquarters in Alvarado, Calif., Nakamura dedicated himself to educating American-born Japanese, subsequently leading a series of West Coast kendo demonstration/training tours. Wherever he went, branches emerged through the support of local Issei.

From 1932, the Butokukai sponsored a kendo summer camp while holding an annual "National Kendo Championship Tournament." In addition, they held regional competitions in spring and autumn.

Sumo grew in popularity among the Nisei in similar fashion, and as early as the mid-1920s, Issei sumo leaders formed various groups.

The American Sumo Association was established in Los Angeles in 1925, and the Central Northern California Youth Sumo League in Sacramento, two years later. (In 1937, the latter split into two leagues — Fresno and Sacramento). Each group sponsored regional tournaments two or three times a year, while jointly holding a state-wide tournament once a year. In total, they had about 1,000 members.

Like their kendo counterparts, sumo organizations maintained close relationships with the central sumo group in Japan. Beginning in 1927, in response to Issei requests, the Japan Sumo Association sent professional sumo masters to train Nisei youths throughout California.

A few Nisei were also recruited to compete in professional Japanese sumo. Toyonishiki, a Nisei from Colorado, was the most successful; he advanced to a senior-grade wrestler rank.

There was also an increase in *kengakudan* (study tours) to Japan, which was first popularized by the *Nichibei Shimbun* of San Francisco in 1925 to enable the Nisei to experience Japan firsthand and to deepen their appreciation of their heritage.

Nakamura's Butokukai organized kengakudan several times between 1932 and 1940. A 1940 group not only visited Japan, but also traveled to Korea and Manchuria, then under Japanese colonial rule. There, the American group often overwhelmed local Japanese kendoists.

The Butokukai eventually set up a special boarding school in Tokyo, where Nisei could learn kendo and attend classes.

Likewise, a group of Nisei sumo wrestlers, primarily from Los Angeles, crossed the Pacific Ocean in 1937. Touring Japan for more than two months, they learned about their parents' homeland, while demonstrating how competitive JA sumo had become. Yet, this and other projects fell prey to the ultra-nationalist agenda of Imperial Japan, and due to these associations, they later became a target of FBI investigations.

And as to an average Nisei, many probably did not appreciate the martial spirit of Japan their parents wanted them to acquire. To them, Japan was as foreign as it was to other Americans. The Nisei tended to prefer American sports such as baseball and basketball, although some perhaps simultaneously took part in both.

If the attainment of *dan* (grades of excellence) can be used as a measure of success, the Butokukai produced only 150 Nisei with various degrees of dan by 1940, which was a mere 1.5 percent of the officially reported total membership.

Similarly, some Nisei recalled that many youths participated in sumo not because they loved it but due to adult pressures. Many often felt awkward exposing their bodies and wore shorts under their *mawashi*.

The Kibei Nisei tended to be more receptive to the martial arts. This seems to be more so in the case of sumo. Many of the best Nisei sumotori were Kibei. Some had experienced sumo in Japan; others enjoyed the opportunity to mingle with other Kibei, since they were often isolated from each other and from the English-speaking Nisei.

The popularity of sumo in California's Central Valley is probably because many Kibei worked in the area during the 1930s. In fact, the All-Nisei Grand Champion Mitsugu Hamanaka was a Kibei from near Fresno.

Many Issei found the martial arts not only beneficial in instilling the Yamato spirit but also useful in deterring moral degeneration and Nisei delinquency, a growing trend that horrified Issei parents throughout the 1930s.

War and Japanese Martial Arts

The Pacific War ended kendo and sumo on the mainland since anything associated with Japan became the target of persecution.

Kendo, with its ties with the Japanese military, was perceived as one of the most subversive elements in the JA community, and kendo leaders fell victim to the initial round of arrests by law enforcement following the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

For the duration of the war, kendo virtually disappeared. Not only was it identified with Imperial Japan but it required a set of protective gear and bamboo swords which was impossible to get in the camps.

Sumo, on the other hand, fared a little better. Issei leaders, who were sent to Justice Department camps, often enjoyed sumo. In the Merced Assembly Center, which included many from the Sacramento area, a group of Issei organized a sumo tournament in which Nisei participated. In 1945, internees from Southern California and Fresno even held an inter-camp tournament between Poston and Gila River.

Postwar Kendo and Sumo

The fate of kendo and sumo in postwar Japanese America reveals a sharp contrast although both initially met with strong suspicion from the American public.

Kendo, deemed an ideological component of Japanese militarism, was banned in Japan during the American Occupation between 1945 and 1951; likewise in the United States, the Butokukai remained blacklisted as "un-American" groups.

Despite this, Mori Torao was able to revive kendo in California. Mori, advocated the shift of American kendo from moralistic didacticism to competitive athleticism. Others took Mori's lead and opened several dojo in California from 1952 on. This resulted in the first north-south kendo championship tournament and a friendship mission to Japan in 1956. The following year, with the merger of kendo groups in San Francisco and Los Angeles, the Kendo Federation of the United States was established under Mori's leadership.

To further stimulate kendo activities in the United States, Sasamori Junzo, today a noted educator in Japan, brought a college kendo delegation, which competed with American kendoists throughout Southern California.

Postwar kendo now reaches beyond the Nikkei community. Today, although JAs constitute the dominant group in American kendo, non-Asian kendoists are not rare. Among these are non-JA Asian Americans. This is especially true among new Asian immigrants who may have been exposed to kendo's legacy when Japan colonized Asian countries.

Such changes have internationalized kendo, and world championships are now held every three years. This February, the Kendo Federation of the United States hosted the 11th World Championships in Santa Clara, Calif.

On the mainland, JA sumo met a contrary end. In Los Angeles and Sacramento, a wave of redevelopment in the 1950s gave the final death blow to JA sumo. The Sacramento sumo ring was demolished after the last tournament in 1952, and Little Tokyo lost its ring with the construction of the Los Angeles Police Department building.

Without financial or community support, postwar sumo leaders could not build new rings. As a result, in the 1950s, some Nisei sumotori became professional (not sumo) wrestlers. Thus, appeared Nisei pro-wrestlers such as the "Great Togo" (George Okamura) and "Mr. Moto" (Charles Iwamoto).

But now the remnants of JA sumo have almost disappeared. Although a small group of diehard fans exist due to the recent success of Hawaiian sumotori in Japan, virtually no Sansei or Yonsei practice sumo. Japanese American sumo is becoming a forgotten past time — a memory only kept in fading black-and-white photos in family albums. ■

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COMBATIVE

(Continued from page 31)

Most Nisei fighters of the late 1920s and early 1930s came from Hawai'i. Early Hawaiian amateur boxers included Fred "Chappie" Hayashi, whose first recorded bout was in Honolulu in September 1926. Hayashi's ring career continued until April 1933, when he was beaten senseless in a California ring. Another Hawaiian boxing pioneer was Patsy Fukuda. His amateur career began on Maui in October 1925 and culminated with his service as coach to a National AAU boxing team in 1949. Finally, Hilo's Paul Matsumoto won a national Golden Gloves championship in 1940.

Some well-regarded Hawaiian professionals of the 1930s included Johnny Yasui, Tony Gora[matsu] and Hank Nakamura. Of these, Nakamura was probably the best known, as his fights included a 10-round loss to Pete Scalzo in Madison Square Garden.

At the national and international level, one of the best Nikkei boxers of all time was Katsumi Morioka of New Westminster, British Columbia, who during the mid-1930s was usually ranked around eighth in the world. Another excellent fighter was Pendleton, Oregon's, Harold "Homicide Hal" Hoshino. Hoshino did most of his fighting in Seattle and was regarded as one of the heaviest hitters in his division. Unfortunately, he chose November 1941 as the time to take his shot at the big-time in Los Angeles, and, as there was little demand for a Nikkei prizefighter in California during WWII, Pearl Harbor effectively ruined his hopes of earning a championship belt. So the only Japanese American to ever win a major championship remains Paul Fuji, a Hawaiian who won the world's junior welterweight title in April 1967.

During WWII, hundreds of Nisei boxed for church, Army, or school athletic clubs. In 1943 the U.S. Army in Hawai'i, fearing ethnic violence between Pinoy and Nikkei, prohibited JAs from fighting anyone but other JAs. The Honolulu sportswriters were nearly as incensed as the fighters and managers, and as a result, the Army quietly rescinded that prohibition in 1944

Following WWII, JAs including Baldwin Okamoto, Tsuneshi Maruo, Robert Takeshita, and Yasu Yasutake became prominent Hawaiian professional boxers. Their success was in part due to the influence of Sad Sam Ichinose, who with his business partner Ralph Yempuku, effectively controlled Hawaiian boxing until the mid-1980s. Mostly, though, JAs fought as amateurs. Examples include Bruce Kawano of Pearl City, Hawai'i, who won a Hawaiian Golden Gloves championship in 1993, and Sky Hosoya, who won three successive New York Golden Gloves championships during the mid-1990s, a first for a woman of Asian descent.

Freestyle Wrestling

A collegiate wrestling pioneer on the Pacific Coast was the University of Washington (UW), which got its first wrestling mat and coach in 1905. A judo demonstration broke in the new mat, and within a few years Washington wrestlers were sometimes wrestling JAs in varsity matches.

In 1911, for example, a Washington wrestler defeated Kichigoro Yamamoto of the Tacoma YMCA. In 1912, Yamamoto not only reversed the outcome but also went on to win the Pacific Northwest AAU wrestling championships at 125 pounds. Eighty-seven years later, his daughter still has the watch he received as his prize.

By 1914, UW had its own Nikkei wrestler, an Issei named Fred Yamada. The 105-pound Yamada first turned out in 1913, but lost the varsity berth to Gordon Dickson. The following year Dickson moved to a higher weight class, allowing Yamada to make the first team in both 1914 and 1915. In 1914 Oregon Agricultural College, the future Oregon State, also had a Nikkei wrestler by the name of Maki.

Morimitsu Kitamura was the first Nisei to wrestle for UW. From Seattle, the 125-pound Kitamura played football for West Seattle and Broadway high schools from 1914 to 1916. At UW, Kitamura wrestled junior varsity from 1917 to 1919 and varsity in 1920. Leonard Masui, another Seattle Nisei, wrestled for Washington from 1918 to 1920. By 1938, Nisei comprised half of Washington's varsity wrestling team.

In 1924, Penn State intercollegiate wrestling champion Katsutoshi Naito became the first person of Japanese ancestry to win an Olympic medal. In 1932, Seattle Kibei Eitaro Suzuki was a member of another Japanese Olympic wrestling team coached by the American Roy "Pop" Moore. Unfortunately, Suzuki was better at judo than freestyle wrestling and was eliminated early on.

From 1929, Japanese collegiate wrestling teams began touring the United States and Europe. Stars of these early visits included Ichiro Hatta, a naval officer's son who subsequently became the Japanese national wrestling coach.

Oregon high schools that had Nikkei wrestling champions before WWII included Salem High School and Portland's Benson Polytechnical School. Washington high schools with Nikkei champions included Tacoma's Lincoln and Stadium High Schools and Fife High School. California universities such as UCLA also had Nikkei wrestlers before WWII.

Following WWII, Nikkei wrestlers were ubiquitous in U.S. high schools and collegiate programs. For example, in 1949 San Diego's David Kikuchi won the Far West AAU high school wrestling championship at 127 pounds. The most successful, however, was Oklahoma State's Yojiro Uetake, who was NCAA Division I outstanding wrestler of 1965 and 1966 and an Olympic medalist for Japan in 1964 and 1968. ■

L.A. NIPPONS

(Continued from page 30)

Near the dock at Yokohama and Kobe, we saw stevedores playing catch and hitting around. At playgrounds during noon, office people go and play ball. It is under the skin."

Overall, the Nippons finished with 20 wins and five losses on the tour. "Except professional teams," Watanabe boasted in an interview, "we had the best record of outside teams."

According to Kobayashi, the Nisei players felt quite at home: "One distinct feature of our first impression was our feeling of relaxation when we found ourselves mingling among the Japanese people. There was no *enryo* (reserve) and we felt free to do as we pleased. What a feeling it was. Never before had we experienced anything so dramatically realistic. No prejudiced feeling, etc."

Visits of Japanese Teams

From the other side of the ocean, since the 1905 Waseda University team, various middle school, college and professional Japanese teams crossed to America to learn up-to-date baseball skills. For them, the Nippons were the team to beat in Los Angeles.

These games were supposed to promote friendship but often heated up competitively. For example, on Sept. 7, 1930, visiting Shinko Commercial School of Kobe, the National Middle School Tourney champion, forfeited the game, disputing the umpire's safe call on the Nippons' tying run at home plate in the bottom of the ninth.

The biggest series was the 1935 Tokyo Giants visit. The newly born pro team barnstormed in North America and Hawai'i, playing 109 games against minor league teams, semi-pros and local teams for a record of 73-45 with one tie. Fans were excited by the fact that the Giants could play on even terms with the PCL, the best pro league on the West Coast.

The *Rafu Shimpo* sponsored the Nippons-Giants three-game series at White Sox Park, calling it the "Japanese World Series."

The Nippons' solid lineup consisted of Matsuura (p), Harris (c), Takahashi (ss), Sugi (2b) and Zuke Tanaka (cf). Third baseman Pete Kondo was sidelined due to an auto accident.

On April 13, the Nippons lost the opener, 3-0, due to four infield errors, despite George Matsuura's three-hit efforts. The Nippons bounced back to edge the Giants, 4-3, in the second game with the combined mound efforts of Matsuura and Clarence Kumalae.

For game three, the Giants sent highly-touted 18-year-old Eiji "Schoolboy" Sawamura to the mound. He was well known for striking out Charlie Gehringer, Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig and Jimmy Foxx in a row the previous fall in Japan. As expected, Sawamura stunned the Nippons, fanning 14 batters for a 14-3 win. The Nippons' Matsuura brothers, George and Frank, couldn't stop the Giants' 20-hit attack.

In all, the Tokyo Giants played 16 games against Nisei teams on their West Coast swing, easily winning all but two; one loss came by the Nippons and the other by the San Jose Asahis.

When the Japanese pro league was established in 1936, four Nippons — Takahashi, Harris, George Matsuura and Horio — were recruited and starred there with their brilliant American style of play.

Anti-Japanese Sentiment

In semi-pro circles, the L.A. Nippons were one of the most sought-after teams because of their race. "Being the only Japanese team," said former Nippon Joe Suski, "we were a kind of attraction. It is a little more interesting than when two *hakujin* (white) teams play each other. All-black teams were always popular too." Many former Nippon players agreed that there were no racial problems on the field.

However, the Nisei were hampered by racial hardship in their everyday lives. Nippons outfielder Tanaka, for instance, wanted to get a job in a bank, but none would employ him. He gave up that goal after three years of trying and took a job in a flower shop.

By 1935, former Nippon Horio, who had since joined the Tokyo Giants, encouraged young Nisei players to pursue a pro baseball career. While he understood that socioeconomic circumstances of immigrant families could prevent Nisei from pursuing pro careers in the sport, he advised them not to give up their dreams of playing pro baseball, if they really wanted to.

Including Horio, there were only three JA minor leaguers in the prewar years. The first JA major leaguer, Ryan Kurosaki, took the mound for the St. Louis Cardinals in 1975.

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, JAs had a brief opportunity to be accepted on the same level as their white counterparts. The sport played an enormous role in opening up the door for Nisei to American society at a time of strong anti-Japanese sentiment. The L.A. Nippons often found themselves in a unique position between the United States and Japan, playing both interracially and interethnically.

Because of worsening U.S.-Japan relations, however, no major Japanese teams visited California after 1936. By contrast, the Japanese League in Los Angeles went on to prosper. The San Pedro Skippers and the Three Star Ayes began to draw attention away from the L.A. Nippons.

On Sun., Dec. 7, 1941, the war broke out, and it put an end to the 16-year history of "The Pride of Little Tokyo." ■

Shinzen Basketball:

Bridging Communities Here and Across the Pacific

By EMILY MOTO MURASE

Since 1997, the *Shinzen* USA Nikkei Youth Goodwill Basketball Program has reinforced community ties among youth in the San Francisco Bay Area and across the Pacific. *Shinzen* means goodwill, or international amity, in Japanese.

Amidst the rise of anti-Japanese sentiment in the late 80s, the Japanese Community and Cultural Center of Northern California (JCCCNC) and the Office of the Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco discussed the importance of person-to-person exchanges in U.S.-Japan relations. While programs involving business, government, and other adult leaders existed, none included young people.

According to Diane Matsuda, one of the program founders, the Shinzen program was designed to engage youth in U.S.-Japan relations and promote cultural ties. International exchanges did not generally include people of color or youth. It was important for us to focus on groups not normally involved in the making of foreign policy. We wanted youth in our community to interact with folks outside of the familiar physical community, and put a face to a place that they had only heard of — Japan.

According to JCCCNC Director of Community Development Chris Hirano, who works closely with the Shinzen program, basketball was identified as an activity that would attract youth participation. The Nikkei basketball leagues began in the 1930s primarily to assimilate young Japanese Americans into mainstream society. Now, the sport provided an opportunity for young JAs to explore their cultural heritage.

Program leaders Matsuda and JCCCNC Executive Director Paul Osaki timed the first exchange, in 1997, to coincide with the 40th anniversary of the sister city relationship between San Francisco and Osaka. That year, 86 players and family member traveled from the San Francisco Bay Area to Osaka and Kobe. In 1998, 24 boys and girls from the Kobe area came to San Francisco and stayed with American families for a six-day tour. In 1999, 21 youths and 75 family members traveled to Kobe and Hiroshima on the "Wings of Peace" tour. On August 6, the anniversary of the atomic bombing, the players and their families were guests of the government at memorial services, attended by over 50,000 visitors from all over the world, at the Hiroshima Memorial Peace Park.

Kara Okamoto of San Francisco participated in the first Shinzen tour: "I wanted to participate because I thought it would be a good experience for me and I had never been to Japan before. Most of all, I wanted to play basketball and meet new people." Currently a junior in high school, Kara plays for Wallenberg Traditional High School as well as the Ardenettes, a Nikkei team based at the San Francisco Buddhist Church.

Like many Nikkei youth, Kara did not feel a deep connection to Japan before going on the goodwill tour: "I didn't have much exposure to Japan and Japanese culture at all. I was born in Japan but I was too young to remember anything."

Despite language barriers, the Shinzen players communicated with their Japanese counterparts on and off the court. According to Kara: "It was easy to communicate with the other kids through body language." In fact, Kara received the "Jabonica Award" for redefining the art of international communication with creative combinations of English, Japanese, slang and hip-hop body language, all in a single sentence.

As part of the tour, all of the players stayed with Japanese families as yet another opportunity to create people-to-people connections. "My homestay family in Osaka had a daughter who was 14 years old, so I was able to communicate with her and it turned out we had a few things in common," explained Kara. Many friendships arose from the tour. Kara still stays in touch with the players she met through the program, even though it has been two years since they met.

The tour also afforded the opportunity for family members to travel to Japan. Both of Kara's parents, Pat and Allen, joined her on the tour. Kara's mother Pat explained why it was important for Kara to participate in the program: "My daughter loves basketball. In fact, basketball is an important activity for my entire family — my son Scott played for the Associates [a Nikkei team based at the Konko Church of San Francisco] and my husband has always played basketball, now with the old-timers league at the JCCCNC. This was not only a chance for Kara to play basketball, but to visit Japan at an age where she would remember things."

Kara's father Allen found that traveling with Kara gave him a renewed appreciation for Japan: "I really enjoyed watching Kara's reaction to the culture, from the train system to the foods. I had been to Japan many times, but here I had the chance to see Japan through her eyes."

Clearly, the Shinzen program offered players and their family members the chance to participate in a meaningful cultural exchange. Thus, not only did the tour provide the opportunity to create community ties across the Pacific, it reinforced ties among local youth and their families.

Kara elaborated: "I feel that a special bond has been built between the families of the Shinzen players. The memories and laughs will always be cherished and remembered. Our 1997 Shinzen families have made a bond that will never be broken or forgotten." Chris Hirano echoed this sentiment: "The bonding that the kids engage in is so strong. They think of themselves as the Shinzen kids. Once a Shinzen, always a Shinzen."

Applications for Shinzen 2000 are currently available by calling the JCCCNC at 415/567-5505. ■



Photo Courtesy of Kara Okamoto

The *Shinzen* "Barbie" Girls. From left: Kara Okamoto, Erin Donahoe, Sashi, a Japanese friend, Staci Hamaguchi, and Kelly Der.

Emily Moto Murase is a regular columnist for the Pacific Citizen. *A long, long time ago, she also played for the San Francisco Ardenettes. Her experience there led her to play college ball but she admits that the team welcomed anyone who wanted to play. While in college, she led an all-girls team, Women At Work, in the otherwise all-boys Summer Youth Basketball League of the Japanese Community Youth Council.*

WRESTLING WITH OUR PLACE IN SPORTS

By GIL ASAKAWA

Is it possible that Japanese Americans were put on earth to excel at mental exercises, not physical ones? My brother Glenn, his wife Michelle and I were sitting around the other day, trying to name JA professional athletes, and though I admit we're not experts at this sort of thing, we couldn't think of more than a couple.

Skater Kristi Yamaguchi and Colorado-based skier-turned-TV-sportscaster Hank Kashiwa came to mind. Who else?



Hmm, it's not likely that there'll be a JA NBA star anytime soon — even if the current generation of JA kids is growing up bigger and stronger than previous ones. Even in hockey, a sport which seems less tied to a player's size than his or her skills, I can't think of a Japanese name on the ice. And though we're seeing Asian Pacific Islander athletes playing now in the National Football League, I have yet to see a Japanese beefy enough to play professional football.

There are some Asians on the pro golf circuit, and people like Michael Chang excel in tennis. But I can't think of many JA names covered in the sports pages.

OK, OK, there are Major League Baseball players who are Japanese. But they're not JAs.

That quality of player is the result of Japan's love of baseball and the commitment boys in Japan put to the sport. It's true that baseball is Japan's national sport — something that can't be said for the United States, where other team sports like football, and now NASCAR auto racing have overtaken our passion for baseball. But Japanese are crazy about other Western sports besides baseball.

Take professional wrestling, for instance. That's right: pro wrestling, as in Hulk Hogan, Jesse Ventura and all the other wild, flamboyant entertainers calling themselves "athletes" in the increasingly popular sport.

When we think Japan and wrestling we think of sumo, but during the 1950s, American-style professional wrestling helped revive the national spirit of the defeated Japanese archipelago. The country was still rebuilding its cities and re-creating a peaceful government and society from the ground up using a foreign blueprint (an American-style constitution forced upon Japan during Gen. Douglas MacArthur's Occupation). Though the population accepted American rule during the late 1940s, by the 1950s, quality of life was miserable for the Japanese and the spectacular defeat still cut to the core of Japan's psyche.

That's when western-style professional wrestling caught on. It caught on in such a big way that the sport helped establish the young medium of television in Japan, and caused the sale of early TV sets to skyrocket — just so audiences could watch Japanese wrestlers take on Americans ... and often beat them. It was a thrilling form of cultural revenge played out as entertainment on a countrywide scale, and it worked to take viewers' minds off their past defeats and current poverty and focus on the future.

