

KIRITAKA English Journal Vol.19

~Stay Independent, Stay as ONE TEAM~ March 24th, 2023

What did you find through the 2023 WBC?



Did you enjoy watching the 2023 World Baseball Classic? Most of you probably watched some highlights of the games. Anyway, were you moved by the WBC?



There has been some criticism about whether or not the WBC is meaningful, because it might cause serious injuries to the players just before the new baseball season is about to start.

I suppose the final moments of the 2023 WBC answered all this criticism.

Shohei Ohtani, the young leader of the Japanese national team, was on the mound for Japan and pitching against U.S. superstar Mike Trout. Ohtani won the duel with a strikeout, and shouted with excitement as he tossed away his glove and his cap.



"I thought it was like a manga," Japan's first baseman Kazuma Okamoto said.

Japan outfielder Lars Nootbaar said **"I think (Mexico manager) Benji Gil said that baseball won last night, and I think baseball won again. I just think this WBC, as a whole, kind of elevated the game, and I hope the exposure that it got creates baseball fans all over the world."**

In other words, the WBC was not only meaningful to the champion team, but also to Ohtani, who was named MVP, and to the players who did well in the games. It was so meaningful to all the people who could find their worth.

Besides, what do the words **"Baseball won"** mean?

I think it was everything. In other words, it was the essence of baseball. All the players have been making great efforts since they were children, and also have been trying to seize a chance to realize their dreams. Some played well, but some did not play well, contrary to our expectations, like "Murakami-sama". **The final moments of the Japan vs Mexico semi-final was also like a manga, I think.** You could experience everything through the 2023 WBC.



"I think baseball is great and it describes life, I think," Kuriyama, the manager of the Japanese team, said after the final.

"I think it was a very precious experience for the Japanese pitchers and also all the kids in Japan who are watching that might think, 'oh, that's really cool,' and they might make up their minds and choose to be baseball players," Kuriyama also said. **"So I think that was a very great thing to do."**

Through the 2023 WBC, I learned a lot of things; **seriousness and sincerity toward what you do, respect toward people around you, a spirit of self-sacrifice, and strong bonds as a team.** I also want to **enjoy every moment of my life with a smile, believing in myself no matter what happens in my life.**

I hope the KIRITAKA English Journal will be accepted by students and their parents, and become a regular issue. (Toru Hoshino)

★ TK's Power Song ★

Let me introduce a CM "Seishun BINGO", which might show some impressive moments of your youth.

I graduated from Kiryu high school, and came back here 30 years after I graduated. These 6 years as a teacher here was the second "Seishun" in my life.

It was a great honor to experience both the last year of the previous Kiritaka and the first year of neo-Kiritaka. Thank you all, and I will see you again! I hope you will enjoy your own "Seishun" here in Kiritaka!

<https://youtu.be/WSoaa-Cmz9M>



Kiwi Corner



The Japanese Nightingale (ウグイス) – one of my favourite things in spring

Hi everyone! It has now become spring! The days are getting longer and the weather is becoming warmer. These last few weeks have been exceptionally warm, with many weather forecasters saying that the temperatures we have been experiencing are around the same as what is usually seen in mid to late April! Some of you may be crying as you bid farewell to going **skiing** and **snowboarding** for another year. Some of you may be crying tears of joy as it is finally getting warmer. And some of you may be crying unwillingly (like me), due to your pollen allergies as **everything around you turns yellow**.

Before I came to Japan, I didn't have any **seasonal allergies**. However, before I worked here at Kiritaka, I worked in Tomioka city. While working there, I was posted to a junior high school and elementary schools near **Mt Myogi**. If you've never been there, I highly recommend it as the striking figure of Mt Myogi is unlike any other mountain I've ever seen. There is also an **art gallery**, a cheap **hot spring**, and you can even do **paragliding** there! It is genuinely one of my favourite places. However, I wouldn't recommend going in spring if you are allergic to pollen. As I worked there for so long, I became allergic to all the pollen, so now when I return to this wonderful mountain, it's not only with happiness that my eyes get a little wet.



Kawazu Sakura, at Myogi Roadside Station



It's time to fight against pollen!

According to a survey conducted on behalf of the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, **15.6% of Japan's population suffers from seasonal allergies**, with it being even higher in the **Northern Kanto Region at 21%**. Seeing the number of students sneezing and sniffing during my classes, I honestly thought that number would be much higher. Maybe the chance of suffering from these allergies is higher among young people? Among the **Kiritaka English Journal writers**, however, it is even higher, with **67% of us suffering** at the moment.



I'd like to thank everyone for following the Kiritaka English Journal, and my Kiwi Corner, for the past year. I hope you enjoyed reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it each month, and that you continue to read it during the new school year, too. For this month's article, I'd like to introduce a song to celebrate the return of warmth and sunshine. It's by an old rock band from the UK. You can listen to it here: <https://youtu.be/aQUIA8Hcv4s>

(Liam Campbell)

Lauren's Newsletter



Blossoming into Spring!

It is finally happening! Days are getting longer, the weather is getting warmer, and spring is almost here! Maybe you and your friends plan to celebrate



Cherry blossoms at the garden

the coming of spring through hanami (flower viewing), and will have a picnic in the park to see the cherry blossoms. In my hometown, there is also a place where people can go to see the beautiful pink and white flowers. This place is the Japanese Friendship Garden, a garden created in



The Cherry Blossom Festival design for 2023

1991 to strengthen the friendship between San Diego and its sister city, Yokohama. This year, they celebrated the start of spring by hosting a three-day cherry blossom festival from March 10th to the 12th!



Onigiri sold at the festival

Food: During the festival, many food stalls sold food and drinks to those who visited the garden. Some of these foods included mochi donuts, onigiri, and kakigori (shaved ice). During their Tanabata festival last year, I tried a miso chicken onigiri. It was so delicious!



Mango shaved ice (kakigori)

Performances: Every day, there were also performances by local groups for visitors to enjoy. Visitors learned how to put on a kimono, listened to taiko drummers, watched ondo dancers, and much more! During the Tanabata festival, I saw a kendo demonstration for the first time. It made me so excited to live in Japan!

The Garden: Along with the food and performances, people could also walk around and enjoy the garden. With cherry blossom trees, koi ponds, and a museum, people could learn about Japanese culture and experience "flower viewing" with Japanese cherry blossoms! I saw their cherry blossoms a few years ago, but I cannot wait to experience hanami in Japan!



A koi pond at the garden

With the start of spring, a new school year will begin, and new beginnings are about to bloom! Thank you for reading the Kiritaka English Journal this year, and I hope you all have a wonderful spring break!

Your Friendly Neighborhood ALT,

(Lauren Taylor)

For this month, I'd like to introduce a song about happiness and cheer. Please enjoy!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOWDb2TBYDg>