Robert Whiting's 1995 "Tokyo Underworld," subtitled "The Fast Times and Hard Life of an American Gangster in Japan," suggests that the matches between Japanese and American wrestlers were fixed (no, say it ain't so!) by the post-war *Yakuza* (Japanese gangsters) that booked the events. Although some Japanese such as the former sumo champion Rikidozan were powerful athletes in their own right, the Western wrestlers were happy enough to lose a fight on purpose — if they were paid enough to do so.

The history of "*puroresu*" (a typically contracted form of the English "professional wrestling") in Japan goes back much farther than the 1950s.

Way back in 1883, a sumo wrestler named Sorakichi Matsuda went to the United States and became the first Japanese pro wrestler. The same year, another sumo star, Shokichi Hamada, known as Sangokuyama in sumo, also became a pro wrestler in the United States and a few years later brought 20 American wrestlers to Tokyo for a match. The event sold out because of curiosity, but after initial interest, the Japanese public wasn't interested. It took until 1952, when Rikidozan retired from sumo and traveled to San Francisco for a match, for wrestling to catch on in Japan.

The first wrestling match broadcast by Japanese networks was in 1954, and the tag-team matches that included Rikidozan, the main event, attracted thousands of bystanders who gathered around publicly-mounted "street television" for people who couldn't afford television sets at home.

Rikidozan eventually was killed in a Yakuza revenge stabbing, but his talent was real: he won the World Heavyweight title from Fred Blassie in 1962 at the Los Angeles Olympic Auditorium and was the first Asian to win a world title belt.

This kind of international acknowledgement has also come from the signing of Japanese players to American baseball teams. And it reflects a national commitment to fitness as an important part of growing up in Japan. There's even a holiday every October where sports and fitness is celebrated nationwide. It might be a good idea to adopt in the United States, so we as a society can all applaud the physical accomplishments of all our students (not just JAs).

But I, for one, hate to sweat, so you won't find me pumping iron in a workout room or knocking my insides around jogging at the crack of dawn every day. Swimming is about the only exercise I can stand — and that's because I don't notice the sweat.

I wonder if Japanese society's commitment to sports has been handed down to us through our immigrant roots. There certainly is a history of organized sports within our community. Others who know lots more than I do about JA sports leagues that were started in the early days of our Issei forefathers.

I know there were all-JA minor league baseball teams in places like Hawaii, and scattered throughout the Western United States, at one point. I know there are all-JA bowling teams and leagues. And of course there's the wide variety of Asian martial arts from judo and karate to aikido and kung fu that JAs compete in. The Denver Buddhist Temple has always sponsored all manner of sports for its young members – in fact it's hard to think of any JA community center that doesn't have an attached gym for its youth. That's a relic of the days when Asian faces weren't welcome on the courts or pools of local YMCAs and health clubs.



So, the JA community isn't lacking for interest in and support for sports — just for athletes in the national spotlight to serve as role models. Just maybe, with the increasing size of every generation of JA athletes, we may still get to see a Mayeda get a hat trick, or a young Asakawa play pro women's soccer.

Or maybe another Rikidozan will rise up and take over the world of pro wrestling. I'd even tune in to the WWF for that! ■

But I for one, hate to sweat, so you won't find me pumping iron in a workout room or knocking my insides around jogging at the crack of dawn every day. Swimming is about the only exercise I can stand – and that's because I don't notice the sweat.



By NANCY ENDO

When I turned 30, I considered it a new beginning. The beginning of what, I wasn't quite sure. I never imagined it would be the deterioration of my body. Every day it seems as though a part of me hurts. Sometimes it's a muscle I didn't even know I had.

Every Thursday I gear up to play with a women's slo-pitch softball team. Gearing up used to mean putting on the uniform and lacing up the cleats. These days, it means rubbing in the Miracle Ice® and taping up both ankles.

Bumps, bruises, pulled this and torn-that are all part of the game, I suppose. Unfortunately, the older you get the more serious the injury. And let's not even talk about the healing process. Heck, I still show bruises dating back three years.

I used to be able to go to the game, put on the cleats and play. Now I have an actual pre-game ritual. Before I leave the house, I have to take about 15 minutes to wrap up my ankles. Then I have to arrive at the game 45 minutes before just to warm-up and stretch. I don't mind these things if it means I can prolong my playing days. Whatever it takes, baby!

I have had ankle problems off and on for about 16 years. It was never a real serious injury. It was nothing that a little athlete's tape couldn't take care of. But last year, I hit the first base bag wrong and hurt my foot.

My regular doctor decided to send me to an orthopedic surgeon who specializes in sports medicine. After taking a few x-rays, I was told I was born with an extra bone and when I hurt my foot, I irritated it.

The doctor said I could have surgery to remove it, but I don't think I want to do that just yet. The thought of surgery scares me, but what scares me even more is not playing softball for a few months. At my age, even a few months of playing time can be precious.

A few years ago, I was crossing home plate, and I slipped and landed on my shoulder. I began having a numbing sensation up and down my arm, so I went to see my physician. He diagnosed me with thoracic outlet syndrome. He gave me some exercises and sent me on my way. Three years later, the problem is still there, and I am now seeing a neurologist.

Being a graphic designer, I spend much of my day on the computer, which of course means that I now have tendinitis in my wrist. Thank goodness this hasn't affected my ability to throw the ball.

Of course, I now have a new injury that does affect my playing. Last season, I developed an excruciating pain in my throwing arm. I rubbed on the Miracle Ice® before I left for the game. Then, after I got there, I did my arm exercises. The exercises didn't help much so once again I paid a visit to my doctor just so he could recommend me to an orthopedic/shoulder specialist.

It seems the older I get, the more specialists I see. This can't be a good sign. I guess the injuries are getting so serious that my regular doctor can't help me. Now I have to see orthopedic doctors, neurologists and chiropractors.

Every time I make a visit to these specialists, I brace myself and pray that I don't hear those three ugly words. The three ugliest and scariest words that an athlete can hear — NO MORE SPORTS! It pains me just to type out those words. Ooooh, I think I just felt a chill.

People say that as you age, the mind is the first thing to go. I am definitely beginning to believe that there is some truth to this statement. Sometimes I think I need to have my head examined. After all, why would any sane person put themselves through pain and agony for a game. The simple or not so simple answer is mental makeup.

An athlete's mental makeup is different than the non-athletes', for that I am certain. An athlete will play through poor weather conditions and even worse physical conditions. They love the game so much that they are willing to endure a little pain for a couple of measly hours. For an athlete there is no pain that can't be cured by hitting the game-winning homerun or scoring a goal in sudden-death overtime. It's an indescribable feeling that one has to experience in order to understand.

The past few years, a growing number of athletes have had serious injuries or ailments that have forced them into early retirement. A couple of athletes continued to play despite the doctor's recommendation. Those players collapsed on the basketball court and never regained consciousness.

Today's athlete is bigger, stronger and faster than the athlete of yesterday. Along with that comes more serious injuries. Head injuries are becoming more prominent in the game today, and many of the athlete's refuse to hear the warning signs.

Why do these players continue to play Russian roulette with their lives? Is it for the money? Is it for the fame? Is it for the glory? Or is it for the love of the sport?

I tend to believe that many continue to play for the love of the game. They can't imagine waking up and not having to prepare for the next game. The game has been so much a part of their lives, they've sacrificed so much to fulfill their dreams that they can't let it go without a fight.

Sure it's ego but that is what an athlete is all about. They are told from the beginning to be tough and to never give up. Sports apparel and equipment companies build their advertising campaigns on this mentality.

Even a pseudo-athlete like me can relate to this way of thinking. I have been playing sports since I was five-years-old. I can remember wanting to play whatever sport my brother was playing at the time. If he played baseball, I played baseball. If he played basketball, I played basketball. If he skateboarded, I skateboarded. I would even run down the street to chase after a ball just to be accepted by my brother as a fellow athlete. It may have started out as this need for acceptance but it eventually grew into a deep love for sports.

The section of the newspaper I pick out first is the sports page. The channels I surf through are ESPN and Fox Sports West 1 and 2. I even subscribe to Sports Illustrated for Women and Conde Nast Women's Sports and Fitness magazines. I go through withdrawals if there isn't an Angels or Kings game on that I can watch. If I'm not at a game, I'm watching it on television or listening to it on the radio.

Sports is an integral part of my life. I know the day will come when I will have to stop putting my body through this torture. There will be no more pre-game rituals. No more athletic tape. No more ankle braces. No more Tiger Balm®, Miracle Ice®, Ben Gay® (or any combination of the three). No more dirt in the cleats. No more game-winning hits. No more turning double plays. No more trying to stretch a single into a double. No more high-fives. I will round third and head for home for the last time. I only hope to arrive there in one piece. ■

Nancy Endo is a full-time graphic designer and sports maniac. She resides in Long Beach with her parents and two dogs, DiSar and Sammy, both named after her two favorite Anaheim Angeles — Gary DiSarcina and Tim Salmon.



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The Heart Mountain Relocation Center's Golf Course



Photos courtesy of Yo Hosozawa

By JANET T. INOUYE & LEWIS S. KAWAHARA

The Heart Mountain concentration camp in Wyoming during World War II allowed certain areas for recreational purposes. Recreation and mess halls were used for dances and other social activities, while the outdoor areas were used for such sports as basketball, baseball, football, volleyball, ice skating (during those cold winter months) and yes, even golf.

It was only recently that my sister and I heard from our Aunt Noby (Nobuko Hirashima Amamoto, Block 23) about the Heart Mountain Golf Course.

I was surprised to learn that Heart Mountain had a nine-hole golf course and further astounded to learn that our dad, Masao Mac Kawahara (24-20-D) and Uncle George Amamoto (24-20-C) were involved. Growing up, I knew our dad and uncle liked sports, but we didn't see them as jocks.

In May 1943 at the southern end of the administration field, our dad and Eddy Hamazawa (17-27) developed a driving range. Before his incarceration, Mr. Hamazawa worked at the Riverside Golf Course in Fresno, Calif.

In the beginning, only Mr. Hamazawa and our dad worked on the golf course construction. They would work on the course every evening after their camp-related day job. They were soon joined by our Uncle George, Mr. Harry Nouchi, and two administration employees, Mr. Joe Suski and Mr. Ray Thompson.

On June 26, 1943, a meeting and party was held to celebrate the new club and its new officers: Eddy Hamazawa, club president; Art Okado, vice president; Shigio Ito, treasurer; and Sukenari Suke Yamada (24-4-D), secretary.

The golf course, which covered three sides of the administration building and extended towards the warehouse "Y" area, was constructed using the creativity of the designers as well as the natural resources of the area: dirt, rocks, sagebrush and other native plants found within the compound.

The crew had to watch out for rattlesnakes as they used the limited quantities of hand tools and shovels to clear away rocks and sagebrush. Without any irrigation system available, no lawns and trees were planted.



The Heart Mountain Golf Course was opened for all to use. Choppy Umemoto and Bob Nishimoto provided lessons. Non-golfers were encouraged to join, and "Heart Mountain Golf Club" memberships cards were issued to all members. The Heart Mountain Golf Course card #60 belonged to non-golfer Yasuko Amamoto Hiraki, (24-20-C).

By September 1943, 84 persons were members. The Heart Mountain Golf Club held bimonthly tournaments, on the first and third weekend of the month, weather permitting. The tournament entry fee was 25 cents. Small prizes, such as a set of new golf balls, were given to the tournament winner. But everyone benefitted; the golfers played the sport they loved and they were with others who had that same attraction for the game.

Unlike the mild climate of Southern California where my family is from, Wyoming has distinct seasons. Spring and fall brought the rains, mud and dust storms. Winters were harsh with their rain, snow, sleet and ice. The extreme cold winds made playing golf impossible.

With no trees, bushes or shrubbery along the golf course, there were no screens from the howling winds or shelter from the scorching sun during the summer afternoons. The wind made its presence felt throughout the year, thrashing dirt, sand and dust. And there were rattlesnakes and all sorts of crawling bugs everywhere.

Despite these problems, the golfers were grateful to be able to engage in their favorite sport on their own golf course from late spring to early fall. In addition to the nine-hole golf course, Heart Mountain had its own six hole miniature golf course near Block 22.

Since each evacuee was allowed to carry into camp what they could carry, not many chose to bring sports equipment. Amazingly, one man did bring his golf club set while others had carried in one or two clubs, hoping to practice their swing.

Later, players were able to purchase used or new clubs through mail order catalogs. Since new golf balls were not readily available, golfers took special care of their tattered and deteriorating but precious old balls.

Having access to a golf course, dad and Uncle George and their golfing friends played every chance

See HEART MOUNTAIN/ page 47

NISEI SKI CLUB
Over Forty Years of Fun Through Skiing

By PAM YOSHIDA

Who would have thought that a yearly weekend ski trip over 40 years ago would evolve into an organization that offers over 30 ski days this year to 350 members from throughout the San Francisco-San Jose area (including members as far south as Southern California and Sacramento!).

Founding Nisei Ski Club (NSC) members are amazed that the ski club, formed by a few Nisei skiers over 40 years ago, still exists. However, the key to its success is simple — 'it's the love and passion of skiing that keeps us together.'

This common bond is the 'glue' that gathers a bus-load of skiers for a weekend of exhilarating skiing in the Sierras for a weekend of camaraderie that is impossible to acquire at events such as a Saturday afternoon picnic. The love of the sport is what brings us together to create a community of people with common interests.

Beginnings

In the early 1950's, a weekend ski trip sponsored by the JACL San Francisco chapter became the foundation for the NSC. While popular in Europe for centuries, skiing was a new and unknown sport in the United States. As skiing became more well known, the yearly JACL ski trip gained in popularity among many JACL members and non-members. This popularity was the reason the San Francisco JACL and the ski trip organizers decided to go their separate ways.

This separation allowed the young Nisei skiers to focus solely on skiing by organizing ski trips throughout the winter instead of one yearly ski trip. Tats Sumida, a school teacher and resident of San Francisco, was the driving force behind this move. Tats loved to ski and quickly became the one to organize bus trips to the Sierras every other weekend during the winter. Tats did this diligently until the latter part of the 1980s.

Most of the original members were Nisei, and, for lack of any other ideas, the name of the organization became the Nisei Ski Club. Accommodations were typically at Nevada Lodge with early Saturday morning buses departing from San Jose and San Francisco.

In those days, it was not unusual to have nine weekends of skiing with two to three buses of NSC skiers in the Sierras. With the development of ski resorts springing up throughout the United States, week-long trips to new resorts out of state, such as Sun Valley in Idaho, were quickly added to the schedule to supplement the weekend trips.

The early bus trips were a great weekend of skiing together, sharing lunch bentos on the mountainside and developing friendships that would last a lifetime. The members designed song books, and many bus trips were filled with non-stop singing all the way back to the Bay Area.

It is important to note that during this time, few organizations for young Nikkei or Asian Americans existed. The NSC



was one of the first organizations developed by postwar Nikkei to fill a void for those who yearned for a recreational and social sports forum to share among other AAs.

The hard-working spirit of the Nisei was instrumental in developing a good and strong foundation for the club today. As a recreational club, the emphasis was on fun and camaraderie rather than competition. Enthusiasm for the club was contagious and momentum was high. The NSC was a perfect vehicle to gather young JAs who shared a common interest.

In 1966, after several years of existence, NSC elected their first president, Hi (Hayami) Fujii. The following year, a movement to make NSC a year-round club with non-skiing events throughout the winter months evolved. This was a natural evolution since skiers found that they shared other sporting interests.

The friendships that were formed during the winter months on the ski slope were integrated into the non-skiing months. 1967 was filled with canoe trips down the Russian River, water skiing trips at Lake Berryessa and picnics at Mitchell Park in Palo Alto.

On Nov. 22, 1968, the NSC was officially incorporated with the state of California. The directors were Sumida (founder of the club), Fujii, Donald H. Lang and Yoshiobu (Yosh) Morimoto. (All are still members of the club except for Don Lang, who is deceased).

Ski racing was soon added to the skiing program. The first slalom ski race was in 1970 at Squaw Valley and had 93 racers. These races were timed by members holding stopwatches at the base of the hill. The racers jumped out of the gate with another member waving a flag at the top of the hill. (This method has since been replaced by electronic 'wands' at the starting gate, with a lighted electronic time display at the base of the hill).



Past presidents at the 1997 Nisei Ski Club week trip to Sun Valley. From left to right are: David Tom, Pam Yoshida, Gordon Kōo, Annie Ogata, Jim Tanaka and Hi Fujii.

See SKI CLUB/ page 47

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ISERI, Kerry/Patty; Christy ..... 1761 S.W. 11th Ave.
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NAKANO, Jim/Terri ..... 403 E Clark Blvd.
NAKANO, Mae ..... 3725 S.W. 19th Ave.
NAMBA, Harry/Yaeko ..... 1489 S.W. 2nd Ave.
NISHIMURA, Shizuo/Frances ..... P.O. Box 4
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Seasons Greetings



Merry Christmas

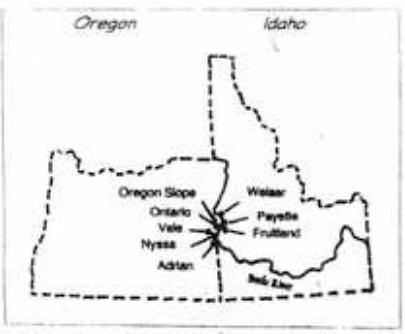


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NISEI SKI CLUB

(Continued from page 45)

Changes Through the Years.

Very little has changed with the NSC over the years. While a majority of the membership is no longer predominately second-generation JA, several original founding Nisei members still remain in the club.

The beer that was served on the original bus trips for the entire weekend has been replaced by bottled water. Today's NSC serves two full dinners on the bus and two morning continental breakfasts en route to the resorts. Passenger buses equipped with videos have replaced car-pool trips. The long bus trips out of state to places like Sun Valley, Idaho, have been replaced by a two-hour plane ride to the resort.

NSC remains a year-round club, with the primary focus on the skiing program. The non-ski months are filled with picnics, kayak trips, bike-riding trips, tennis socials, golf socials, bowling events, dances, and just about anything else the board of directors wants to plan. The NSC also participates in activities such as food booths for AA street festivals like Nikkei Matsuri in San Jose.

'Evolution': A Fortieth Anniversary Celebration

In 1998, a fortieth anniversary celebration, "EVOLUTION," chaired by former NSC President Pam Yoshida, was held at the Westin Hotel in Santa Clara. The celebration included a golf tournament and a dinner dance.

An anniversary recipe book, chaired by Judy Hom, was made for the occasion and featured a recipe from each of the past presidents and recipes used on the weekend bus trips. The club's first female president, April Shiro, presented the dedication to club founder Tats Sumida. The recipe book was the third one created in the long history of the club. It was dedicated to longtime member Haruko Hagaishi and to the memories of former members Tamiji Kanegawa and Dean Davenport.

This Year's Ski Trips

The NSC will host ten weekend trips to the Sierras this year. Among these trips will be a long weekend trip to Park City Utah with ski days at Park City, The Canyons and Deer Valley. The last trip of the season will be two days of skiing at Squaw Valley and two days of skiing at Mammoth Mountain. All other trips will be to the Lake Tahoe region. Each year, the club organizes a week-long trip out of state. This year, the trip will be to Aspen, Colorado, and is being organized by Ida Koo.

A trip that members look forward to each year is the annual potluck and race weekend. The weekend trip combines two of our members' most favorite things — skiing and eating. The first day of skiing is highlighted by a huge potluck luncheon that all participate in. The diversity of the club is shown by the wide variety of items brought each year: from sushi to samosas, dolmadas to egg rolls — this is a fabulous weekend of sharing and showing off culinary skills. The next day is the race which is looked forward to all year. This is a dual slalom course that is accessible to all levels of skiers. This has been a time-honored tradition and continues to be the largest trip that the club organizes.

For the Love of Skiing

Diversity in ages and ethnicity are an asset for the members who love to ski together. Each person gives in their own way to the club. Younger members might be the ones to unload the skis from the buses, while the older members might be the ones to bring along some tasty Japanese snacks to share, such as cuttlefish, *saké* or dried *kaki*. While it is the younger members who serve as the leadership for the club, it is the older members who keep younger members in awe with skills such as folding origami to hand-making something that a trip leader might have been left at home (such as a rice paddle).



Members still marvel about a week-long ski trip to Sun Valley in 1995 — that the members who went helicopter skiing were not the younger members, but were founding members Hi Fujii, Jim Tanaka and Tom Yokomizu.

In retrospect, it is little wonder that the spirit of the club has continued throughout the years with the strong foundation given to us by the Nisei founding members, who continue to serve as prime examples of leadership, friendship, fun and ... gee — THEY CAN SURE SKI!

For more information about the Nisei Ski Club, visit the NSC web site at www.pgbgroup.com/NiseiSkiClub, or contact the Nisei Ski Club Trip Director Pam Yoshida by e-mail: yoshidapam@pgbgroup.com. ■







HEART MOUNTAIN

(Continued from page 44)

they had. Whenever dad and Uncle George went out to play, they would return home hot, sweaty, dusty and dirty from head to toe and in need of a shower. But first they would carefully dust off their shoes, bags, clubs and balls. Then they would shake the dirt and dust from the garments they wore that day before having their clothes hand washed and line dried.

In June 1945, the members of the Heart Mountain Golf Club had a going-away party/golf tournament for our dad and three other members. This may have been one of the last gatherings of the Heart Mountain Golf Club before the camp closed on Nov. 10, 1945.

Heart Mountain wasn't the only camp to build a golf course. Three additional camps had golf courses.

A relative and a longtime golfer, Toshio Nakabayashi of Riverside, Calif., and some of his friends designed and constructed a golf course at Poston Camp 1. His son, Mr. Robin H. Nakabayashi, learned to play golf at Poston and remembered his dad going to the motor pool to get used motor oil to pour on the course "green" to keep it smooth.

The Manzanar Relocation Center's golf course was built outside the barbed wire, and the Minidoka Relocation Center's golf course was shortened to six holes to make way for more farmland.

This article has allowed my sister and myself to gather more information on our family history. She is the main caretaker of our family tree. This story got our family to talk about the Heart Mountain Golf Course. It was a nice reminder of our dad's and uncle's leadership abilities and how they were able to overcome the difficulties of constructing a playable course.

They and the others must have felt much pride at the completion of the course. Golfers worked together to bring their sport to the camps and to give others the opportunity to share in the enjoyment of their favorite sporting activity. It also showed how a group of people came together to help and assist others at a time when others may have needed a sense of normalcy, of a former way of life that had been taken away from them. ■

SACRAMENTO

Season's Greetings



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New Development in Little Tokyo

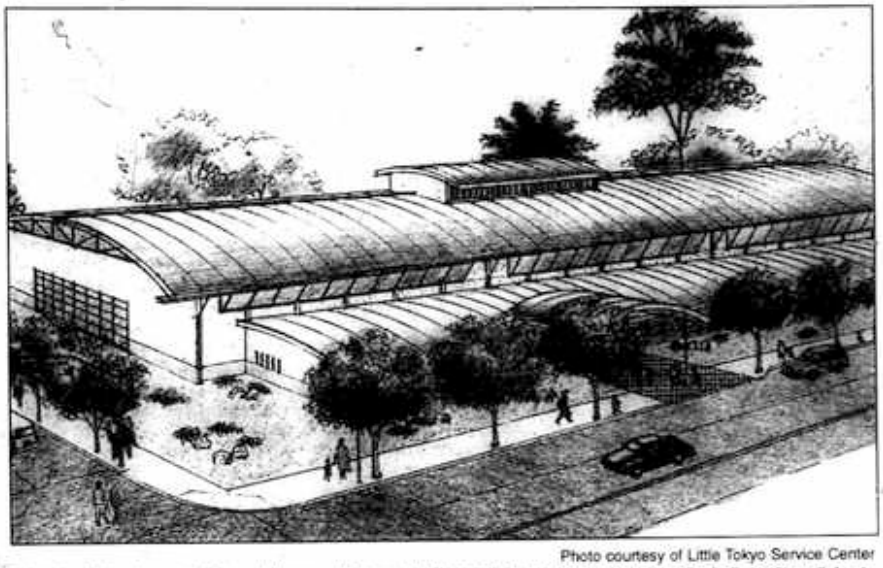


Photo courtesy of Little Tokyo Service Center

Sketch of the six-court Sakura Village, which would be available to JA basketball, volleyball, and martial arts leagues, as well as non-league members, courtesy of Takase Associates.

By CHRISTINA SHIGEMURA

The Little Tokyo Service Center Community Development Corporation (LTSC CDC) is pursuing plans to develop Sakura Village, a multi-use complex which will include a six-court gymnasium, apartments and condominiums, an expanded branch of the Los Angeles Public Library, retail and commercial office space, Japanese-style gardens, parking facilities and a community art room.

The centerpiece of Sakura Village will be a 40,000-square-foot gymnasium, which will be used by Japanese American basketball, volleyball, and martial arts leagues as well as being open to anyone who wants to play — whether they are in a league or not.

John Saito Jr., of the Nisei Athletic Union, estimates that there are about 5,000 basketball players in JA leagues in Southern California alone. Because of the number of players, who can range in age from 5 years old to adults, many teams are having difficulty finding a gym to play at. "It's kind of difficult to get a place to hold all these games," Saito noted.

Community Youth Council (CYC), a JA basketball league, faces similar problems. The league plays in gyms which are owned by the Los Angeles Parks and Recreation Department, but these cannot be secured more than one week in advance, said Yosh Hirai.

Beyond simply finding a place to play, David Nagano of Westside Volleyball voiced concerns about the quality of many gyms. "We have some consistent gyms that we tend to use all the time, but some facilities are not that strong," Nagano said. "The gym we use in Monterey Park is not very good," he explained. "The end line of one of the courts is one foot away from a brick wall, it's hot, and the floor is extremely hard."

Another concern Nagano voiced is that most gyms have only three or four courts, which limits the number of teams that can play at the same time.

Saito, Nagano, and Hirai hope that the six-court Sakura Village gymnasium will be the answer to their problems. "The gym will be large enough for tournaments where several teams play at once," Hirai said.

Saito envisions the Sakura Village gymnasium as a place where sports-minded JAs will come together. "The gym would be great as a place where all these different sports groups could have a home stadium to play their sports," Saito said.

Rev. Kensho Furuya, chief instructor at the Aikido Center of Los Angeles, sees the Sakura Village gymnasium as an opportunity for martial artists to share their skills. "I would like to see full representation of all the traditional martial arts practicing and working together," he said.

Another benefit of the Sakura Village gym is its central location, especially for people who work downtown and play on weeknights after work, Nagano explained.

Carrie Morita has a different reason for wanting the gymnasium to be in Little Tokyo. "The gym is very important to rejuvenate the Little Tokyo community," said Morita, a volunteer at the Union Center Cafe and the mother of two boys who participate in basketball leagues. "A gym will draw young people [to Little Tokyo]. Sports will bring families down here and keep kids involved in the community," added Morita, whose sons have participated in JA sports leagues for 13 years and are currently playing for Diamond Bar High, FOR (Friends of Richard) and CYC.

Sandy Miyashiro, director of the Nisei Church League and a member of the Sakura Village gym board of directors, shares Morita's hope that Sakura Village will draw families back to Little Tokyo. "I notice that I used to go to J-town with my mom, and now we hardly ever go with our children," she said.

For many young JAs, sports and martial arts provide an important connection to Japanese culture. Morita credits the leagues for providing her sons with the opportunity to travel to Japan twice with JA basketball leagues.

Furuya believes that martial arts promote understanding of cultural heritage. "Many young Sansei, Yonsei and Gosei are trying to find their culture," he explained. "Martial arts stimulate their interest in Japanese culture because it's difficult to understand Japanese American culture without understanding Japanese culture."

Furuya, who holds classes for children as well as adults, said that studying martial arts such as kendo, judo, karate, and aikido teaches children to sit up straight, follow Japanese etiquette, and show respect.

Miyashiro, whose league draws from more than 50 Christian churches, agrees that JA sports and martial arts leagues have a positive affect on Nikkei youngsters. "Sports have really helped the Asian community as far as keeping the kids busy and out of trouble," she said.

Supporters of the JA volleyball and basketball leagues say that the leagues teach the value of teamwork and inclusiveness. "In CYC, every kid gets coaching; our motto is for every kid to play," said Hirai, whose league has a "minimum playing time" policy to give every team member a chance to play. Hirai also pointed out that JA leagues allow Nikkei children to play against other children who are about the same size, instead of competing against larger, non-Asian children.

Adults and children alike make friends in the leagues. "There's a competitive aspect, but there's a social aspect as well," said Nagano, noting that Westside players often take the opportunity to go out to eat together after their games. Nakano sees the potential for a significant boost in Little Tokyo's restaurant business from players who will be hungry after they finish a game or practice at the Sakura Village gym.

"There would be tremendous amounts of potential people who would come to use the gym," agreed Rev. Grant Hagiya of Centenary Methodist Church. We hope it will continue to bring people back into Little Tokyo."

LTSC CDC does not want people to only come into Little Tokyo for a few hours and then leave, however, so Sakura Village will include 200 new apartments and condominiums.

Sakura Village could increase Little Tokyo's current population of 1,500 by 25 percent, assuming an average occupancy rate of two people in each of the 75 condominiums and 125

Continued on the next page

apartments, said Scott Ito, project manager of Sakura Village. One third of the condominiums and apartments will be available as low-income housing and the rest will be market-rate.

To those who live and work in Little Tokyo, the demand for housing is obvious. "Nobody really had to tell us that people in Little Tokyo need places to live," aid Ayako Hagihara, a community organizer for LTSC CDC. "The complex [will] help fill a housing shortage in Little Tokyo and replace the many units that were lost over the past 20 years," added Ito.



Photo courtesy of LTSC

Young athletes battle one another in a tournament sponsored by LTSC dedicated to raising awareness for the need for a Little Tokyo gymnasium

Sakura Village will also provide a new home for Koreisha Chushoku Kai, a community service organization. Translated into English, Koreisha Chushoku Kai means "nutrition program for the elderly," and the organization lives up to its name by providing daily hot lunches and home delivery meals to senior citizens in Boyle Heights, Evergreen and Little Tokyo. We are looking forward to expanding our supportive services into a total program, including festivities, our escort service, and dancing and exercise [classes], explained Emi Yamaki, director of Koreisha.

Sakura Village will also include a new space for the Little Tokyo branch of the Los Angeles Public Library. The Little Tokyo library, which is currently leasing a 5,000-square-foot space on Alameda Street between Second and Third streets, will have 12,500 square feet in Sakura Village. The library hopes to expand its collection from 44,000 to 80,000 books in the new location, and they hope to increase the number of computers from eight to 26, said Yoshiko Solomon, a librarian.

In addition, LTSC CDC hopes to entice the Japanese Consulate to return to Little Tokyo by offering to build a new office in Sakura Village. The consulate's office would consist of 25,000 quare feet of office space on a single level and would feature special security measures such as a private elevator, Ito said.

Before LTSC CDC can begin building the consulate's office or anything else, however, they must first purchase a suitable piece of land in Little Tokyo. The difficulty of securing the land in Little Tokyo has kept gym supporters waiting for the past 20 years, said Hagihara.

Originally, supporters of the gym gained the approval of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) to build a small community gymnasium as part of the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center (JACCC) complex in the 1970s, explained Al Taira, one of the original supporters of the gym and a member of the Sakura Village gym board of directors. In the initial planning stages,the $14 million JACCC project included the main JACCC building, a theater and a gym. However, renowned sculptor Isamu Noguchi wanted a large plaza for his sculpture honoring the Issei, so there wasn't enough space left for a gym in the JACCC complex, which was completed in 1983.

Yet supporters of the Little Tokyo gym clung to their dream. In 1994, supporters proposed a small, temporary gymnasium on the vacant, city-owned property north of First Street, behind the Japanese American National Museum and next to the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA).

Under former mayor Tom Bradley's administration, developer Michael Barker had been contracted to build a 650,000-square-foot office tower called City Hall Far East and 275 mixed-income residential units on the city-owned property north of First Street.

When Richard Riordan became mayor the project was canceled, resulting in several lawsuits. During the four years it took for the city to settle with Barker, gym supporters submitted a proposal to build a temporary gym on a portion of the First Street property which was not under litigation.

If the gym proposal had been approved, the city-owned land, which is currently a parking lot, would have been free of cost. However, several concerns prevented approval. City Councilwoman Rita Walters, whose district includes Little Tokyo, expressed a preference for a permanent structure instead of a temporary one. Also, MOCA requested that the gym not be built in front of the museum.

When the lawsuits between the City of Los Angeles and Barker were settled, LTSC CDC submitted a new plan for a gymnasium which included a three-story public parking structure with a gym on top, making the building six stories high. The proposal was to build the gym along Temple Street on the city-owned First Street property, where the building would not have been in front of MOCA, said Lisa Sugino, director of LTSC CDC.

At that time, Walters announced that she did not want any above-ground structures to be built on the First Street property and promised to support and help find money for a gym at another site in Little Tokyo, said Sugino.

Determined to make their dreams a reality, gym supporters searched for any piece of land large enough to hold a gym in Little Tokyo. "We looked at every open piece of land — the parking lot of Centenary Church, the roof of Yaohan, Mangrove Estates, Obayashi — but none of the land that was large enough was for sale, Sugino stated.



Photo courtesy of LTSC

Lindsey Yamasaki, a star on Stanford's collegiate basketball and volleyball teams, participates in last August's Little Tokyo's Three-on-Three Basketball Tournament in front of LTSC's Casa Heiwa.

However, Little Tokyo gym supporters found a suitable site on Second and Central streets, across from Honda Plaza. In March 1998, LTSC CDC offered the owner, Shaoul Levy & Co., $3.4 million for the property, but still had not received a response to their offer by November 1998. The CRA offered to exercise its powers of eminent domain to purchase the land from Levy for ITSC CDC but did not receive the CRA board approval necessary to follow through with this action.

Sugino hopes that Sakura Village will serve the needs of the Little Tokyo community as well as the larger JA community. "There have been certain things the residents have been screaming out for, so we're trying to listen to them and respond," Sugino said. The results of a Little Tokyo community survey sponsored by the CRA reveal such needs as affordable housing, more parking, and a multi-lingual post office for non-English speakers. "We're trying to bring in businesses which will draw people but not compete with other businesses which are already in Little Tokyo," said Sugino, who hopes that many Japanese quasi-governmental agencies will follow the Japanese Consulate in relocating to Little Tokyo.

Currently, LTSC CDC is in negotiations for an undisclosed site which is nearly twice as large as the site at Second and Central streets. After LTSC CDC lined up $900,000 in loan guarantees, the Fannie Mae American Communities fund agreed to finance a $6.6 million cash offer for the site. Sugino expects that the owners of the site, a large Japanese corporation, will need three months to evaluate the offer and reach a decision in Japan, but she is hopeful. LTSC CDC estimates total costs for planning, acquiring the land, and constructing Sakura Village at $56 million.

Ito expects to begin an aggressive capital campaign as soon as LTSC CDC gets site control. Some fund-raising efforts, such as the first annual Children's Day 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament, have already proved successful.

State Assemblyman Gilbert Cedillo sponsored a budget item for LTSC CDC to receive a $250,000 grant to build the gym from the California Parks and Recreation Department. The budget item, which was co-sponsored by Mike Honda and George Nakano, passed. "We're really thankful to Assemblyman Cedillo, because it's a great start and we know it will help us with site control," Sugino said.

Another legislative effort could also provide funds for the gym. Assemblymen Villaraigosa and Keeley are sponsoring a $1.5 billion state park bond, A.B. 18, the Urban Parks, Clean Water and Coastal Protection Act of 2000. This bond, which would provide money to improve state parks, rivers and urban recreation centers like the Sakura Village gymnasium, is currently pending in the state Senate. ■

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HOLIDAY GREETINGS FROM THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN MIS VETERANS CLUB



Judo, Justice

By Frank Emi

It was sports day at this institution in Middle America. The athletic field was busy with men competing in various sports, and the bleachers were filled with spectators.

Several of us Nisei were participating in this event to demonstrate the sport of judo, something these Mid-Westerners probably never witnessed before.

Since there were no *gi* or judo jackets available, we used the government-issued blue denim jackets and pants which were strong enough to withstand a short period of pulling and tugging. The mat area was composed of firm cotton mattresses tightly lain together on the field.

In traditional manner, we lined up and bowed before stepping onto the mat. Then we began our demonstration with fairly simple techniques and gradually moved into the more complicated and spectacular throws.

Following this, we proceeded to hold a mock *shi-ai* or tournament where we applied hip throws (*koshi nage*), over the shoulder throws (*sei-oi nage*), foot sweeps (*ashi harai*), chokes (*kubi shime*) and arm locks (*kansetsu waza*).

We had the smaller men throw the bigger fellows with spectacular throwing techniques. This really brought a response from the spectators as this was the first time they had seen anything like this and were truly impressed.

After our judo demonstration, a burly wrestler challenged one of the Nisei men to a match. This Nisei was a *san dan* (third degree black belt) and stood about 5'8" and weighed 160 lbs. The wrestler was about 5'10" and 200 lbs.

The wrestler immediately dived for the Nisei's legs as wrestlers often do. The Nisei let him get on top of him and then proceeded to apply a judo choke hold on him until he choked him out. That ended the match, and that Nisei never got any more challengers after that.

In another incident, a big cowboy type kept pestering another Nisei until this Nisei told him to lay off or he was going to "throw him on his ass." This Nisei stood about 5'6" and weighed 130 lbs. The cowboy was about 6' and 170 lbs.

The big guy thought it was a big joke that a little Nisei could throw him so he kept harassing him. Finally, the Nisei grabbed the guy's sleeves and lapel, and threw him with a *sei-oi nage* (over the shoulder throw). The guy landed so hard he had to be taken to the infirmary. The Nisei guy spent one week in the "hole" for that one.

Why did this Nisei man spend one week in the "hole?" This athletic event took place in the spring of 1945, behind the high gray walls of Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary in Kansas. We were "guests" of Uncle Sam.

We Nisei ended up in this high security prison with bank robbers, con artists, crooked lawyers, convicted doctors and murderers because this was the result of our fighting for our constitutional and human rights while incarcerated at Heart Mountain concentration camp in Wyoming.

We were members of the Heart Mountain Fair Play Committee (FPC) that challenged the legality of the military draft as applied to the concentration camps under the existing conditions at that time. There were 35 men, including seven leaders, at Leavenworth. Fifty-five more were at McNeil Island Federal Penitentiary in the State of Washington, convicted on the same charges of draft resistance.

During World War II, the government had, without semblance of due process, forcibly removed all persons of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast into 10 inland concentration camps, based solely on their ancestry. This, in the face of reports from FBI, Naval and Army intelligence that there had not been one instance of espionage or sabotage by persons of Japanese ancestry within the mainland United States or Hawaii. All of our citizenship rights under our Constitution and Bill of Rights were violated and suppressed.

The government continued to add to the injustice by instituting the military draft in January 1944 to those in the concentration camps on the same basis as the free people on the "outside."

The FPC challenged this government atrocity through the courts. We contended that the government was morally, ethically and legally wrong in applying the draft into the concentration camps without first restoring our constitutional rights and rectifying the injustices of the forced removal and internment of Japanese Americans.

The FPC took this stand because no other organization, including the national American Civil Liberties Union or the JACL, seemed concerned, either in spirit or on principles, in standing up for the constitutional and human rights of Japanese Americans.

In fact both "civil rights" organizations during that period discouraged our movement for justice and fair play. The JACL vilified the leaders of the FPC and James Omura, the only JA newsman to support our cause.

The result of our resistance movement was the conviction of 85 members of the FPC, who were charged with draft resistance and sentenced to three years. Their convictions were appealed all the way up to the U.S. Supreme Court but to no avail.

Later, however, they were given presidential pardons by President Harry S. Truman with complete restoration of political and civil rights. In issuing the pardon, the head of the pardon board made a



Photo Courtesy of Frank Emi

This April 7, 1940, photo shows Frank Emi holding the victory banner after his Hollywood Judo Dojo team won the Southern California Team Championship.

and Civil Rights



Photo Courtesy of Frank Emi

Frank Emi is today a sixth degree red and white belt and head instructor of the Hollywood Judo Dojo. (Judoists who are sixth degree or higher receive a red and white striped belt.)

statement that the government understood why the resisters took the stand that they did.

The seven FPC leaders were charged and convicted with conspiracy to violate the draft law, and aiding, abetting and counseling others to resist the draft. Our sentences ranged from two to four years.

Two year sentences were meted out to two FPC leaders who were already serving a three year draft resistance sentence and to an Issei man who had been translating our bulletins and speeches into Japanese for the benefit of the parents of the young men resisting the draft. The rest of the FPC leaders were sentenced to four years, including myself.

We appealed our convictions on constitutional grounds. Thirteen months later, the appellate court reversed our convictions, and we were released. One appellate court judge wrote in his opinion that we had a right to contest a law we felt was unconstitutional. Although our case was one of only two successfully argued before an appellate court, chroniclers of the camp era seldom mention our case.

In addition to the Nisei men from Heart Mountain, another group of seven Kibei Nisei joined us in the judo demonstration at Leavenworth. They were men who were in the U.S. Army prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Shortly after the bombing, the Army replaced the weapons of these Nisei soldiers' with mops and brooms and ordered them to latrine duty. The men protested this treatment and repeatedly requested to be treated like regular soldiers. Their appeals went by the wayside.

In a final act to underscore the seriousness of their request, the soldiers signed a petition with their own blood and went on a hunger strike. They were court martialed for insubordination and sentenced to death.

Months later, the death sentence was reversed. It was first commuted down to 30 years, then 15 years and then five years, until they were released after the war.

Another interesting group at Leavenworth were the U.S. soldiers of German ancestry who were members of the German American Bund. They too had been relieved from active duty, court martialed and sentenced to death. Their crime was assisting some of the German soldiers escape while they had been on guard duty outside a United States prisoner of war camp harboring German soldiers captured overseas.

The death sentences of these German American soldiers were also later commuted down to 30 years. I do not know what happened to them after we left the prison.

There was another group quite different from the general prison population. This was a team of German spies who had been captured after coming ashore on the East Coast from their submarine.

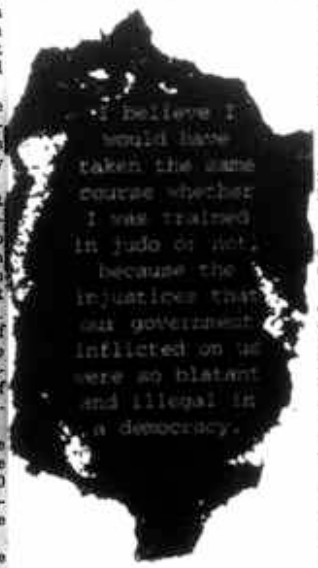
Among this group, one individual always walked a few feet behind everyone, and the rest of the men ignored him. One day, we asked them why they ostracized this particular man. We were told this man was first to be taken captive and had "ratted" on them, resulting in the capture of the rest of the team.

People have often asked me if we were mistreated in prison. On the contrary, once our story was explained to the prisoners, the inmates were quite sympathetic, and I believe our judo demonstration made our stay less stressful. The officials too seemed to be understanding of our situation.

In fact, every non-Japanese person I have talked to since WWII concurs with the actions we took in our struggle for justice and civil and human rights.

To illustrate this point, I would like to share with you an incident that took place on Feb. 4, 1994, at an Oakland, Calif., panel discussion titled, "Principled Dissent: The Heart Mountain Draft Resisters." It was organized by Dr. Clifford Uyeda, and sponsored by the National Japanese American Historical Society and the Oakland Museum's History Department. The panelists included myself; resister Mits Koshiyama; playwright Frank Chin; and Grace Ybarra, an attorney and daughter of Guntaro Kubota of the FPC "seven."

Following a heated discussion with several Nisei WWII veterans sitting in the front row, a lone Caucasian man stood up and made this statement: "I am a veteran of World War II, and I want to thank the resisters for standing up for their constitutional rights. That is what democracy is all about and that was what I was fighting for in Europe." When the man sat down, the entire room burst into applause.



I have often been asked whether my judo training had any influence on my camp era resistance activities because four of the seven FPC leaders had judo backgrounds. I believe I would have taken the same course whether I was trained in judo or not because the injustices that our government inflicted on us were so blatant and illegal in a democracy.

At the same time, I believe judo instills self confidence, and this may make one more apt to stand up for rights and fairness. Therefore, I would have to conclude that training in judo may have some affect on how one reacts to injustices.

I started learning judo at the San Fernando Valley Judo Dojo at age 14 in 1930, under Professor Seigo Murakami, a real gentleman and fine instructor. His son, Roy, now heads the dojo.

When our family moved from the San Fernando Valley to Long Beach, my younger brother, Art, and I commuted to the Compton dojo and later to the Moneta dojo, one of the powerhouses of judo during the 1930s.

A highlight of my judo experience was going to Japan in 1937 with an 18 man judo team under Moneta dojo's instructor, Prof. Yamanouchi. That was the first trip to the land of my ancestors, and it was truly a wonderful and unforgettable experience. Of the 12 matches we had with the Japanese team, we won 10.

Our two losses were to the Hiroshima Police Department team and to the Tokyo Teachers College Judoka, whose lowest ranking member was a *yo dan* (fourth degree), while our top man was *ni dan* (second degree).

At Kumamoto, we made a name for ourselves when we defeated the renown Kumamoto Ken judo team and became the first United States judo team to do so.

That same year in 1937, our family left Long Beach and moved to Los Angeles, and I joined the Hollywood Judo Dojo. Except for my stint in Heart Mountain and Leavenworth during the war, I have been with this dojo eversince. In 1976 I became the head instructor after Prof. Takashi Kikuchi retired.

Throughout its history, the Hollywood dojo has had it's share of winners. Just prior to our forced removal from the West Coast, our team won the Southern California Team Championship.

During the post-war era, our dojo dominated three weight divisions during one tournament. At that event, Ben Takahashi clinched the title in the 130 lb. division; my brother Art, in the 150 lb. division; and Gene LaBell, in the heavyweight division.

In 1990, we joined the Hollywood Japanese Cultural Institute in helping to build a two-story structure to house a new judo dojo and classrooms to hold Japanese language instructions. Today, we have one of the most modern judo dojo's in Southern California.

We practice every Tuesday and Friday nights from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Being a community activity, our fees are very reasonable. We are located in the Virgil area of Los Angeles. Interested individuals can leave a message on our phone machine at 323/666-8146 or come visit us some night.

Frank Emi was one of seven FPC leaders sent to Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary and is currently head instructor of the Hollywood Judo Dojo.

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Playing Hard Ball in Hawaii



By JONATHAN Y. OKAMURA

In 1996 a former University of Hawai'i baseball player, who is a local Haole, requested permission to play in the Japanese-only O'ahu AJA (Americans of Japanese ancestry) Senior Baseball League.

The player, Bill Blanchette, who grew up in Hawai'i and formerly played with many AJA league ball players, indicated he wanted to join the league because it is the most competitive league for former college and professional players like himself. His request was denied by the league's board of directors without any explanation given him.

This issue generated a substantial amount of public discussion over a period of several months in the print media, including the Honolulu daily newspapers and the Japanese American community newspaper, *The Hawaii Herald*.

In editorials and strongly worded letters sent to the newspapers, critics of the Japanese descent eligibility rule contended that it is a form of racial discrimination insofar as it denies individuals from participating in the AJA baseball league solely on the basis of race. They especially pointed out that the league uses Honolulu City and County parks for its games and therefore should be subject to government laws that prohibit such discrimination in the use of public facilities.

Blanchette, who was an anthropology major at the University of Hawai'i, himself recognized the racialized nature of the controversy. In his observation, he noted: "It's a baseball issue that unfortunately became a race issue."

The AJA league president and others who supported the board of directors' unanimous decision not to change its rule to admit non-Japanese Americans cited the "cultural tradition" of exclusively Japanese baseball teams and leagues in Hawai'i.

They emphasized the "history" of Japanese-only teams and leagues since the 1900s, and they view the AJA league with considerable pride as a long-time community institution developed and maintained by JAs that should be allowed to continue like other Japanese cultural and social traditions in Hawai'i.

In noting that most of the players in the league would not be opposed to a non-Japanese being allowed to join, a player nonetheless remarked, "But that's because we're not in touch with the history of the league. But the [older] officials of the league are. They know the history. Would you want to be the person to end a tradition that's been standing for 30, 40, 50 years?"

While supporters of the Japanese descent rule noted that the O'ahu AJA Senior League is the premier amateur baseball league in the state in terms of the level of competition, organization and facilities, they did not mention that in Hawai'i, baseball is considered to be the sport in which JAs excel, compared to other ethnic/racial groups.

In the same way that Native Hawaiians and Samoans are acknowledged to be the best football players, JAs are thought to be the top baseball players, and baseball is considered to be "their game" in Hawai'i.

Each year, JAs constitute the largest group selected to high school all-star baseball teams by the Honolulu daily newspapers and are among the island players offered college baseball scholarships or drafted by major league teams.

Despite the claims of upholding the historical tradition of permitting only JAs to participate in the AJA league, that rule has been subject to both reinterpretation and violation over the years. In the early 1950s, a controversy emerged when Robert Kaneko became the first half-Japanese player admitted into the AJA league. He was fortunate to have a Japanese surname because Hapa JAs with non-Japanese fathers were not allowed into the league until later. Given increasing rates of intermarriage over the years, as long as a player is of some Japanese descent, however minimal, he is considered eligible.

However, as controversial as the eligibility rule has been in the past, only recently has it been more strictly enforced. As recently as 1996, a player, who by his own admission was not Japanese, had competed for the same AJA league team for eight years. Only when he tried to change teams was his eligibility successfully challenged by another team manager and he was banned from the league.

League officials suspect there are a few other non-JAs among the 200 players in the league since the eligibility rule is not enforced through a formal review of birth certificates but by an honor system maintained by each team. Neighboring island teams are especially thought to include non-Japanese members, but the roster of every AJA team includes players with last names such as Garnett, Pang, Halemanu, Silva and Buenconsejo that are indicative of JA intermarriages with other ethnic groups over the years. Even the fabled "Asahis," by far the most popular Japanese-only baseball team that was started in 1905, began to include non-Japanese players in 1956 when it competed in another league.

In light of the emphasis on JA history and tradition in connection with the AJA baseball league controversy, a letter writer, who identified himself as JA, noted that the Japanese descent rule "runs counter to what the boys in the 100th Infantry Battalion and 442nd Regimental Combat Team fought for: fair play the American way."

These World War II veterans became staunch supporters of the rejuvenated Democratic Party in Hawai'i in the 1950s as it gained political power and brought an end to more than 60 years of Haole oligarchic rule. Along with other JAs, a significant number of AJA veterans were elected to office during that decade and led the Democratic Party's goals of social justice, equality and economic reform.

These liberal and progressive values and goals advocated by JA legislators, veterans and labor leaders in the 1950s and 1960s are another historical tradition in Hawai'i that stand in marked contrast to the retention of the racially exclusive eligibility rule by the AJA league.

In voting to uphold its Japanese descent rule, the directors of the AJA league and those who supported that decision can be seen to have engaged in a form of "defensive ethnicity" in which an ethnic/racial group acts to protect its interests or resources in response to a perceived threat from external forces. This defensive reaction also is evident in a statement by the AJA league president, which stated that if forced to accept non Japanese players they would terminate the league.

While a defensive ethnicity response is understandable on the part of disadvantaged minorities in order to protect their limited resources, a more privileged and powerful group such as the JAs could have reacted to such challenges in a more conciliatory manner and sought a compromise resolution to the issue. Such a compromise could have been to permit each team to have a few non-Japanese members, a rule established in the professional baseball leagues in Japan.

Although a Sunday afternoon amateur baseball league is a minor issue compared to other far more significant areas in which JAs could take the lead, it would be extremely unfortunate for society in general if AJAs continue to respond to the challenges to their dominant position in a defensive manner by seeking to maintain their power and privilege while denying fair and equal access to other ethnic/racial groups. ■

"It's a baseball issue that unfortunately became a race issue."

Bill Blanchette

"Would you want to be the person to end a tradition that's been standing for 30, 40, 50 years?"

An AJA baseball player

Kohei Yoshida: Judo Pioneer



Photos courtesy of the Yoshida Family

This 1937 photo is believed to have been taken in the Guadalupe High School auditorium after a tournament. Kohei Yoshida sits in the second row, fifth from the right.

By MARTHA NAKAGAWA

Kohei Yoshida, who once held the highest judo ranking in the United States during the 1940s, may be considered the first judo instructor on the mainland. The 5'10" Issei achieved this notoriety at a time when there were no weight divisions in judo competitions.

Yoshida's early years are sketchy, but his surviving sons, Ken and Sock Sakaye Yoshida, believe their father was born in 1897 and that he first made his way to America from Fukushima, Japan, with his new bride, Sakiko Kimishima Yoshida, around 1919 or 1920.

The couple landed in Tacoma, Wash., where Yoshida immediately opened shop as a judo instructor and held night classes for the local Nisei boys. He supported his teaching income by holding down a day job at the saw mills.

It wasn't long before Yoshida's reputation spread through word of mouth, and he was offered another judo teaching job in California. Sock, the fourth of seven Yoshida children, remembered his father teaching in several Southern California towns of Santa Maria, Guadalupe, Lompoc and Arroyo Grande.

"He taught a class almost every night," recalled Sock.

It was only natural then that Yoshida's three sons be introduced to judo when they became old enough. Although Sock felt his father "wasn't too much of a disciplinarian," Ken, the oldest son, recalled that his father made him fight opponents bigger than him so as not to show favoritism to his own children.

In 1932, when Los Angeles hosted the summer Olympics, judo was not yet accepted as an Olympic sport, but Yoshida received an honorary gold medal for participating in a judo exhibition. The gold medal is now in the careful possession of Sock.

Yoshida's judo expertise also came in handy in fixing dislocated arms and shoulders. Ken remembered Nikkei families from surrounding areas visiting his father on a weekly basis to have their arm or shoulder injuries examined.

"In judo, if you don't fall right, you can break a bone, so you learn to know the difference between a broken bone and a dislocated arm," said Ken. "My father helped people with dislocated arms. If it was broken, he'd tell them to see a doctor. ... I remember one family where the doctor told them a broken arm couldn't be straightened out, but my father was able to help him out."



Kohei Yoshida with his wife Sakiko and first child Toshiko.

Since Yoshida didn't accept monetary payment for his services, grateful families sent barrels of food to the Yoshida family during Christmas. This was particularly helpful during the Great Depression years, recalled Ken.

A year before the United States entered World War II, Yoshida was asked to teach judo in Northern California, and the family moved to Redwood City.

Due to the address change, the FBI was unable to locate Yoshida when they began rounding up martial arts instructors following the bombing of Pearl Harbor. The FBI eventually did find Yoshida but that was after the end of the war.

When evacuation notices went up, Yoshida and his family were sent to the Tanforan Assembly Center and then to the Topaz Relocation Center. In camp, Ken recalled his father considered resuming judo lessons but met with opposition.

"He was going to teach in camp but there was some conflict," said Ken. "There were some people who didn't want Japanese things in camp so he didn't teach."

After the family's release from camp, Yoshida and his family returned to Northern California where Yoshida found employment as a janitor. Yoshida never taught judo again.

But while Yoshida never held classes again, Sock recalled that his father continued to work tirelessly to get judo accepted as an amateur sport by mainstream society.

Yoshida also continued to train, and in 1947, he became the highest ranking judoist in the United States when he earned his sixth degree red and white belt. Judoists who achieve the ranking of six degree or higher receive a red and white striped belt.

Shortly thereafter, Yoshida passed away in 1952 of tuberculosis. He was roughly 55. ■

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The Roots of Karate in Hawaii

By CHARLES C. GOODIN

It was a time before *gi* (uniforms), black belts, or organized tournaments — a time when the art was practiced in secret and taught only to the most trusted students. A high Karate Sensei might have only a handful of students during his entire life, often only one or two at any one time.

"Karate Jutsu" ("China Hand Art") came to Hawaii in 1900 with the very first group of Okinawan immigrants aboard a ship appropriately named the S. S. China Maru. For the next three decades, Karate, which could also be pronounced "Tode," meant "China Hand" in Hawaii. It was only after the war that the term "Empty Hand" became widely used.

In "Uchinanchu: A History of Okinawans in Hawaii," Chinzen Kinjo, one of the first 26 immigrants and the only one to remain in Hawaii, described using "Karate" to defend himself against a *luna* (foreman) at the Ewa Plantation. This must have been shortly after his arrival. Many other Okinawan immigrants learned Karate in Okinawa before coming to Hawaii. These included: Seio Morikone (originally of Hakalau), Watoku Higa, Kizo Teruya, Shuichi Agena, Gentaro Kaneshiro, Seishin Uehara, and Seichi Urasaki.

One of the earliest Okinawan Nisei to learn Karate in Honolulu was Thomas Shigeru Miyashiro. Miyashiro had bad posture as a child and learned Karate from an Okinawan immigrant known as Mr. Kuniyoshi to correct this problem. He also learned from Seishin Uehara, another immigrant who had learned Karate in Okinawa. Miyashiro eventually trained with all of the famous Okinawan Karate teachers who visited Hawaii before World War II. These included:

1. Kentsu ("Gunso" or "Sergeant") Yabu.
2. Choki ("Saru" or "Monkey") Motobu.
3. Zuiho Mutsu
4. Kamesuke Higashionna.
5. Chojun Miyagi.



Photo courtesy of the family of Shigeru Miyashiro.
Motobu No Saru.

Yabu Gunso was well-known as the very first Okinawan officer in the Japanese military. He was an Army Lieutenant, but his nicknaqne means "sergeant." A student of Sokon "Bushi" Matsumura and Anko Itosu, Yabu was one of the first teachers to conduct Karate classes in the Okinawan school system. He also taught at the Teacher's College and the Police Academy. At the time of his visit to Hawaii, he was the most senior instructor of the Shuri-te (Shorin-ryu), form of Karate in Okinawa.

Yabu taught classes in Honolulu and on Kauai and also visited Maui with Admiral Kenwa Kanna. He gave the first Karate demonstration in the United States at the Nuuanu YMCA in March of 1927, and another on July 8. He performed several of the *kata* practiced in Shorin-Ryu including Kusanku, Gojushiho, Naihanchi, Sanchin, Pinan (developed by Itosu), and Passai. These *kata* are still practiced today.

Choki Motobu, nicknamed Motobu No Saru ("Monkey") was very famous for having defeated a European boxer in a contest in Kyoto in 1921. Known as a "kumite" or "sparring" expert, his Karate was largely self-taught. Known as something of a troublemaker as a child, Choki Motobu was refused instruction by many teachers. It is said that he learned some Karate by peeking through or over fences during training sessions.

For the most part, however, he trained by strengthening his body with weights and large rocks, striking the *makiwara*, and sparring with friends. He also was fond of testing his skills in challenge matches, some of which were quite violent. The challenge of the European boxer was probably irresistible to him despite the fact that he was in his 50s at the time!

Upon his arrival in Hawaii, Motobu encountered some visa problems. He was refused admission and detained at the Honolulu immigration station for about one month before being returned to Japan. I have heard many explanations for Motobu's detention. The most likely seems to be translation difficulties (he spoke Okinawan only, not Japanese) and the lack of a suitable sponsor. During his brief stay, Motobu instructed Thomas Shigeru Miyashiro, who had tried to assist with his visa problems.

Zuiho Mutsu and **Kamesuke Higashionna**, who were both from universities in Japan, visited Hawaii in August 1933. The next month, they gave a big demonstration at the civic auditorium on Sept. 9. Because it generated so much interest, Mutsu, Higashionna and Thomas Shigeru Miyashiro started to conduct Karate classes downtown. These were probably the first classes open to the general public, particularly non-orientals.

Mutsu returned to Tokyo shortly after the civic auditorium demonstration. He had co-authored a book titled "Kempo Gaisetsu" (1930) and written another book titled "Karate Kempo" earlier in 1933. Both books are very rare today.

Chojun Miyagi was the founder of Goju Ryu (Hard/Soft Style) Karate. His teacher, Kanryo Higashionna, was the most senior instructor of the Naha-te form of Karate. Miyagi was an active teacher in Okinawa and Japan and arrived in Hawaii in May 1934. He was sponsored by Chinyei Kinjo of the Yoen Jiho Sha on Kauai, and said that he came to teach the Nisei and study Karate there. Mr. Kinjo was the son of Chinzen Kinjo, one of the first immigrants, and he had practiced Karate with Miyagi in Okinawa before immigrating to Hawaii. Miyagi taught many people in Honolulu and on Kauai, including the famous Sumo and western wrestler, Oki Shikina. ■



Photo courtesy of the family of Seishin Uehara.
Thomas Shigeru Miyashiro, Taro Azama, Kamesuke Higashionna (a visitor from Japan), and Seishin Uehara, 1933.

Charles C. Goodin is an instructor of the Matsubayashi-Ryu form of Shorin-Ryu at the Hikari Dojo, in Honolulu. Having great respect for Hawaii's pioneering Sensei, Goodin is writing a book about the earliest days of Karate in Hawaii. With next year marking the 100th anniversary of the first Okinawan immigrants in Hawaii, he feels it is essential to preserve this aspect of Karate's history. He may be contacted at 98-211 Pali Momi Street #640, Aiea, HI 96701 USA, 808/488-5773, or by e-mail at goodin@lava.net.

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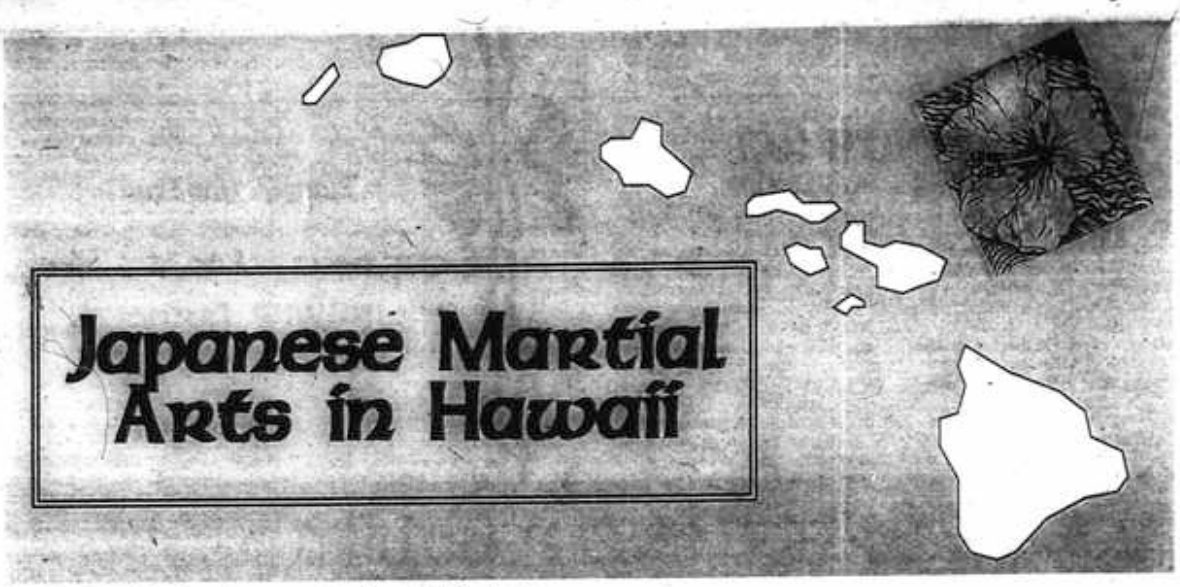


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Japanese Martial Arts in Hawaii

By
WAYNE MUROMOTO

Hawai'i's cultural ecosystem is a wonder. Successive waves of people from Polynesia, Europe, the United States, and Asia have brought with them customs, folklore, traditions and culture to these islands, located like a string of pearls in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

Of the ethnic groups, the Japanese have been historically documented as being in Hawai'i for over a century, beginning with a small group of migrant contract workers called *Gannen Mono* in 1868 (the first year, or Gannen, of the Meiji dynastic era).

Among the many positive legacies the Japanese have brought to this cultural mix has been their *budo*, or traditional martial ways. It is a notable legacy, one that has influenced generations of Nikkei as well as countless thousands of other people of different ethnic groups. No comprehensive documentation has been written of the history of budo in Hawaii, although this will hopefully serve as a jumping-off point for future research.

The Beginning Seeds

From the earliest immigrants, martial ways were a part of the culture brought by Japanese contract workers. There is no documentation of martial ways being practiced by the Gannen Mono, but the next major wave of immigrants, the *Kanyaku Imin* ("contract immigrants") was occasioned by a dockside demonstration of kendo and sumo at the immigration depot. The demonstration was performed before King David Kalakaua, then the reigning ruler of the Hawaiian kingdom. The event was recorded in the *Daily Pacific Commercial Advertiser* for Feb. 12, 1885 (1).

King Kalakaua was so taken by sumo that he invited the wrestlers to perform once again on the grounds of 'Iolani Palace, where he participated briefly in some bouts himself.

Kendo, as an aside, was also called other names, including gekken, kenjutsu and shinai-geiko. It was a rougher sport, compared to its present incarnation, with grappling, trips and body blows allowed in its matches.

Once established in stable communities, the Japanese immigrants practiced various martial arts with zest, and eventually, just before World War II, began to draw interest from non-Japanese as well.

Sumo became a popular sport, with sumo bouts between local amateur wrestlers held to celebrate various American and Japanese holidays. Such events could draw crowds that numbered in the thousands. Oahu, Maui and the Big Island, in particular, were strongholds of tough sumotori.

Kendo also grew as the Japanese population grew. Kendo *dojo* (practice halls) and other Japanese martial arts training sites were often connected to Japanese cultural and religious centers, primarily Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines. One of the early sponsors of kendo also included the Rev. Takie Okumura, who founded the Makiki Christian Church. Okumura was a rather interesting historical figure, who was involved in many different sports, cultural and political activities. The earliest prewar organization for kendo that I have determined was the Hawaii Kobu Kai.

Judo/jujutsu was another art that has a long history in the Islands. On March 17, 1909, Naomatsu Kaneshige, a bone-setter, formally established judo in Hawai'i by opening one of the first judo dojo in Honolulu. (2) In 1932, the Hawaiian Association was formed with ten judo clubs as members. Shortly thereafter, the founder of judo, Kano Jigoro, visited Hawai'i.

Kyudo, the way of Archery, was also established early on. At the turn of the century, Gensaku Nakamura had a kyudo dojo at his home in Honolulu. In 1908, Dr. Umekichi Asahina established the Honolulu Daikyu Club on Nuuanu Street. Other clubs were subsequently started at the Ewa Plantation in 1913, and at various other sites.

The club started by Shichizo Yamaguchi in Moili'ili in 1915 evolved to become the Hawaii Kyudo Kai. Koichi Iida, and Yutaka Yamamoto included kyudo in the curriculum of their martial arts club at the Kotohira Jinja in Kapalama, Honolulu, which was a branch (*shibu*) of the Dai Nippon Butokukai martial arts organization. Kyudo later spread out to the neighbor islands largely through the efforts of Gyokusei Matsuura, currently the retired bishop of the Soto Mission of Hawai'i. (3)

Prewar karate developed somewhat distanced from the other Japanese martial arts. Karate is essentially an Okinawan martial art, and the Okinawan community was set somewhat apart from the Japanese community due to cultural differences and prejudice. It was taught as it was in Okinawa, in very small groups in informal situations, at people's homes and private residences.

Chinzen Kinjo, who came on the first boatload of 27 Okinawan immigrants on the SS City of China in 1900, may have been the first karate practitioner in Hawai'i. He gave an account of using what he called karate to defend himself against an abusive *luna* (field supervisor) in the sugar cane fields.

As enclaves of Okinawans were established throughout the Islands, several of the most important Okinawan karate masters visited Hawai'i and taught here. According to Charles C. Goodin, who is researching a book on Okinawan karate in Hawai'i, some of the master instructors included Choki Motobu, Yabu Kentsu, Mutsu Zuiho, Higaonna Kamesuke and Chojun Miyagi. (4) Thomas Miyashiro (who passed away in 1977) trained with all of the above visiting instructors and began his studies at the age of 12, under a Mr. Kuniyoshi, an immigrant.

The first public demonstration of karate in American soil may have been on July 8, 1927. It was held at the old Nuuanu YMCA, with Okinawan master Yabu Kentsu demonstrating, accompanied by young local students.

World War II put a damper on all Japanese cultural activities, including the various budo. Most of the budo dojo were associated with Buddhist temples or Shinto shrines, and they were shut down for the duration of the war. Japanese cultural activities were also closed, and many priests, who were also teachers of budo, were among the Hawai'i Nikkei who were selectively interned.

Training in those arts may have served the Nisei men who were in the U.S. military, however. Lineberger cites that a number of young kendo practitioners were among the famed 100th Battalion and 442nd RCT, and no doubt there were also quite a number of judo students as well. (5)

Postwar Budo in Hawai'i

Kendo and sumo never fully recovered from the effects of the war. Although still practiced by enthusiastic players, both arts are arguably smaller in number and popularity compared to their prewar glory days.

In 1955, after kendo was revived among different disparate clubs and organizations, the Hawai'i Kendo Federation was organized as a statewide umbrella group. It has since overseen the stabilization and progression of postwar kendo.

Sumo was resurrected as well. The 442nd Veteran's Club had a hand in sponsoring several of the first sumo bouts, with professional sumotori from Japan, beginning in 1962. The club, with sumo master Takasago Oyakata, raised interest in sumo as a spectator sport.

From that fruitious conjunction came the Hawai'i sumo connection. Takasago was introduced to Jesse Kuhaulua, a strapping Maui high school football player who expressed an interest in the sport. Takasago accepted Jesse as the first foreign-born wrestler from America in 1965, creating a media sensation. Jesse, as Takamiyama, gained high ranking and great popularity in Japan, paving the way for later wrestlers from Hawai'i, including Konishiki, Akebono and Musashimaru, the latter two now at the highest rungs of sumo ranking.

The Oahu Sumo Club, some 130 years old, is still active, headed presently by John Jacques, a Kahuku High School teacher. Sumo's ongoing popularity (heightened by the same-day broadcasting of the major Japanese sumo *basho*, or tournaments, and by the public's interest in the records of "local boys" Akebono and Musashimaru) has seen an interesting twist recently.

Women's sumo is reported to be gaining some adherents locally.

There was a women's sumo division in the World Games in Germany on December 4.

Judo wasn't allowed during WWII among the general population, although the Kodenkan jujutsu school of Henry Seishiro Okazaki was allowed to remain open throughout the duration of the war because he trained a number of officers for the Honolulu Police Department.

Immediately after the war, Yukiso Yamamoto, who later became active in aikido, opened a judo dojo at the Nuuanu YMCA, which began the slow revival of judo. Spurred by the inclusion of judo in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, judo has regained some ground as an Olympic sport, especially among younger players. Several of the USA's Olympic judo hopefuls in the past have Hawai'i ties, including Seoul silver medalist Kevin Asano.

There are currently many judo dojo all over the major islands, with two main local judo umbrella organizations: the Judo Black Belt Association of Hawai'i (JBBH, or the Hawaii Judo Yudanshakai) and the 50th State Judo Association. Dojo are also affiliated with the national United States Judo Federation.

Kyudo was reactivated as early as 1946 by Enzo Miwa, at the Wainlae Hongwanji in Honolulu. By 1947, the Dai Nippon Kyudo Kai Hawaii Shibu renamed itself the Hawaii Kyudo Kai and formalized its organization. Its first president was Tooka Iida. The Hawaii Kyudo Kai is currently the only group to my knowledge that continues to train in the standard form of Japanese kyudo on a regular basis. Training is held at the Kapi'olani Park Archery range in Waikiki and at the Soto Mission of Hawaii under the tutelage of the retired Bishop Matsuura.

There is another archery group not aligned with the All Japan Kyudo Federation that practices at Chozen-ji Temple, in Kalihi Valley.

Karate received a big boost when many Nisei received advanced training in Japan and Okinawa after the war. The participation of many non-Okinawans and the introduction of Japanese-style karate took the art outside the confines of the Okinawan community.

In addition, karate masters from Okinawa and Japan came to Hawai'i to teach, creating a cadre of highly trained karate practitioners who are respected world-wide. Among the local karate teachers active during the 1950s were Mitsugi Kobayashi, Kenneth Murakami, Walter Nishioka, Bobby Lowe, Richard Kajiyama, and Thomas Miyashiro. A relative of Shotokan karate master Gichin Funakoshi, Kenneth Funakoshi, also became active in local karate.

In 1961, Shotokan master Hirokazu Kanazawa came from Japan and trained with many local instructors. The goodwill from the gathering of local teachers set the groundwork for the Hawaii Karate Congress, an umbrella organization of Hawai'i karate schools. Another informal group of karate black belts, the Hawaii Karate Kodanshakai, was formed in 1984.

Martial arts politics and friction between different schools and organizations has fragmented the karate schools somewhat, however. At present there are several organizations regarding karate. The Shotokan style alone has some four or five different subgroups. Other groups are aligned along styles, such as the Shito-ryu, Butokukai, Goju-ryu, Wado-ryu, Matsubayashi-ryu, Shorin-ryu, and so on.

Attempts are being made to bring the different groups together, but philosophies and goals are quite different from group to group, ranging from groups that promote karate as a national AAU type sport inclusive of all styles, to groups that prefer to train by themselves, without tournament participation.

Aikido and Other Arts

Aikido is a relative newcomer compared to the other martial arts, having been promulgated by Ueshiba Morihei before WWII. Aikido's presence in the Islands was a momentous event, since it was the first place that aikido was formally taught outside of Japan. Koichi Tohei came to Hawai'i at the request of the Nishikai health organization in 1953. Tohei's charismatic character and the aikido techniques he taught became quite popular very quickly.

By 1958, there were several hundred aikido students all over the Islands. In 1961, the Hawaii Aiki Kwai headquarters was opened on Wainlae Avenue, and for that occasion, Ueshiba sensei visited and gave several lessons, lectures and demonstrations, the first and only time that the aikido founder ever set foot on American soil.

Yukiso Yamamoto, a judo pioneer, was the Aikikwai's first head instructor. There are, at present, two different aikido organizations in Hawai'i; the Hawaii Ki Society and the Aikikwai. The Ki Society is aligned with Koichi Tohei, while the Aikikwai follows the Ueshiba lineage.

Other smaller groups and organizations exist. Koryu martial arts are "older" martial arts styles not covered by judo, kendo, karatedo, kyudo, etc. organizations and systems.

Iaido, the art of learning how to draw and cut with a real sword, was taught informally by different kendo teachers over the years. It became formalized as a branch of the Hawaii Kendo Federation only recently. Most of the HKF iaido members practice *seitei iai* (the standardized iaido forms) and the old style called Muso Shinden-ryu. The group that the author belongs to, the Seifukan Dojo, is the only HKF-affiliated club that practices Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu iai. Another, differently affiliated, Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu group practices on Maui, and there is a Toyama-ryu iai club on Oahu.

A Jikishinkage-ryu *naginata* (Japanese glaive or halberd) group practices in Honolulu, and there is a small group practicing Chikubushima-ryu *bo* (wooden staff) with Bishop Matsuura. Quintin Chambers heads a Shinto Muso-ryu *jo* (four-foot staff) group, and besides iaido, the author's own group practices Takeuchi-ryu *kobudo* (ancient martial ways).

There is a Hakko-ryu jujutsu group that is closed to most outsiders, and a scattering of so-called jujutsu and ninjutsu groups whose lineage and origins are murky, at best.

Although this overview may lead one to conclude that Japanese traditional martial ways are extremely popular in Hawai'i, the survival of such arts depends on each generation. As we in Hawai'i head into the new millennium, I can only wonder and hope that this long and rich legacy is continued long into the future.

It would be a shame to have such arts disappear from the Islands, but it is possible. Only a handful of students train in kyudo at present. Even though karatedo, judo and aikido has a lot of youngsters participating, the same age group has a wide range of other choices to pick and choose from when it comes to sports, including baseball, football, tennis, volleyball, soccer, surfing, skateboarding, basketball, paddling, amateur wrestling, softball, and so on.

Longterm retention rate of youngsters is an ongoing problem in any sports organization, especially in the discipline-bound martial ways.

Traditions endure only if they are successfully passed on from one generation to the next. I am somewhat concerned, but mostly optimistic, that our own Hawai'i tradition of Japanese martial ways will continue into the new millennium and beyond. ■

"Although this overview may lead one to conclude that Japanese traditional martial ways are extremely popular in Hawai'i, the survival of such arts depends on each generation. As we in Hawai'i head into the new millennium, I can only wonder and hope that this long and rich legacy is continued long into the future."

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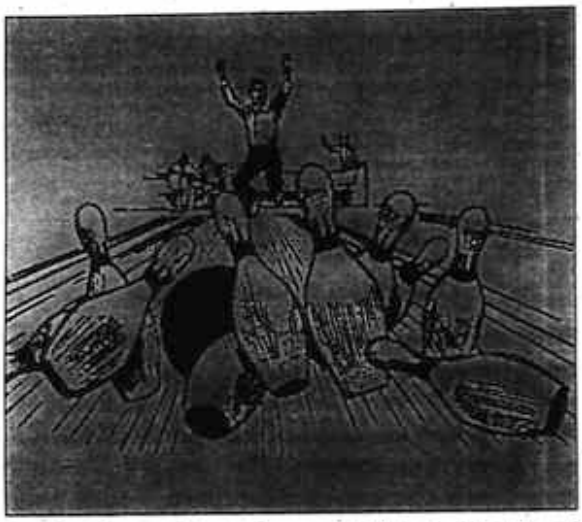
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The History of BOWLING

By MIKE HOSHIKO
W9CJW



According to the latest figures, there are over 50 million active recreational and professional bowlers in the United States. Although there are no statistics on the number of Japanese American bowlers, the sport has been popular in our community since before World War II.

There were no bowling alleys at any of the WWII relocation camps, but after the war many JAs turned to it both for fun and for competition. JA newspapers often featured lists of bowling team scores and individual standings in the leagues. In the last few years, however, bowling has decreased in popularity among JAs as well as the general public.

Yet, there are still folks like Seichi Hayashida, who left Minidoka camp after the war to start farming but eventually became a partner in a bowling center with 24 alleys in Idaho. Retired now, and 80 years old, he still enjoys bowling like many other senior citizens.

The positive aspects of bowling are varied. It is the only sport where the spectators are also the participants. It provides people with an opportunity to relate to others of different social and economic classes in the community. It helps players keep physically fit with exercise that is more fun than formal.

Bowling has a long history going back to about 5,000 B.C., when the Egyptians carved scenes in stone depicting a recreational activity using round rocks and egg-shaped pins. Later, the Germans and the Dutch both practiced a religious activity which in time became bowling. The worshippers walked into the church, picked up a stone and threw it down the aisle to rounded wooden objects called *heide*, which were about two feet long with flat bottoms.

The heide were set near the altar as instructed by the priest. If the sinner knocked all the heide down, he automatically attained atonement. If not, he was required to continue with more prayers and further penance. In order to knock down the heide more skillfully, men started to practice outside on the grass, hoping to be absolved more readily. Since they couldn't use the heide from church, they used wooden objects about two feet long called *kegle* (or kegel) which they usually carried for protection against robbers. These were placed on a grassy area and eventually nine of them were arranged in the shape of a diamond.

So in time the kegle replaced the heide, which represented evil, and a religious activity became a sport. Martin Luther, in addition to his religious writings, wrote the rules for the game of kegeling which he named "nine pins." It was said that he never played the game himself but constructed a lane for his family.

Historians say that this game of "nine pins" was brought to America by Dutch settlers in 1623. The word kegle stuck, and even today a bowler is often called a kegler. The French played a game like bowling called "carreau," while in Northern Italy, around 1,000 to 1,500 years ago, people played a game considered a precursor to bowling called "bocce." The word bowl could have come from the Saxon "bolla" or the Danish word "bolle," which meant bubble. Or the game may be named after the Latin word "bulla."

In Canada, people enjoy a sport called curling, which is a form of bowling on ice-covered strips. The English had a similar game around 1100 called "skittles," which became so popular that young men lost interest in the common practice of archery. This caused King Edward III to pass a law banning bowling in 1366. He reasoned that if the skills of archery were lost, his soldiers wouldn't be able to protect England. King Henry VIII enjoyed the game but found that too many people were making money from it, so he had a law passed prohibiting people from making money.

One favorite story claims that Sir Francis Drake in 1588 was bowling when he got word that the Spanish Armada was approaching. He was said to have responded that he had time to score enough strikes to finish the game and still strike the Spaniards. Thereupon, he destroyed the "invincible" Spanish Armada.

Bowling became very popular among people of all persuasions. The wealthy built alleys in their homes. The game eventually started to attract gamblers, hustlers and other unsavory persons, as the alleys were usually found in taverns and pool halls. Several states outlawed the game of nine pins.

There is a story that one promoter introduced the tenth pin to evade the law. That story may not be true but from 1860 on, ten pins were set up in triangular form with the tenth pin in the center.

As bowling became more popular, there was a need for uniformity. On Sept. 5, 1895, the American Bowling Congress (ABC) was organized by E.H. Baumgarten, who was its first president. Nothing was standardized at that point — rules, alleys, balls, pins, cushions, gutters, kickbacks or approach. ABC was organized as a non-profit men's organization of ten-pin bowlers. They established playing rules, set equipment standards and specifications and promoted international tournaments and recreational events.

It was not until Jan. 14, 1892, that Mrs. Albertine Harde organized the first women's tournament. In 1916, during World War I, the Women's International Bowling Congress (WIBC) was established in St. Louis, Mo. But women found it difficult to find a decent place to bowl as alleys were mostly in taverns and pool halls.

It was not until WWII, when 50 percent of the men were gone and many women were working in war plants, that women became interested in bowling. With this new crop of participants, bowling alleys were kept open 24 hours a day so that women coming off the night shift could play.

In addition, new technology affected bowling with automatic scoring machines, automatic pin-setting machines and ball returns. Maple hardwood in alleys, which produced grooves, was replaced by synthetic material that was pressed and used to line the maple gutters so they wouldn't develop grooves. Special shoes and clothing were introduced. Bowling centers became clean and attractive and offered many amenities, such as baby-sitting services. Children could even participate, using six-pound balls.

As society has changed in recent years, with more emphasis on individualism and with television, computers and the Internet changing both the workplace and the home, membership in churches, clubs and organizations has dropped as people focus on doing their own thing. What's nice about this particular sport, though, is that people can choose to bowl alone, with a friend or two, or even on a team. Bowling may even evolve as societies do, perhaps connecting bowlers in an electronic network all over the country. ■

Mike Hoshiko is a member of the St. Louis JACL chapter. He wishes to thank Mr. Seichi Hayashida of Idaho, Mr. Travis Boley, curator of the Bowling Museum in St. Louis, Mo., George Kitazawa, NS30, who never bowled in camp, and the library of Southern Illinois University.

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Bowling Tournaments - A National JACL Pastime

By HARRY K. HONDA

Sports is hardly a major action today in JACL programs, but a half century ago it was. Old-timers can remember the JACL National Bowling Tournaments — one of JACL's major resources of membership revenue and 1000 Club support during the years when Masao Satow was national JACL director.

In fact, a national JACL sports committee was recommended during the first postwar national convention in 1946 at Denver. The minutes read: "With an increasing number of [Nisei] taking part in such individual events as bowling and tennis, it might be advisable for JACL to take the lead in sponsoring regional and national tournaments ...."

The first Japanese American national bowling tournament dates from 1947 when national JACL co-sponsored with Salt Lake JACL the 12th annual Intermountain Nisei Bowling Tournament, (March 29-30) at Temple Alleys in Salt Lake City. A national atmosphere prevailed as 200 bowlers came from California, Washington, Nebraska and Illinois to compete in what became the first national Nisei "scratch" kegfest (to use sports jargon for a bowling tournament).

Incidentally, the Los Angeles JACL All Stars won the national team title with a 2826 total of three games by five men. Bowman Chung was "anchor" — the fifth member in the lineup, who was counted upon to score big. A total of 14 men's teams participated. (I couldn't find the number of women's teams, but Denver won the women's title with its 2267 score. Team anchor Rosa Higashi was also the all-events champion.)

According to a 1947 *Pacific Citizen* sports column, there were Nisei bowling leagues in New York City, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, Denver, Salt Lake City, Ogden, Pocatello, Ontario (Ore.), Spokane, Seattle, Portland, Hood River, San Francisco, Oakland, Sacramento, San Jose, Watsonville, Stockton, Fresno, Los Angeles, Orange County, and other cities including leagues in Hawaii.

When the United Auto Workers (UAW) organized a National Committee for Fair Play in Bowling in June 1947 to combat the American Bowling Congress's racial discrimination policy, then Midwest JACL Regional Director Tats Kushida, attended on behalf of national JACL. Subsequently, Hito Okada, then national JACL president, was named to its national steering committee, co-chaired by Minneapolis Mayor Hubert Humphrey and woman golfer Betty Hicks.

The UAW-CIO had taken this step after the ABC that year prevented Gim Wong, a World War II veteran in Leyte, from bowling in his hometown, Beloit, Wis., tournament. His teammates/co-workers directed their complaint to the union, which then instructed its fair practices and anti-discrimination committee to do whatever "it took to make the American Bowling Congress live up to its name." This story appeared in the Dec. 6, 1947, *P.C.*



Our Anchor Man

A fitting tribute by *P.C.* cartoonist Pete Hironaka of Mas Satow appeared June 16, 1972, in advance of the national JACL convention in Washington, D.C., where the testimonial luncheon honored Satow, who was ending his professional JACL connection spanning 26 years (1946-1972). He shepherded the National JACL Bowling Tournaments until they were dropped in 1974.

National JACL made a survey of Nisei leagues across the country through cooperation of the chapters, for the 1948 Humphrey-Hicks committee meeting in New York to appeal again to the American Bowling Congress. Mike Masaoka and Sam Ishikawa represented JACL at this meeting; both were named to a subcommittee. Also on this committee was Detroit boxer Joe Louis. But high-profile figureheads lacked any power teeth for the national ABC tournament that spring in Detroit that stopped the Hawaiian "Ambassadors," comprised of four Nisei and one Chinese American, from participating. One member, Tad Nagasawa, was a 442nd veteran who took up the sport after the war and was the Honolulu city champ with a 190 average.

The big blow with a defiant Nisei impact flared in 1949 when the Boeing Airplane Co. Bowling League was notified by ABC that its all-Nisei team, the "Clippers," was ineligible to compete in ABC-sanctioned tournaments. "The Clippers were as good as anyone in the league and on the first night of play they led the league with a cumulative score of 2654," the *Boeing News* reported Sept. 16.

In Seattle's Japanese community press, the *Northwest Times* (Sept. 9) editor Budd Fukei wrote that Herb Furuta, Tom Namba, Floyd Yamamoto, Masakazu "Mud" Tsuchikawa and Tak Shibuya had formed the Nisei Clippers in the Boeing Co. Airplane league — unaffiliated with ABC. But the Boeing Majors team was ABC-sanctioned.

There was a front-page story 10 days later in the Seattle *Post-Intelligencer*, "BAN ON NON-CAUCASIANS STIRS BOWLERS IN SEATTLE LEAGUE," with a picture of the five Nisei bowlers under the caption, "How come?" The story went on the wire and gained national attention.

The next day, Sept. 28, nationally known sports editor Royal Brougham wrote in his column "The Morning After" that Tak and Tom fought in Italy (442nd), Floyd in the South Pacific (MIS), and Mud and Herb had volunteered but were turned down on the physical. "They can fight for their country but they can't bowl in a friendly game in the same building


PHOTO: ELMER OGAWA

National JACL Director Mas Satow (left) presents *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* sports editor Royal Brougham with a certificate of appreciation for his lead in 1948 in eliminating the "white male only" clause from the American Bowling Congress constitution. The photo was taken at the 1958 National JACL Bowling Tournament award banquet in Seattle.

THE BIG GAME

By PETE HIRONAKA

It was Sunday morning in December. I remember leaping out of bed to check the weather outside. The grey fog that rolled in from Monterey Bay four miles away was still lingering over us but it didn't look like rain. I was pleased and excited because this was the day of THE BIG GAME.

The other Big Game had already been played and the Stanford Indians, led by the fabulous foursome of Frankie Albert, Pete Kometivic, Hugh Gallarneau and Norm Standlee, had beaten the University of California and were headed for the Rose Bowl. Now it was our turn.

My involvement was belated to say the least. When you're 14 and scrawny, chances of cavorting on the gridiron in an organized game are slim at best. But on Saturday afternoon, at the Japanese language school, in Salinas I saw a couple of older Nisei in serious conversation and eyeing me.

It was either Yas Abe or Kazuto Taniguchi who approached me with "Hey, can you play football this Sunday? We've got a game with the town guys in the high school stadium. Can you make it?"

"Sure" I quickly replied while hiding the exhilarating glee I felt for being asked.

"If you don't have football shoes, wear your tennis shoes," were my instructions along with the time of THE GAME. Didn't have Adidas or Air Jordans in those days. Just high top black J.C. Penneys, and I assumed they wanted me to wear my grey sweat shirt.

The drive home to the Panziera Ranch from the Japanese school always took us past the Salinas railroad depot. And as I had seen for several Saturdays, I noticed a group of Nisei townies ... city slickers we called them ... along with a smattering of other groups practicing football in the adjacent empty lot. I recognized some of the guys — Taro and Ryuji Yokoyama, Kats Shiba, Henry Inagi, the Tazumi brothers



— and they were actually scrimmaging and running plays!

It was mildly disturbing because we hadn't had one practice nor even a game under our belt. But, what the heck, we country hicks had some talented athletes. Kaz and Jim Taniguchi, Yas Abe, Y. Kobara to name a few.

Well, anyway, here it was. The day of THE GAME. Nobody in the family was even casually interested in this monumental gridiron classic. My sisters could care less and my brother Eiji was too young to tag along. Pop said it was O.K. to drive our family Plymouth to the game. (To clarify, as a 14-year-old, I was within the limits of the law because my driver's license restricted me to: driving to and from school — only from sunrise to sunset.")

The years have dimmed some of the pertinent details of that Sunday. I think that the agreed-to game time was about 11 a.m. As some of us country hicks were sneaking into the stadium, we saw that the slickers were all there and warming up. But what struck me more than anything else was that THEY WERE WEARING UNIFORMS! At a recent reunion, Ryuji Yokoyama told me that they had gotten discarded uniforms from someone at Salinas Junior College.

I quickly joined our motley aggregation and one of the older guys gave me my assignment. "You're going to be our center. Just hike the ball and get the hell out of the way!"

I can't recall who won the toss to open the contest. I do know that when the townies first went on the offense, we were in for another big surprise. They came out in the newfangled "T" formation which worked so well for coach Clark Shaughnessy and the Stanford Indians! The city slickers easily marched down the field against our bewildered, bothered and befuddled defense and quickly scored. Us country hicks were in for a long day.

Our offense was pretty basic. Yas Abe. We just gave him the ball and he ran. Since nothing else worked, rough, tough Yas carried the load for us country hicks. As I recall, he did score a touchdown for us but none of the participants could tell me what the final score was. Although I have been challenged by some, I always thought that we were soundly beaten by a 30-6 score.

"See you guys Saturday at Japanese School," I remember yelling as I headed for the car. Although bruised and beaten, at least we didn't have any broken bones. The drive home was filled with thoughts of the razzing Ryuji and the other city slickers were going to give us at school.

I eased our silver-grey Plymouth into the yard in front of our farmhouse as Pop came charging out the front door. My god, did I do something wrong? Was I supposed to come home earlier? He was ashened and troubled and he bounded right to the car.

"*Senso da!* It's war! Japan and America!" he yelled excitedly. We quickly went to the front room radio to hear the repeated bulletins about a sneak attack and bombing at some strange place called Pearl Harbor.

The date, of course, was December 7, 1941. President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared it the "Day of Infamy." to this day, I still second that declaration. Who can dispute the sinister aggressive attack by a superior force that took advantage of an unprepared assemblage of disorganized individuals on a peaceful Sunday morning.

It's a date never to be forgotten. Not only that, it was the same day when World War II started. ■

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with other Americans ... And this is the enlightened year of 1949?".

R.B. kept stirring the issue in his columns, picking up his prewar theme that U.S.-born Nisei were American citizens rather than Japanese "and [that] it was un-American to treat them otherwise."
[Thanks to Joseph Svinth, Edmonds, Wash., for that statement gleaned from the *P.I.* Jan. 30, 1942.]

Thus, the suggestion that JACL support a test case against racial discrimination in bowling was born in 1949, and the 1950 national JACL bowling tournament (at San Francisco's Downtown Bowl) became the vehicle by which to assault the "white only" clause of the American Bowling Congress. Participating were a record turnout of 80 teams: 58 men and 22 women — now officially a part of the national JACL tournament. (No wonder I couldn't find the number of women teams in 1947.) This tournament also marked the first appearance of the Hawaiian contingent.

A national JACL Advisory Board of Bowling was organized in 1950 to coordinate JACL efforts to remove ABC's all-white policy and to improve the national tournament for its participants. The first members were: Gish Endo (San Francisco), James Kozuma (Chicago), Dr. Jun Kurumada (Salt Lake), Harley Kusumoto (Los Angeles), Bill Matsumoto (Sacramento), Dr. Takashi Mayeda (Mile-Hi), Eddie Mitsueda (Honolulu), Buzz Noda (Selma), and Fred Takagi (Seattle).

The National Negro Bowling Association, dating from August 1939, had sought in vain to be affiliated with ABC. The Seattle City Bowling Association was already on record in 1947 opposing the white-only clause. In 1948, the Honolulu Bowling Association "disaffiliated" from ABC because of its racist policy.

At the 1949 meeting in Atlantic City, ABC for the first time considered the proposal from Father Charles Carow, a Roman Catholic priest from Brooklyn who had been pressing for a constitutional amendment to extend membership to all men regardless of race or creed for the past five years. It didn't pass.

In 1949, ABC threatened a Cleveland alley with sanctions because it allowed JA bowlers to join its league. Bowling teams in Rock Springs, Wyo., voted to withdraw from both ABC and the equally discriminatory Women's International Bowling Congress (WIBC). Nisei teams in Provo, Utah, and Nampa, Idaho, were allowed despite ABC opposition. In Portland, Ore., the 12-team Bonneville Power Administration league withdrew rather than drop a single Chinese American bowler. So the pattern went, isolated cases nonetheless, as ABC sanctioned some 2,600 leagues in Wisconsin alone with over 23,500 teams. Even in January 1950, Wisconsin Attorney General Thomas Fairchild charged that ABC's "practices constitute a public nuisance." (See Feb. 4, 1950, *P.C.*)

Joseph Svinth* also notes Illinois was the first state, in October 1949, to file suit against ABC on behalf of CIO union officials requesting revocation of the ABC charter. CIO general counsel Arthur J. Goldberg (of U.S. Supreme Court fame and later a CWRIC redress hearing commissioner) handled the case. It was heard March 6, 1950, before Chicago Superior Court Judge Sbarbaro, who found ABC guilty of racial discrimination but rather than revoking ABC's charter only imposed a $2,500 fine.

In February 1950, B'rith Sholem with 8,000 members asked Pennsylvania Gov. Duff to investigate ABC's racial policies and revoke the organization's state charter if found guilty of racial discrimination. New York, California, Ohio and Minnesota were also on the same platform.

The color bar was dropped by ABC at its annual meeting in May 1950 at Columbus, Ohio, effective August 1950. It was Boeing League president Jack Bunsey who moved to scratch the "whites only" clause from the constitution, seconded by a New York bowling association official. Furthermore, ABC leadership was being warned by its counsel that it was becoming increasingly difficult to find sites for future ABC tournaments. Within 27 minutes, chairman Bernard Leuthy of New Jersey announced the motion carried. While the vote of the 518 delegates was not announced, before the 1951-52 bowling season was well underway the matter was corrected to the satisfaction of all concerned. The WIBC soon followed to end its white-only membership clause.

The fifth National JACL Bowling Tournament at Vogue Bowl, Los Angeles, was the first meeting with ABC's moral sanction, which required that every participant be a JACL member. ■

** Our gratitude to Joseph Svinth for sharing his report, "Champion of All the People: Royal Brougham, the Nisei Clippers, and the End of the Color Bar in American Tenpin Bowling," (1999).*

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For the Love of the Game – Japanese Canadian Baseball

By Pat Adachi



Baseball in British Columbia

With the Frazier River Gold Rush of 1858-1865, American prospectors and miners introduced the game of baseball to British Columbia. During lulls in panning for gold, they taught the game to the locals. The first Canadian ballgame recorded was played in New Westminster, B.C., on May 24, 1862, when the community celebrated the Queen's birthday. Crews from naval ships promoted the game along the coast, north and south of the border. Then with the coming of the Canadian Pacific Railway between 1881-1887, baseball was played with great zeal among the communities along the railway route. In 1888, Kamloops held the Provincial Baseball Championship in conjunction with the CPR workers' picnic. Today, we still carry on the tradition of playing baseball at our community picnics.

Baseball and the Japanese Canadian Community

The first Japanese immigrants to arrive in Canada about 1874 were mainly educators, university students and professional people. These early pioneers moved into Vancouver, to an area later known as Powell Street, the mecca of enterprising merchants. Powell Street offered many Japanese restaurants, rooming houses, dry goods stores, pharmacies and, above all, the *ofuro*, bathhouses.

The former university students had played baseball in Japan. Soon they were having pick-up games with the local Nisei. The Powell Street merchants took a great interest in the game and in 1910 organized the Nippon Baseball Club. However in Victoria, B.C., a team called Nippon had also been formed, so the two opposing Nippons met at Powell Street grounds to have their first contest. It was an event that was enthusiastically welcomed and supported by the community.

The Asahi Baseball Organization

In 1914, Matsujiro Miyasaki, owner of a clothing and food store, became the manager and sponsor of the first baseball team under the name of Asahi. Other managers followed his example and collectively they formed the Asahi Baseball Organization. Its purpose went beyond the teaching of baseball fundamentals to instilling youngsters with discipline and the meaning of integrity and sportsmanship.

Boys were recruited as young as nine years old, their greatest dream being to one day wear the Asahi uniform. It was the strong interaction between the youngsters, parents and the community that gave all of them the courage to face the daily disappointments and constant barrage of discrimination that was pressuring the Asian Canadian community.

The Japanese had initially been looked upon favorably, as industrious and quick to learn a trade. But lumped together with "the Oriental problem concerning the Chinese," all Asians became a plague. The British Columbia legislature restricted the Japanese from achieving the franchise, and Japanese were banned from employment in public works. Their skills in boat-building, farming and in developing the fishing and lumber industries only further antagonized what was mainly the British community.

But then appeared an unexpected glimmer of hope into the situation. Under the management of the most respected Asahi manager, Harry Miyazaki, was a young 15-year-old named Roy Yamamura. Roy was to develop into an outstanding shortstop. Though diminutive in size at barely five feet, his dazzling execution of smart plays and speed on the bases drew the attention of the city's top-flight division, and Roy became the first Nisei prominent in the Vancouver baseball circuit.

At first the Caucasians came out of curiosity and then with open admiration. Roy and the Asahis became the drawing card at every stadium and always drew an overflowing crowd. The actions of these ballplayers, on and off the diamond, combated the racial intolerance and won them friends everywhere. These positive encounters enabled the Japanese Canadian community to hold their heads high and to meet the Caucasian world on equal footing.

Beyond the Playing Field

In 1921, the Asahis toured Japan and played the Japanese university teams. Four Caucasian players joined the Asahis for the tour. The occasion provided the B.C. government with an opportunity to send a film on Canadian industrial development as a gesture of friendship to the Japanese government.

The goal of the tour was not to prove which country possessed the superior team. It was a chance to appreciate each others' skills and to cement the camaraderie that began on the playing field and continued well beyond. That good will encompassed the local people, the country, and international frontiers.

In 1931 and 1934, the American All-Stars were invited by the owner and publisher of the Japanese newspaper *Yomiuri Shimbun* to play in Japan. The Americans, with the

calibre of their power players, were undefeated. Nevertheless, an amazing 19-year-old Japanese pitcher named Eiji Wasamura struck out legends Charlie Gehringer, Babe Ruth, Jimmie Fox and Lou Gehrig, all in a row.

This feat was to prompt All-Stars manager Lefty O'Doul to advise *Shimbun* publisher Matsutaro Shoriki to form a Japanese professional team, the team that would become the Tokyo Giants. In 1935, the Giants came to Canada to play against the Asahis in Con Jones Park. It was a memorable day for the Asahis, many of them still in their teens and facing the Russian-born ace Giant pitcher Victor Starffin at an overwhelming 6'4" and 230 pounds.

Mass Evacuation

But in 1942, the glorious days of the Asahis and the Japanese community came to a devastating end. This was the last time the Asahis played together as a team. Regardless of whether they were Japanese Nationals, Canadian-born, or World War I veterans, all people of Japanese descent were labeled enemy aliens. The result was a forced mass evacuation, with families torn apart, men placed in road camps, people situated in remote ghost towns and abandoned mining towns, and some incarcerated into internment camps.

In the camps there were no schools or formal activities for some time. So the former ballplayers organized clearing of the land and the formation of baseball diamonds, and soon the crack of a bat was drawing out participants. Baseball



teams were organized and soon the local Caucasian people, some of whom had never seen a Japanese face, lost their suspicions and came to join in.

The local merchants provided the trophies and even the B.C. commissioner and Mounties became stalwart supporters of these Japanese Canadians.

Once more the game of baseball gave the people something to cheer about, and a way to forget the anxiety and turmoil in their lives, even for a little while.

The Move Eastward

As the war came to an end, the B.C. government had to disperse the Japanese Canadian people. The political atmosphere in Vancouver was such that Japanese Canadians were restricted from returning to their homes on the coast. Their only choice was repatriation to Japan or moving eastward. At first it was the single men and then families that settled in Alberta, Ontario and Quebec. Once more in order to create a pastime, the former Asahi players began coaching and forming baseball teams for the youngsters.

In Toronto, one of the first local merchants to take an interest in the teams was Ed Mirvish, the famous entrepreneur, who sponsored Honest Ed's Nisei in 1956. Among the teammates were six local Caucasian boys. These acts of inclusion did much to dispel the sense of isolation being felt by the Nisei in their new environment.

In Montreal as well, baseball once more became the focus of the Japanese Canadian community. One remarkable Asahi player earned invitations to play semi-pro for several teams in Quebec, and an offer to join the pro baseball team, the Montreal Royals.

Roy Yamamura continued his interest in developing youngsters in Hamilton and Toronto. In 1979, the *Toronto Star* newspaper was to honor him as "Mr. Umpire" for his 24 years of dedicated service as umpire at the Annual Toronto Star Peewee Tournament.

So many actions throughout our history show how much the Asahis meant to the Japanese Canadian community. This makes it most evident: At the time of the mass exodus from their homes, some had only 24-hours' notice to evacuate with only the luggage they could carry. Among their meager treasured belongings were Asahi photos, memorabilia, and even two Asahi uniforms. These acts speak volumes about the love of the game and the place of the Asahis in creating lasting community ties.

Pat Adachi of Toronto, Canada, is the author of "Asahi: A Legend in Baseball."

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Learning the Art of Losing Gracefully in 10 Weeks

By KRISTINE SAKAMOTO

"It's not whether you win or lose but how you play the game." — This quote often ran through my mind during my pep talks in the middle of our team's most dismal volleyball season.

Although we played to the best of our ability, we discovered too late that we were hopelessly out of our league. All of the teams outclassed us. All of them.

While I had warned my teammates on how difficult the season might be, we never dreamt that it would result in an absolutely winless season.

"Were we that lame?" you may be thinking. We had held our own in the previous season albeit with a slightly different lineup and (at what I thought initially) a slightly lower skill level. But I figured as long as people had a good time that was all that mattered. Who really cared about winning a t-shirt at the end of the season and getting the bragging rights that went with it? — Well, apparently a lot of people did.

As team captain (not due to experience but because I could front the money and was willing to complete the application), I shared my philosophy that this team would be purely for fun with a low level of competitive fierceness.

We were a motley crew at different skill levels. Some had no league playing experience; another couple had been playing long before me. I was playing in my third year of recreational volleyball, and while not the best, by any means, had progressed at a decent rate.

What we all shared was a love for playing the game. What I had not anticipated was that most of the teams we had been equal with in the prior season did not sign up to play the following season, suddenly throwing us little guppies into a pool of sharks.

If losing graciously is an art, then we became master artists. But as frustrating as losing was, we never forfeited a game, never surrendered without a fight.

While the other teams probably enjoyed the easy score we were, a couple of them seemed to take the game a bit too seriously and seemed bent on trying to humiliate us. One of my teammates, a beginning player who stood under five feet with twig arms but had a lot of spunk, got beaned hard in the face early in the season by an overzealous player. That pretty much scared her off from any balls slammed over. Actually, that scared the rest of us women too.

Sure, we knew we were outgunned after a few games into the season, but you'd think people would at least lighten up to have a better rally rather than none at all. There were some teams that understood this and eased up on us so a game could be played.

Playing against such tough competition taught me that sportsmanship is learned. One doesn't necessarily acquire good sportsmanship by mere age alone. Volleyball is only a game, no matter what anyone thinks or acts on the court. Lest you think I'm bitter, I'm not ...

Well, maybe a little towards the gym director who knew what he knew about our team and about those few players who were just jerks on the court. They were probably very nice people outside the court but it's surprising how people can get in the heat of competition.

I am happy to report that my team still managed to work in laughter and high fives while playing. Rather than celebrate winning games, we celebrated each hard-earned point.

It became our running team joke and goal that we needed to score at least one point to avoid being shut out after each match. And oh, how we whooped it up each time we did get that point to the amusement of our opponents! Even now, earning that first point still holds as much meaning to me as the last.

Growing up, I had no desire to participate in team sports, but now that I'm older, I realize that I enjoy the teamwork atmosphere where you encourage each other to play a better game.

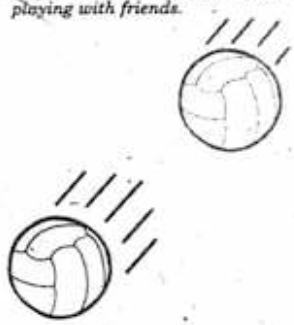
That season, I felt badly for the newcomers that were initiated through a trial by fire. After the end of the season, we never returned to that gym. Yet our desire to play was not quenched so we proceeded to sign up for another season at another gym (although a little farther away). At that time, we had yet another team evolution but still managed to have a good time, once again competing on a playing field that was equal to our skill and attitude.

Don't get me wrong, I think competition is healthy. I can be a very competitive person when I have a fighting chance. But our losing season showed me that it's important to know what you can do, and to play not just to win but to play for the fun of playing.

And while I still prefer winning to losing, I know that whichever side I'm on I can do so with grace. So while that quote at the beginning of this piece may sound trite, it still holds true for me. Believe me, I can attest to it firsthand. ■

Kristine Sakamoto is a Yonsei who is currently on hiatus from league volleyball but still enjoys playing with friends.





A Japanese American Life Without Sports

By JODY SAKAMOTO

A Japanese American patient at the hand therapy office I work at happened to know my dentist, who is also a Japanese American. I asked this Nikkei patient how he knew the Nikkei dentist, and he told me they met through basketball. What a small world. Everyone I know seems to know each other through basketball — well, except for myself.

Looking back at my younger years, I wasn't your typical JA kid. You know, the ones that had basketball practice or were on a Sansei softball league. Come to think of it, sports wasn't a big part of my life. But it did affect me because my friends wouldn't be able to go out because they had practice or tournaments. In that sense, I felt excluded.

"Sports isn't just about playing a game. In the JA community, it is a bond that binds people together."

It wasn't until college that I realized what an impact sports has on the Asian American community, JAs in particular. There would be basketball tournaments where everyone seemed to know each other, either because they played with or against each other.

Growing up, I missed out on this experience — the team camaraderie and parental rooting. But I also avoided the screaming parents if you lost a game or the high expectations that come with participating in sports.

While I didn't participate in team sports, I did enjoy individual competitions such as tennis and skiing. I even experienced a little of the team spirit when I joined an intramural volleyball team in college. It was fun and not too competitive — the way sports should be.

Now that I'm out of college, I realize sports isn't just about playing a game. In the JA community, it is a bond that binds people together — in fact, the entire community together. But I have been a part of the JA community in other ways, so I think this JA child did okay for not participating in the sports subculture, don't you think? ■

Jody Sakamoto is a Yonsei from Gardena who enjoys watching team sports.



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Staying Fit in Tokyo

By Lee Ryan Miller

The Gym

I moved to Tokyo from Los Angeles in August 1996. In L.A. I had practiced judo and worked out regularly in a gym. I planned to stay in shape in Tokyo as well.

I did some research and discovered that there were two private gyms within walking distance of my apartment, and that there was one public gym run by the city government a short bus trip away. The public gym was reasonably priced — they charged some ¥300 per visit. But when I added in the bus fare of ¥200 each way, I realized that I would likely spend the equivalent of $90 per month if I were I to visit the gym three times per week.

The two private gyms cost ¥80,000 and ¥90,000 per month, respectively — or about $80 or $90 per month. The prices shocked me. But given no viable alternative besides getting out of shape, I joined the cheaper of the two private gyms.

On my first visit, I walked in the door wearing my gym clothes and handed my membership card to the young woman at the desk. She handed me a locker key and asked a male staff member to show me around. He spoke very little English, and I spoke very little Japanese, so we communicated mostly by pantomime.

The man led me through a doorway, past the snack bar, toward a shoe rack. He gestured at my sneakers, and then at the rack. I nodded and removed my sneakers, placing them on the rack. Feet now clad only in white athletic socks, I took a step forward, beyond the rack.

"No," said the attendant, using some of the few English words he knew. "Indoor shoes."

Fortunately, I was prepared. When I had joined the gym, the salesperson had told me that I was supposed to bring a clean pair of sneakers to be worn only indoors while working out. So I reached into my gym bag, pulled out the clean pair of sneakers, and put them on.

The attendant led me down the hallway. We took about ten steps and he stopped at a door adorned with the Japanese symbol for man. The attendant opened the door for me, and I entered without noticing the shoe rack just inside. I headed for the lockers, key in hand.

"No," said the attendant. I stopped. He was pointing at the shoe rack. "No shoes," he said.

I nodded and removed my workout sneakers, placing them in the rack. The attendant herded me toward the lockers. I placed my gym bag in the locker matching my numbered key, and I tried out one of my few Japanese phrases:

"Toire wa doko desu ka?"

The attendant gestured toward a door a few steps away. I nodded and headed for the bathroom. The attendant watched me step inside.

"No," he reprimanded, gesturing to the sandals just inside the bathroom. I slipped my feet into the bathroom sandals and stepped up to the urinal.

The bathroom door shut, separating me from the attendant. I breathed a sigh of relief — partially because I'd really had to go, and partially because the attendant was not standing beside me, telling me how to pee.

I found him waiting outside the bathroom door. With a gesture, he reminded me to leave the sandals in the bathroom. Good thing. I had forgotten about them, and was about to step back into the locker room proper wearing bathroom sandals. I removed the sandals, and wearing only socks on my feet, I exited the bathroom.

The attendant gestured toward the shoe rack. I laced up my workout sneakers. He just slipped his on. Then he led me back out into the hallway.

We descended a flight of stairs and reached the workout room. The attendant attached my workout chart to a clipboard, and showed me where to find my chart stored on subsequent visits.

The man gestured toward the blood pressure machine. I sat down before it and inserted my arm. He pressed the start button, and the band tightened.

When the procedure finished, the man wrote down my blood pressure on the chart. I noticed that there was a space for my blood pressure for each visit. I guessed that I would be expected to take my blood pressure each time I went to work out.

The attendant gestured to the scale. I stepped onto it. "No, no," he growled.

I stepped down, and he pointed to my shoes. I sighed, and removed them again. The man wrote down my weight on the chart, and gestured to my shoes.

I put them on again.

Next the attendant showed me the cardiovascular machines. I selected a stationary bicycle. I warmed up for a few minutes, until I just began to break a sweat. Time to stretch out. I noticed some mats nearby, and stepped onto them.

"No, no, no!" hissed the attendant in frustration. I jumped off the mats, and he pointed to my shoes. I nodded, embarrassed, and removed them.

I stretched out for a while, and then looked around the room. There were just a half-dozen other people working out. All were wearing sneakers. I put mine back on and started lifting weights.

At one point I laid myself down on a bench. The attendant came and spotted me as I did some bench presses. I noticed that there were three attendants in the room, and only six people working out.

"I guess that's why the gym is so expensive," I thought to myself.

When I had finished my workout, the attendant asked for my chart. I handed it to him and headed for the locker room. This time I did not forget to remove my sneakers before entering.



Judo

Now that I'd joined a gym, my next order of business was to find a judo *dojo*. I had been practicing judo on and off since I was a child, and I wanted to continue while I lived in Tokyo.

The *Kodokan*, the world headquarters of judo, was in Tokyo, but it was far away from where I lived. The Kodōkan gave me the address and phone number of *Shitokukan*, a dojo in my neighborhood.

I tried calling but had difficulty communicating over the phone. So I decided to head down there in person. This is not as easy as it sounds. Addresses in Tokyo are not like addresses in the United States. For example, my address was 3-19-2 Yanaka, Taito-ku. This meant that I lived in building 2 of block 19 of region 3 of the Yanaka neighborhood of the borough of Taito.

Even more complicated, the numbers are not sequential. Block 19 is not necessarily next to block 18; nor is building 2 next to building 3 (they are numbered in the order they were constructed).

In other words, it is virtually impossible to find an address in Tokyo without detailed directions. When you have an appointment, the person you are meeting usually either faxes you a map or meets you at the train station and leads you there.

I really wanted to join this dojo, though, so I decided to give it a try. Using a street atlas, I figured out roughly where the dojo should be located, and then asked for directions. I showed the address to one woman, who led me for a block in one direction before giving up apologetically. A man led me in a completely different direction, before also giving up apologetically. Finally, a third passerby noticed a sign for Shitokukan.

The trouble was that I could find no dojo. All I could find at that location was a small sign

See STAYING FIT/ page 95

> After a great deal of effort, I learned that Takahashi-san had told them that it would be *abunai* (dangerous) if I were to throw them, since Americans threw too hard. I did not throw anyone on the first night we practiced. But by halfway through our second meeting, I convinced my companions that I was not dangerous, and they allowed me to throw them.

INDIANA JONES SAVED ME



By GLEN KITAYAMA

Basketball is my favorite sport. Being a UCLA graduate, I follow the Bruins whenever I can and have been an avid Los Angeles Lakers fan ever since I was able to dribble a basketball. Like many other Los Angeles area Sansei in their 30s and 40s, I learned the game playing in the Community Youth Council (CYC) basketball leagues. I played for the Evergreen Knights.

I wish that I could say that we were a good team when we first started out and that I was the star player. Truthfully, we were all awful. When our team first began playing in the third grade, we were by far the worst team in the league. We didn't win one game in the entire season. I remember being creamed in our first season 42-0 by the Montebello Jets. I also remember having to face my very disappointed father and dreading the long ride home. "Why didn't you move around more?" he lectured to me. "All of you were just standing around!" Now, don't get me wrong, my dad was and is a great guy. His only problem was that he was an ex-football jock in high school and an avid Nisei golfer who expected his youngest son to be a little more athletic. Or he expected his son to at least try to be a little more athletic.

As the years passed, I grew to enjoy playing basketball even though I was just an average player. Some of the other players on the team became great players. By the time we had reached the sixth grade, we towered over all of the other teams and crushed them with our motion offense and our John Wooden/UCLA press defense. For the next three seasons, we dominated the league and we were actually good enough to beat teams in the older divisions.

Now, before I begin to sound too much like a pathetic old guy reliving the glory days of childhood basketball, I want to stress that I was just a bench player on those teams. By the time I had entered into the games in the middle of the first quarter, we were ahead by so many points that the game was basically over. Our job in the second unit was to not mess things up too badly while the starters took their mandatory rest on the bench. (In the CYC, all kids were required to play in every quarter.)

It wasn't easy being a bench player. I was a second string power forward who really wanted to be the starting shooting guard. Instead of working on my rebounding and defensive skills, I practiced my 20-foot jump shot — much to the disgust of my coach.

And to make matters worse, my best friend Michael was one of the all-stars on the team. Not only was he a better player than me, he was also taller, smarter, better looking and more popular with the guys and the girls. You can imagine what having a friend like that did to a kid's ego.

I actually had a lot of JA friends like Michael when I was growing up. All of them — and I mean all of them — were smarter than me. Out of all of my friends, I believe that I was the only one who was ever happy to get a "B" on his report card. If you're beginning to think that I hated my childhood, you're probably right.

Things didn't really begin to change for me until I became involved in the redress movement and then entered graduate school at UCLA when I was 26 years old. At the time, I still didn't know what I wanted to do with my life and wasn't certain that I belonged in graduate school. I loved the classes and the learning environment, but I also had a very difficult time adjusting to life at UCLA.

Feeling overwhelmed, my friend Karen counseled on how to survive graduate school. Her first piece of advise was on self-preservation and time management. "Do you remember that scene in Raiders of the Lost Ark when that giant boulder is tumbling down on Indiana Jones?" she asked me. "Well, just imagine that instead of being a big boulder, it's really a cluster of rocks and your job is to swat them away, one-by-one." History paper to write? Swat! Redress meeting to attend? Swat! Meeting over Don Nakanishi's tenure case? Swat! ... Going to work? ... Sociology paper due? Swat! Swat! Swat!

Her second piece of advice was to take time out for myself. I told her that I enjoyed playing basketball and her eyes lit up. "My husband Brian loves basketball!" she told me. "Why don't you play with him?"

I dreaded the thought. My

See INDIANA/page 95

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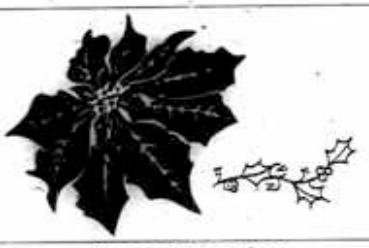
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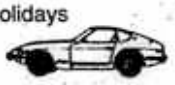
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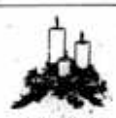
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INDIANA

(Continued from page 85)

friend Karen reminded me of a Nisei mother who wanted me to be nice to her only son. And, of course, I already knew her husband and wasn't t sure if I really liked him all that much. We had met on a couple of occasions since we were both affiliated with the UCLA Asian American Studies Center. I thought that he was pretty arrogant. And for the most part, I was right. He probably thought that I was a self righteous community activist. And if he did, he was probably right. He was also smarter, better looking, and more popular with the women. But hey, at least I was taller. I gave him a call.

We began shooting hoops a few weeks later. I practiced for a few days before shooting around with Brian to try to get my playing rhythm back. Of course, I never told him this. We exchanged the obligatory stories on how long it had been since we last touched a basketball and then went to work on each other. Since I was bigger and slower than Brian was, he kept torching me from the outside and used his quickness to drive to the basket.

"So how long has it been since you played?" I asked. "Oh, it's been a long time!" he reassured me. ("Liar!" I thought to myself.) He must have been out on the court every day since I asked him if he wanted to play. When I got the ball back, I popped a jump shot from the top of the key. Clank! Off the rim. I got the long rebound and put up another jump shot. Clank! Off the rim again. Brian then proceeded to take me to school for the rest of the game with his array of set shots, drives, and jump-hooks.

Man, I hated him and the mind games that he was playing. He was pulling that modesty/*enryo* crap on me. I began to tense up since he was even being more "JA" than I was. I had visions of that giant boulder coming down to crush me again. And then, Karen's words of wisdom came back to me. I dissected the boulder and realized that I had to defend against his drives to the basket. If he kills me from the outside, I could live with that. He wasn't going to control the paint. Then, I had to figure out my counterattack. As usual, the outside shot wasn't working, so I had to use my height and my muscle to score from the inside.



PHOTO: Courtesy of Glen Kitayama

Evergreen Knights basketball team, c. 1976. All-stars in the back row; bench players in the front row. Author holds team ball after scoring

We went at it again. He torched me from the outside again, but couldn't score close to the basket. Every time he drove to the hoop, I either forced him to take a bad shot or he ended up on the concrete floor. It wasn't fair, but I also figured that it wasn't fair that he had a better outside shot than me. I took game two. "Good game!" I said to Brian. "Yeah, good game," he replied back to me. He complimented me on my inside game. "Yeah, but I sure wish that I could shoot like you," I told him. Now we were even.

I don't recall who won the rest of the games that one Sunday afternoon. The only thing that I do remember is that our skills seemed to cancel each other out. I couldn't defend his outside shot and he couldn't handle me from the inside. We both went home pretty exhausted and vowed to play again the next week. I practiced every day on my inside moves and rebounding. I even practiced springing up and down the court to defend against his drives to the hoop. And while Brian insisted that he was too busy to work on his game, I noticed over the ensuing weeks that his upper body strength increased and I found myself kissing the concrete floor after a hard foul.

Very soon, others started to join our games. We had a core of six guys to play 3-on-3 basketball and that grew to eight, and then to 10 until we reached a peak of around 20 guys who wanted to play. Because teams were chosen by whoever made their free throws first, Brian and I often ended up on the same team along with another old JA guy, Erich. The other teams were usually younger, faster, and more talented than the three of us. But we understood our roles on the team, played within ourselves, and usually won the games with intense defense, ball movement, hustle, and the ability to dissect the other teams weaknesses.

Over the years, those weekly basketball games became my release from the daily stress of graduate school. The games allowed me to refocus my vision and swat away all of the rocks that inevitably come at you as you get older. And when my mom died in 1991, my basketball buddies helped to pull me through by being there on the court on Sunday mornings when I needed them the most. I never talked to them about my mom's death. It would have been unnatural for a group of Asian American men to talk about their feelings. Instead, we played ball like we always did every Sunday and then went to Kenny's Café for lunch.

As the years passed, Brian and I became the best of friends. His irritating JA qualities became humorous to me since I had to admit that I possessed many of the same cultural values that were irritating to him. He challenged my intellect in AA history and I think that I played a role in his expanding commitment to the JA community. It's funny how things work out in the long run. Today, I teach AA history at the college level and Brian is very active in JA politics in Hawaii.

Brian is also a very proud father now and I do my best to be the favorite uncle to his daughter May. I'm hoping that Brian and Karen have another kid and that he/she is born around the same time as the kid that I hope to have in the future. I think that it would be fun to have them grow up and play together. I could imagine them playing on the same teams and being as clueless as I was when I first started playing basketball. I can also see Brian and myself up in the stands together criticizing the play of our kids. "Why don't they move around more out there?" Brian would ask. "Beats me," I would reply as I shake my head. "We never played like that when we were kids." ■

Glen Kitayama writes from Monterey Park, Calif. He swears that all events depicted in this article are at least 50 percent accurate. He can be reached via email at <cikuo@earthlink.net>.

STAYING FIT

(Continued from page 84)

factory. I asked some of the workmen, "*Judo dojo wa doko desu ka?*"

They answered me, but I could not understand their response. Finally, they led me upstairs to the office of the owner.

Takahashi-san, the owner, was a man in his early fifties, and he spoke some English. He showed me the dojo, which was located next to his office above the factory. It was a single small room, encompassing the whole second floor. Then he took me to the third floor, where he lived with his wife and three children. He gave me some beer and explained that he owned the three-story building, and that he would allow me to practice judo in his dojo.

There was no formal class; people just came to practice for free. He said that he would let the others know that I was interested, and invited me to return on Tuesday at 6 p.m. I thanked him and went home.

I had looked forward to practicing judo in Japan. I'm 5'9" tall, and in the United States I was usually the smallest man in the class. In Japan, I'd thought, I would be tall.

No such luck. When I returned to Shitokukan, I met two high school boys, perhaps seventeen years old. Both were taller than I. Takahashi-san said a few words to them, and then he left.

The two teenagers did not speak much English, and I hardly spoke any Japanese. This was not a major problem, since our activity was mostly physical anyway. But I noticed that, while they threw each other, they would allow me to do only *uchikomi* (fitting in for a throw, but stopping short of throwing).

After a great deal of effort, I learned that Takahashi-san had told them that it would be *abunai* (dangerous) if I were to throw them, since Americans threw too hard. I did not throw anyone on the first night we practiced. But by halfway through our second meeting, I convinced my companions that I was not dangerous, and they allowed me to throw them.

Golf

Most Japanese men, I noticed, did not exercise very much, aside from walking to and from the subway station. They usually worked from early in the morning until very late at night. But I did learn from one of my students that golf is very popular among Japanese businessmen. I also learned about a very interesting custom associated with golf in Japan.

Avid golf players take out golf insurance. At first I did not find this very unusual. After all, if you accidentally injure someone in the United States with a ball or a golf club, you could face an expensive lawsuit. This, however, is not the type of mishap that Japanese golf insurance protects you against. Japanese golfers take out insurance against the danger of getting a hole-in-one.

Despite the fact that a round of golf in Tokyo can cost several hundred dollars, golf is a very popular sport among Japanese businessmen. Like all activities in Japanese society, playing golf has certain social obligations attached to it. I am not referring to the necessity to play golf in order to conduct business on the golf course — although this is certainly common. No, I am referring to your obligations, should you achieve the distinction of getting a hole-in-one.

In Japan, whenever you do something noteworthy you are expected to provide gifts to everyone who knows you in the context of your achievement. For example, guests at Japanese weddings do not receive mere party favors, but rather, everyone receives expensive gifts.

So, too, with holes-in-one. If you make a hole-in-one, you must give expensive gifts to all of the people with whom you are playing. But it doesn't stop there. You also must give gifts to all of the people with whom you have played golf in the past. Furthermore, you must give gifts to all of your colleagues at work.

The value of the gift depends on two factors: the social status of the giver and the social status of the receiver. In general, the higher up the corporate ladder you are, the more expensive your gifts must be. It is not uncommon for someone making a hole-in-one to spend tens of thousands of dollars on gifts.

Thus, it turns out that golf insurance is a unique solution to a very Japanese problem. ■

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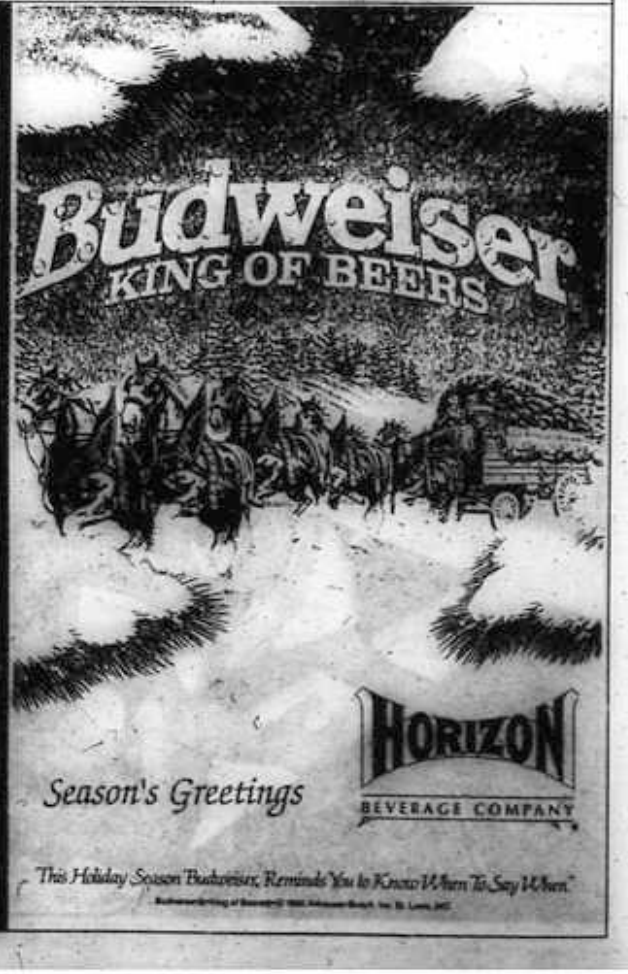
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The Girlz Got Game!!

(Continued from Page 86)



Ann Kiyomura Hayashi

every age division and won 14 junior titles, including the U.S. Girls 18's in 1972. Her biggest win came at the 1973 Junior Wimbledon when she defeated tennis legend Martina Navratilova in the final. Kiyomura and her sister Vicky dominated the Hawaii State Tennis Championships in the 1970s. Their mother, Hisayo, was once the third-ranking tennis player in Japan.

1977—Miki Gorman (distance running): Already 33 years old by the time she took up the sport, the 5-foot-1, 89 pound Gorman only began running in 1969 with her husband, Mike, and competed in her first official 26-mile marathon in 1973 in Palos Verde, Calif., which she won. In late 1974, she won the Western Hemisphere marathon with a new record time for women — two hours, 46 minutes and 36 seconds. She is a two-time winner of both the Boston and New York marathons. Her best time came at the 1976 New York marathon where she clocked in at two hours, 39 minutes and 11 seconds, just four minutes and 36 seconds behind the world record. Born Michiko Suwa in Fukuoka, Gorman came to the United States in 1964 and attended Carlisle College. At one point, her training schedule consisted of 10 miles of running in the morning and 10 miles in the evening, seven days a week.

1979—Alice Eguchi (weightlifting): This 102 pounder was 42 years old when she won the 1979 California state weightlifting championship in the 114.1-pound division. At that competition, she deadlifted 281.1 pounds and squat lifted 192.9 pounds, setting a new national masters record in her division (ages 40-44). She also bench pressed 93.7 pounds for a total weight of 567.7, which set a national masters and a state women's record. Altogether, the Oakland, Calif.-native set more than 60 local, state and national powerlifting records. She originally started lifting weights to strengthen her arms for karate.

1980s - 1990s

1980—Gail Hirata (golf): At 24 years old, this Sansei became the first-ever JA woman to join the pro golfing circuit. Hirata, who grew up in Montebello, Calif., placed third in her first tournament with the Southern California Junior Golf Association at the age of 10. She went on to play at Whittier College on the men's golf squad where she was among the top three players. She vied for a spot on the LPGA tour in January 1979 but missed the cut by seven strokes. By August of that same year, however, she went back to the qualifying trials and hit rounds of 81, 81, 78 and 75, totaling 315 swings, to place third out of 89 women competing for pro status.

1984—Lisa Ishikawa (softball): A top pitcher for Division I team Northwestern, this 19-year-old Stockton, Calif.-native set an NCAA record during her freshman year for pitching 244-and-a-half innings and striking out 386 batters. Her team produced a 29-4 record that year and achieved their first national ranking, while Ishikawa received Big Ten Player of the Year and Freshman of the Year awards. The high school valedictorian was one of three or four collegiate women pitchers to have mastered the riseball.

1984—Lee Ann Sera (basketball): Sera of Saratoga, Calif., was a walk-on member of the University of California women's basketball team which took the national collegiate women's basketball title in 1984 and 1985. She played with the likes of Cheryl Miller and Pam McGee, both of whom made it onto the Final Four All-Tournament Team. Sera began playing basketball through the San Jose CYS program, and went on to help gain the league, sectional and Northern California championship titles for the Zebrettes and Los Gatos High Orange Crush as its point guard and outside shooter.

1991—Kelli Kawashima (volleyball): Kawashima of San Jose received a volleyball scholarship to the University of Denver where she became co-captain of university's women volleyball team, the Pioneers. She set an all-time school record for assists and was named to the Colorado Athletic Conference All-Conference Volleyball Team in 1991.

1992—Sandra Bacher and Liliko Ogasawara (judo): Both Bacher, 28, and Ogasawara, 24, were students at San Jose State University when they made it onto the 1996 U.S. Olympic judo team. Bacher had also represented the U.S. at the Barcelona Olympic Games in 1992.

1992—Liane Sato (volleyball): In 1988 and 1992, Sato was a member of the U.S. women's Olympic volleyball teams which took home bronze medals both years. This year, the former setter served as head coach for Santa Monica High School's girls volleyball team. Brother Eric was a member of the 1988 men's Olympic volleyball squad which took home a gold that year, while other brother Gary served as an assistant coach for that team.

1992—Kristi Yamaguchi (figure skating): Hands down the most internationally recognized JA female athlete of all time, Yamaguchi took home a gold in singles figure skating at the 1992 Winter Olympics in Albertville, France. Prior to winning her Olympic medal, the Fremont, Calif.-native won both the 1992 and 1991 World Figure Skating Championships as well as the 1992 U.S. National Championship. Since taking up the sport at age six, Yamaguchi has compiled an impressive record, beginning in 1986, when she and then-skating partner Rudy Galindo won the Junior Nationals in the pairs division. They followed it up with a win at the 1988 Junior World Championship in pairs and that same year, she took home the Junior World singles title. After Albertville, Yamaguchi left the amateur ranks and has since won numerous professional titles, in addition to touring with Discover Stars on Ice.



Kristi Yamaguchi

1992—Yoko Zetterlund (volleyball): This Olympic-caliber setter helped her U.S. team win a bronze medal in women's volleyball at the 1992 Barcelona Games. She went on to compete in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics where the U.S. women's volleyball team finished seventh. Zetterlund, now 30 years old, is capping off her career this year with the 48th Kurowashiki, her final competition before she retires.

1993—Kelly Inouye-Perez (softball): Inouye-Perez is returning for her seventh season as UCLA's women's softball assistant coach this year. An alum of UCLA herself, the three-time All Pac-10 selection graduated in 1993 after competing on three NCAA Championship teams in 1989, 1990 and 1992 as the Bruins' starting catcher.

1998—Pat Hurst (golf): This pro golfer since 1994 is the winner of two recent LPGA titles, the 1998 Nabisco Dinah Shore and the 1997 Oldsmobile Classic. As a young woman, Hurst, a Sansei, showed early promise, winning both the 1986 USGA Junior Championships and the 1990 USGA Amateur Championships. The putting phenom went on to become the two-time conference Player of the Year and a first-team All American as a member of San Jose State University's women's golf team from 1988 to 1991. She was recently inducted into the San Jose State University Sports Hall of Fame.

1998—Megumi Takasaki (softball): As a senior at UC Berkeley in 1998, Takasaki was starting catcher as well as leadoff hitter for Cal's women's softball team. During her first three years of collegiate play, she was a consistent hitter, boasting a career batting average of .295. In her junior year, she was named to the all-tournament team at the NCAA regional after going 4-for-9 with two runs and an RBI and was voted second team Academic All-Pac 10. Takasaki was an honorable mention All-Pac 10 pick in both her freshman and sophomore years. The Fullerton, Calif.-native was a softball standout at Sunny Hills High School, where she earned team MVP honors after both her junior and senior years and was a three-time all-league performer. A multi-sport athlete, she also competed on her high school basketball, cross country, soccer, swimming and volleyball teams. This past summer, Takasaki, 22, debuted in the Women's Professional Softball League as a catcher for the Carolina Diamonds.

1999—Lauren Arase (soccer): A freshman goalkeeper for USC, Arase has helped her team to a 2-0 record in the Pac-10 and a 9-3 record overall so far this season. She has gone 4-0 as a starter and has a goals-against average of 0.553. She is a graduate of La Canada High School in Southern California.

A History of Notable JA Women

The Girls Got Game!! The Girls Got Game!! The Girls Got Game!! The Girls Got Game!! The Girls Got Game!! The Girls Got Game!! The Girls Got Game!! The Girls Got Game!! The Girls Got Skills!! The Girls Got Game!!

1999—**Kiralee Hayashi (gymnastics)**: Hailing from Kailua, Hawaii, this standout gymnast ended her collegiate career this year as a nine-time All-American. A co-captain for UCLA's 1999 Pac-10 Gymnastics championship team, she was awarded the 1998-99 Pac-10 Conference Medal in June, which is given annually to one male and female student athlete from each institution based on achievement in athletics, scholarship and leadership. She also won the NCAA balance beam title this season and was the Pac-10 Gymnast of the Year for 1999. In addition, Hayashi was a finalist for the AAI American Award, given to the nation's most outstanding all-around senior gymnast.

1999—**Skye Hosoya (boxing)**: An up-and-coming Nikkei woman boxer.

1999—**B.J. Itoman (basketball)**: Itoman, who graduated from the University of Hawaii last year, scored her career-high 29 points during a UH vs. Fresno State game during the 1998-99 season. The 5-foot-5 ultra-quick point guard became UH's all-time assist leader. She was named to the All-Western Athletic Conference first-team and selected as Academic All-American. Wahine basketball coach Vince Goo says Itoman exemplifies the university's team work ethic. Itoman, the daughter of Carole and Jeffrey Itoman of Honolulu, cites her mother as the most influential person in her life.

1999—**Lindsay Kagawa (volleyball)**: A junior setter for Stanford, Kagawa stands 5-foot-9 and currently ranks No. 2 in the Pac-10 with 13.16 assists per game. Although she spent her sophomore year as a reserve, she made four late-season starts while starting setter Robyn Lewis was out with a foot injury. That year, she posted a career-high 54 assists in the San Diego State Tournament. Her career statistics include 659 assists, 89 digs and 23 kills. During her high school career, Kagawa was named the 1996 North Coast Section Player of the Year. She was a two-time West County Times Player of the Year as well as a four-time all-league selection and four-time team MVP.

1999—**Kelli Kamimura (golf)**: As a freshman at the University of Washington in 1998, Kamimura was ranked No. 1 nationally in the mid-October Golfstat rankings after averaging 72.33 strokes per round. Her average was .61 lower than the previous year's winner of the Golfstat Cup, an award given each season to the collegiate woman golfer with the lowest yearly scoring average. In early 1997, Kamimura was only a 17-year-old junior at Sedro-Woolley High School in Washington state, who won three tournaments on the national junior golf scene and was pursued by recruiters from Arizona, Tennessee, Texas, Wake Forest, Washington, USC and UCLA. By late 1997, then a high school senior, Kamimura played in the Safeco Classic on the LPGA tour against some of the top women in pro golf. The daughter of two school teachers, Kamimura and younger sister Jenny were coached by retired business teacher Rudy Franulovich, who died in June 1996 at the age of 76 of heart problems.

1999—**Helen Nakano (naginata)**: One of the premier practitioners of naginata in the United States, an ancient Japanese martial art which uses a long staff with a curved sword-like blade on the end, Nakano is the chief instructor and president of the Southern California Naginata Federation and co-founder of the United States Naginata Federation. She serves as a member of the Technical Committee for the International Naginata Federation, which was formed in Japan in 1990. For the past 30 years Nakano has studied naginata, which is today practiced only by women. Born in Seattle, she studied under Chiyoko Tokunaga Sensei, Yoko Yamao Sensei and Sachiko Wada Sensei. She trained in both naginata and kendo under Torao Mori Sensei and has herself reached the teaching rank of renshi, having conducted numerous seminars in cities across the country. In March 1999, she was inducted into the El Camino College Women's Wall of Fame. Her husband, California State Assemblyman George Nakano, is a kendo 5-dan renshi.

1999—**Natalie Nakase (basketball)**: A 5-foot-2 dynamo who proves that height is no obstacle, Nakase was recruited out of Marina High School in Huntington Beach, Calif., to play for Division I [Pac-10] team UCLA. Previously, the Yonsei led her high school team to two Sunset League titles as well as the 1998 CIF Championship, for which she received All-CIF first team honors. She was also named the 1998 Orange County Player of the Year by the *Orange County Register*. However, Nakase was redshirted last year as a UCLA freshman because of torn ligaments in her left knee sustained during summer league play. Now, having just entered her sophomore year and undergone reconstructive surgery to repair her knee, she is expected to see a bit of playing time this season as a back-up point guard for UCLA.

1999—**Keri Nishimoto (volleyball)**: The 5-foot-7 sophomore setter for NCAA defending champions, Long Beach State, was recently named Big West Co-Player of the Week, averaging 14.01 assists per game and heading a team which leads their conference in hitting percentage, assists, kills and blocks per game. Nishimoto recently broke the school record with 95 assists, previously set by teammate and one of college volleyball's all-time top setters, Misty May, who posted 87 assists last year. Nishimoto was named CIF Division III Player of the Year during her senior year at Redlands High School in Calif.

1999—**Sumi Onodera-Leonard (distance running)**: 71-year-old masters champion

1999—**Marie Sugiyama (various sports)**: Sugiyama of Santa Rosa, Calif., was inducted into Chico State University's Athletic Hall of Fame on Oct. 16. While attending Chico State, she competed in badminton, basketball, softball and volleyball, and from 1963 to 1964, she represented the Chico State Associated Student Body as the Women's Athletic Association's president. She went on to receive her master's degree in physical education at San Francisco State University. In 1966, she began teaching physical education and business at Montgomery High in Santa Rosa. At Montgomery, she was the girls' athletic director for 23 years and coached the Montgomery badminton team to 13 North Bay League Championships. She has also coached basketball, field hockey, softball, volleyball and gymnastics. She has served on the selection committee for the U.S. National Team/Squad and has national officials' ratings in basketball, field hockey, softball and volleyball. Among her many recognitions include the outstanding athletic director in the North Coast Section by the California State Athletic Directors' Association and as North Coast Section Honor Coach for badminton. In 1995, she became the first woman to receive the Phil Hempler Award, the highest honor given by the North Coast Section CIF. Sugiyama retired from teaching, coaching, and as girls' athletic director in 1997. Sugiyama is currently in her 25th year as the North Bay Athletic League co-commissioner. She is a member of the North Coast Section Sports Advisory Committee of League Commissioners and served as the chairperson from 1985 to 1994. She has also served on NCS management committees for badminton, softball, basketball and volleyball.



Marie Sugiyama

1999—**Lindsey Yamasaki (basketball/volleyball)**: Although only a freshman last year, Yamasaki is already primed to become one of the top two-sport female athletes at the Division I women's collegiate level. In basketball, the 6-foot-1 shooting guard led Stanford last year in team scoring with 14 points per game. She was subsequently named a preseason All-American Honorable Mention by *Women's Basketball Journal*. She is a member of Stanford's No. 2-ranked volleyball team and was a top basketball recruit out of high school, leading her alma mater, Oregon City, to four consecutive 4A state championships, in her last year averaging 25.2 ppg

the roots of JA girls basketball

[illegible] They were coached by George [illegible] Buddhist church [illegible] the team had been planning a tour of the Pacific Northwest when Pearl Harbor was bombed on Dec. 7, 1941. Most of the Busy Bees were sent to the Stockton Assembly Center and then to the Rohwer Relocation Center.

Wartime basketball: Despite the fact that they were behind barbed wire, JA continued to play sports in several of the U.S. wartime concentration camps. In Manzanar, Amache and Topaz, high school girls continued to play basketball. Some from Topaz were allowed to play in Denver. Meanwhile, a Minidoka girls softball team was sometimes allowed to play against outside teams. As Japan began to lose the war, some young women were allowed to leave the camps for school or work, many of whom [illegible]

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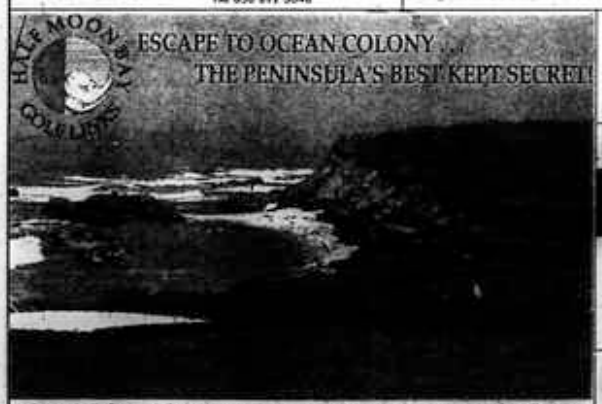
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Early Nisei Athletics

By SHAKE USHIO

In the Spring of 1930 the country was sliding inexorably into the jaws of hard times and depression, but three Issei farmers, B. Mitsunaga, I. Hagio, and M. Ushio had spring fever and baseball fever in their hearts and decided to organize a Junior baseball team for the older Nisei children among the Japanese farmers living in the rural areas of Salt Lake County. They raised some money, bought a few equipment and named the team "Murray Taiyo" (Murray Suns).

Mr. Mitsunaga's sons Hiroshi, Kiyoshi, and Tomio were too young to play at first but the father was an avid baseball fan and spent countless hours rounding up the team members for practice and for games. Mr. Hagio's son Mits was also too young, but the father was a genuine student of baseball and offered to coach the team. Mr. Ushio acted as treasurer and helped raise the funds necessary for the team. His two sons Shigeki and Jim played as did some of their friends including Yukus Inouye, John Aoki, Takeo Tadehara, Harvey Rynearson, George Waki, Michio Sasaki, Don Mori, Tom Matsumori and others.

About this time, other Nisei junior (early teenager) baseball teams in localities such as Syracuse, Ogden, Corrine and two teams in Salt Lake City, the S.L. Busseis, and the S.L. Nippons were being formed. Teams on a very informal basis would schedule games and play against each other.

Prior to this time in the twenties, some of the younger single Isseis in places like Bingham Canyon, Arthur and Magna Mills, and Garfield Smelter Camps, and in Salt Lake City had teams that on certain occasions such as national holidays would enjoy an afternoon of *yakyu shiai* (baseball game). One year at a state wide community picnic staged at Lagoon, a Salt Lake City team was pitted against a camp team. Players like Mr. Oike, Naoki Kobayashi, a Mr. Kido, and the Yoshida brothers who used to operate the "New Era Garage" on West Temple Street, and others put on quite a show.

When in the early thirties, the Kurumada family from Ogden, the Yasukochi brothers Hero and Johnny from Carbon county, and Moe and Yo Takagaki from Tremonton, moved to Murray, the athletic prospect for the Murray Taiyo improved tremendously. For two years Joe and Jun Kurumada, Shake Ushio, and Hero Yasukochi played with the S.L. Nippons who besides the old-timers had Nisei players like Edward I. Hashimoto, Sen Nishiyama, and Hatsuo and Tak Okuda. They also had a colorful Korean American player named Stan Paik. The Salt Lake Nippons, managed and coached by Mr. Yoshida, usually played town teams located up and down the Wasatch Front in the days when baseball was truly a national pastime and every community had a team of their own. A highlight of the season was an annual game with the Salt Lake Tigers, a colorful black team with a garrulous old manager named "George" who entertained the fans and the players with his ongoing baseball stories and comments.

After two years the Murray players returned to form the Murray Taiyo senior team. The team was bolstered by Tom Kurumada who as quarterback for the State Champion Granite High football team and as a star swimmer for the swimming team made quite a name for himself, by Yukus Inouye a guard for the equally strong Jordan High Beetdiggers football team, and by Joe Kurumada, a pitcher for the Granite High's baseball team, who once struck out 23 Bingham High batters in a game.



Salt Lake Nippons baseball team, c. 1929.

During this time, the first formal Nisei baseball league was organized. Joe Kurumada and Shake Ushio representing the Murray Taiyo met with representatives from five other Nisei teams and drew up a home and home schedule for the summer and a single elimination tournament to cap it off at the end of the season. Some of the others involved in the planning sessions included the Asahina brothers from the Salt Lake Nippons, Naoki Kobayashi and Kay Tanashima from the S.L. Bussei team, the Nakano Brothers from the Syracuse team in Davis County, George and Dick Yoshida and Kaz Sato from Ogden, and Kol Haramoto and Sootie Yamasaki from Northern Utah.

For about ten years until the outbreak of the Second World War the Nisei baseball league flourished and some of the senior team became quite good. Each team fielded two teams (a senior team and a junior team) and the competition between the various areas became very keen. When the players on the junior team became older or more skillful, they joined the senior team whose ranks were thinned out by players going away to school, moving away or getting burned out.

Besides playing in the Nisei League some of the senior teams (notably the Murray Taiyo) scheduled games against some of the better town teams from places like Draper, Tooele, Midvale, Layton and other places as well as against semi-pro Industrial League teams such as Magna-Garfield and Salina and were competitive with them.

One summer a sports writer from the old Salt Lake Telegram newspaper backed the Murray Taiyo baseball team and arranged a game with Ogden Boosters, a talent laden baseball team that was taking on all comers. In the fifth inning, behind five to two, we managed to load up the bases. Joe Kurumada came up to bat and lined a solid base hit over the shortstop's head and bounced it over the left fielder and into a hole in the left field fence for a home run. Yukus Inouye with his crossover submarine pitches that seemed to come right out of the ground then completely frustrated the Ogden batters in the final two innings to preserve a 6-5 victory. We got a nice write-up on the game.

In the winter months the same line-up of teams minus Corrine and Syracuse sponsored a basketball league and tournament that provided the young Nisei players with wholesome recreational opportunities. The basketball league was dominated by the Salt Lake Golden Nippon team with two six-foot-plus Kato Brothers, Tom and Noboru, Sam Matsukawa, Ike Oki, Asahina boys, Kaz Iwasaki and others. They also went outside of the Nisei league to play in Salt Lake City Interdenominational Church League at the Westminster College Gym.

Competition against the Golden Nips were furnished by the Bussei team led by Tosh Igata and Juddy Doi, the Murray Taiyo with Tim Kurumada, George Waki, Yukus Inouye, Tom and Min Matsumori, and Ushio brothers Shake and Jim, and Ogden Nippon featuring Sadao Takahashi, Tosh Koga, and for a year or two with an up and coming High School star Wat Misaka. When Tim Kurumada and Tosh Koga left for Southern California, the Kato brothers for Japan, and Wat Misaka busied himself with Ogden High School and University of Utah basketball teams, the competition leveled off until the Second World War when the original Nisei basketball league was discontinued.

During the war years in 1942-43, a morale sustaining series of three games a night weekly basketball games were played in the friendly confines of the Westminster College Gymnasium. Some of the teams involved included the Nuggets with the Kasai Brothers and evacuees from the Northwest, the Trojans with Southern California ties, the S.L. Busseis, two teams from Murray Taiyos, Kettley evacuees from Peoa, the Salt Lake Jokers with Tyra Tashiro, and the S.L. Nippons.

In the post war period Nisei athletic programs generally dwindled except for some high powered basketball tournaments involving teams from San Francisco, Southern California, Denver and Salt Lake City. The Davis County Nisei Baseball Team also sponsored some interesting baseball tournaments featuring teams from California, Denver, and Davis County Nisei teams.

Some of the premier athletes from the Nisei ranks are Tom Kurumada quarterback and swimmer at Granite High School, Yukus Inouye a guard on Jordan High football team, Joe Kurumada a baseball pitcher at Granite High School, and Jack Aramaki a star quarterback at Carbon High School. At the University level, Wat Misaka was a popular star on the University of Utah basketball team under coach Vadal Peterson that won both the NCAA National Championship and the National Invitational Title in 1944 and 1947.

Among the Sansei Japanese American athletes, all-staters Gary Takenaka and Jeff Takenaka starred on the West High football team, while Pat Oki earned an all-state status as a linesman on the Judge Memorial Team. Ronald Inouye was an effective quarterback on the American Fork football team. Dennis Yamasaki from Corrine played running back and receiver for the Utah State University football team. Lisa Ikegami made her mark as a golfer in the Salt Lake area as did the Yamada sisters from Alta High School. Ida Tateoka of South Jordan, Utah, is a qualified International figure skating judge and represented the United States as a judge for the Figure Skating Competition at the Sarajevo Winter Olympics. She still travels extensively judging at major figure skating competitions across the country. ■

The above article is an excerp from the book entitled, "Japanese Americans in Utah."

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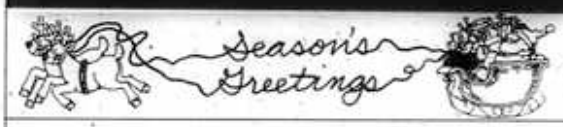
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2000 TOURS

Mar 16	**Millennium Special - 9-Day - 17 Meals - $2295** - Tokyo- Kamakura-Lake Biwa-Okayama-Ako-Takahashi-Tamano-Inland Sea-Kyoto.
Mar 27	**Spring Cherry Blossom - 11-Day - 23 Meals - $2995** - Tokyo-Takayama-Nara-Hiroshima-Tsuwano-Inland Sea-Shodo Isle-Kyoto.
Apr 5	**Nishi-Nihon Onsen Kanko - 9-Day -20 Meals - $2895** -Osaka-Shirahama-Takahashi-Nishi-Nagato-Tamatsukuri-Yumura-Kobe.
Apr 17	**Japan by Train - 11-Day - 25 Meals - $3495** - Tokyo-Takahashi-Nishi-Nagato-Hirado-Karatsu-Kobe-Atsumi Onsen-Hiroshi-Tokyo
May 7	**Europe Classic - 14-Day - 22-Meals - $3295** - All 2-Day Stopovers. London - Paris - Lucerne - Venice - Florence - Rome.
May 19	**Australia & New Zealand - 16-Day - 29 Meals - $3795** - Melbourne-Cairns-Barrier Reef-Sydney, Australia & Christchurch-Queenstown-Milford Sound-Mt. Cook-Rotorua-Auckland, New Zealand.
Jun 6	**America Once More - 10-Day -18 Meals - $1295** - By bus - LA to: Manzanar-Mammoth-Yosemite-Reno-Minidoka-Yellowstone-Heart Mt.-Jackson-Salt Lake-Topaz-Bryce-Zion-Las Vegas-LA.
Jun 17	**Hawaiian Inland Cruise - 4 Islands - 8-Day - All Meals - from $1995.**
Jul 15	**Alaska Cruise - Inside Passage - 8-Day - All Meals - from $2095.**
Aug 10	**Scandinavia - 12-Day - 20 Meals - $3495** - Copenhagen, Denmark - Bergen-Stalheim-Lillehammer-Oslo, Norway - Stockholm, Sweden.
Sep 1	**South African Adventure - 16-Day - 29 Meals - $3950** - Via Brazil - Johannesburg-Kruger Park-Timbavati-Capetown-Victoria Falls.
Sep 22	**New England/Canada Foliage Cruise-12-Day-All meal-from $2458**
Oct 2	**Japan Fall Classic - 11-Day - 23 Meals - $3095** - Tokyo-Takayama-Amanohashidate-Hiroshima-Tsuwano-Inland Sea-Shodo Isle-Kyoto.
Oct 9	**Hokkaido/Tohoku - 11-Day - 24 Meals - $3595**- Sapporo, Sounkyo Gorge, Ainu Village, Lake Toya, Hakodate, Aomori, Lake Towada, Hachimantai Onsen, Matsushima Bay, Sendai & Tokyo.
Oct 16	**NEW DATE "Ursashoe"Otherside Japan"-11-Day-25Meals-$3595** Tokyo-Sado-Toyama-Kanazawa-Fukui-Amanohashidate-Kinosaki-Tottori-Matsue-Izumo Taisha, Mt. Daisen Hot Springs & Kyoto.
Nov 9	**Okinawa, Kyushu & Shikoku -12-Day - 27 Meals -$3395** - Okinawa, Nagasaki, Unzen, Miyazaki, Ashizuri, Kochi, Takamatsu & Osaka.
Nov 24	**Orient Deluxe "Viet Nam Cruise" -15-Day- 29 Meals - $3695** - Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia Cruise, Bangkok & Viet Nam Cruise.

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FRENCH IMPRESSIONS (11 days)	MAY 22
JCCCNC NIKKEI PACIFIC NW CRUISE & LAND (7 days)	MAY 27
CANADIAN ROCKIES / VICTORIA (8 days)	JUNE 14
TAUCK NOVA SCOTIA (8 days)	JULY 14
GRAND PRINCESS MEDITERRANEAN CRUISE (14 days)	SEPT 8
TAUCK COLORADO NATIONAL PARKS (10 days)	SEPT 14
BEST OF HOKKAIDO plus TOHOKU (12 days)	SEPT 23
TENNESSEE / BRANSON / KENTUCKY (Shoji Tabuchi Show, 8 days)	SEPT 30
EAST COAST & FALL FOLIAGE (11 days)	OCT 1
JAPAN AUTUMN ADVENTURE (12 days)	OCT 12
INDOCHINA DISCOVERY (18 days)	NOV

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NEW ORLEANS HOLIDAY TOUR 5 days; New Orleans French Quarter	APRIL 10-14
JAPAN SPRING HOLIDAY TOUR Osaka, Kurashiki, Seto Ohashi Bridge, Hiroshima, Miyajima/Iwakuni, Kyoto, Kanazawa, Noto Peninsula, Sado Island, Tokyo	MAY 8-17
GRANDPARENTS/GRANDCHILDREN JAPAN TOUR Tokyo, Lake Hamana, Hiroshima, Kyoto	JUNE 24-JULY 1
ALASKA/YUKON HOLIDAY CRUISE TOUR Anchorage, Glacier cruise, Denali Park, Fairbanks, Ketchikan, Vancouver HOLLAND AMERICA CRUISE	JULY 18-29
NORTHERN NATIONAL PARKS HOLIDAY TOUR Salt Lake City, Jackson Hole, Spokane National Parks— Grand Tetons, Yellowstone, Glacier Park, Waterton Lakes (Canada)	AUGUST 20-28
ISLANDS OF NEW ENGLAND HOLIDAY TOUR Providence, Newport, Block Island, Martha's Vineyard, Plymouth, Hyanns, Nantucket, Cape Cod, Boston	SEPTEMBER 8-16
CRYSTAL HARMONY AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND CRUISE Sydney, Melbourne, Tasmania, Wellington, Christchurch, Auckland	OCTOBER 1-15
SOUTH AMERICA/PATAGONIA HOLIDAY TOUR Buenos Aires, Iguazu, Ushuaia, Calafate, Puerto Madryn, Bariloche, Santiago Meet with local Japanese in Buenos Aires and Santiago	OCT-NOV
AUSTRIA-GERMANY CHRISTMAS MARKET HOLIDAY TOUR Christmas Markets-Rothenburg, Nuremberg, Augsburg, Oberammergau, Salzburg	NOV 27-DEC. 5

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Holiday Issue Project

Names with addresses here represent contributors who appreciate the cost of "gift." For what they normally spend for greeting or thank you cards to JACL friends, they amount is forwarded to the Pacific Citizen, which inserts $3.50 for the unit-specified in the remainder to the JACL Abe & Esther Hagiwara Endowed Fund or a JACL/PC fund of their choice. If you wish to join them next year, let us know. We'll remind you by the first of November.

—Holiday Issue Editor



Season's Greetings!

The National Japanese American Memorial Foundation extends heartfelt wishes for the Holiday Season and thanks all the wonderful supporters who attended the Memorial to Patriotism Groundbreaking Ceremony in Washington DC October 1999.

We wish to all a safe and prosperous New Year, and hope you will join us for our next Countdown in the New Millenium ... Countdown to Dedication... November 9-11, 2000!

Order your Registration Packet early! Packets will be mailed in the Spring to anyone interested in attending the ceremony. Contains info for reserving hotel and transportation. Rooms are limited!

You can capture the [illegible] of the Memorial to Patriotism in the Foundation's Memorial Almanac, a book written by William Hosokawa, providing background information on the historical perspective, Constitutional significance, architectural design, and the people (you!) who brought this Congressionally authorized project to completion.

Full-color, and illustrated with drawings and photographs, this book will make a wonderful keepsake for yourself or others in your family. The early edition will be available by summer 2000, complimentary with a $35 donation. The second edition, complete with photographs from the Dedication, will be available in winter 2000, complimentary with a $50 donation. If interested in ordering your own copy, contact our office

As always, the Foundation thanks our friends for their continued support!





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