

# Takarabako

たからばこ

September 2006 No. 9



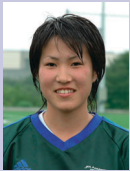
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surname first.

## "Focus on Japan 2007"

### Photography and Exchange Program with Japanese High School Students

Do you have students who would like to visit Japan, meet Japanese people, and see how they live? The "Focus on Japan 2007" program invites high school students from all over the world to do just that for a project in collaboration with Japanese high school students.

Through the annual "Lives of Japanese High School Students: Photo and Message Contest" and the publication of its results, for several years the Japan Forum (TJF) has been making available to the world photographic portraits of Japanese high school students produced by their peers. With the "Focus on Japan 2007" program, we take this a step further by inviting students to visit Japan in Au-

gust 2007 to produce photographic essays in collaboration with Japanese students.

Their task will be to visit, together with Japanese high school students, one prefecture in Japan (either Miyagi, Tokyo, Osaka, or Hiroshima), meet and interact with the local people, and photographically portray them and their daily lives. They will then work with Japanese teammates to compile a joint photographic account of the places they visit.

The completed photo essays will be made available worldwide via the TJF website.

Check out the application guidelines posted on the following website at:

<http://www.tjf.or.jp/focusonjapan/>

## Program Outline

### ❖ Term:

Friday, 3 August to Saturday, 11 August 2007 (9 days)

### ❖ Participants:

16 high school students, 8 from Japan and 8 from overseas. Eight participants will be selected from overseas applicants.

### ❖ Photography assignment locations:

Miyagi, Tokyo, Osaka, and Hiroshima prefectures. Further information about each location is posted on the program website.

### ❖ Activities:

The selected Japanese and overseas high school students will gather in Tokyo and be organized into four teams each comprised of four students, two from Japan and two from overseas, based on their preferences for assignment locations (Miyagi, Tokyo, Osaka, and Hiroshima prefectures). They then will visit their locations. With guidance from teachers and students of local high school photography clubs, the participants will photographically portray the people, features, and lifestyle of their assigned locale using digital cameras. The four members of each team will then collaborate to compile a photo essay consisting of a selection of around 20 of their photos and a written essay. (During their photography as-

signments each team will be accompanied by an English-, Chinese-, or Korean-language interpreter and by a staff member of the Japan Forum.)

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# Soccer as a Popular Sport: Putting Down Roots in Japan

*The quadrennial FIFA World Cup was held in Germany from June to July 2006. For the qualifying matches of this eighteenth World Cup, 197 countries and regions participated and thirty-two teams competed in the finals, with Italy winning the championship. The number of television viewers worldwide had reached 28.8 billion during the previous World Cup, and there is no doubt that people around the globe were glued to their television sets for the 2006 tournament as well. In Japan, enthusiasm for the World Cup was evident from specials that ran on television and in magazines before the tournament even began. And during the tournament itself, Japanese fans went crazy over the national team. A total of 70,000 Japanese traveled all the way to Germany to support the Japanese national team. Many fans also cheered for the team at stadiums and sports bars in Japan, watching the games being televised on giant screens. The Japanese national team did not advance to the round of 16, but many people enjoyed the spectacle of world-class soccer. In fact, it is only recently that soccer has attracted this much interest in Japan. In this issue, we introduce the state of Japanese soccer.*

## History of Soccer

The history of soccer goes way back. There was a game in Europe during the medieval period in which the goal was to transfer a ball to a specified place. Even

before that, games were being played in both ancient Rome and China that are said to be the origins of soccer.

Soccer as we know it today began when the Football Association was founded in England in 1863 and soccer rules were standardized. Subsequently, soccer spread beyond England to other countries, and from the second Olympic games held in Paris in 1900, it was designated an Olympic sport. In 1904, based on a proposal from France, seven European nations (France, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland) formed the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). The number of member countries and regions continued to grow, and in 1932 the first World Cup tournament was held in Uruguay. Today, football associations from 205 countries and regions belong to FIFA. The popularity of soccer has spread around the world, and it is said that over 250 million people play the sport.

## History of Japanese Soccer

Soccer is said to have been introduced to Japan by an English military officer in the early Meiji period (1868-1912). Subsequently, soccer teams were formed mainly

in normal schools and the game spread across the country through teachers who graduated from these schools. In 1921, the Zen Nippon Shukyu Kyokai [All Japan Kickball Association] (currently the Japan Football Association) was established.

### *After the Tokyo Olympics*

After World War II, Japanese soccer made little progress either in technical skill or popularity. When its national team ranked

in the top eight at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics held during the rapid economic growth period, however, the popularity of soccer soared. In 1965, the Japan Soccer League (JSL), a non-professional soccer league sponsored by corporations, was founded with eight teams. As this momentum continued to grow, the Japanese national soccer team won the bronze medal at the 1968 Mexico Olympics.

The number of teams in the Japan Soccer League slowly increased from the original eight, and in 1985 the league was split into two leagues, with twelve and sixteen teams respectively. The popularity of soccer was on the rise, but fan attendance at games remained dismal, with 1,000-3,000 per game. The number of spectators at soccer games totaled a mere 200,000-300,000 per year. Meanwhile, baseball had been the overwhelmingly predominant professional game in Japan. The Yomiuri Giants, the most popular of the twelve league teams, drew an average of 30,000 fans to the stadium per game, and professional baseball as a whole attracted 20 million fans annually.

World-class competitions like the World Cup were considered beyond Japan's reach. Increasingly vocal demands arose for a professional league with a view to raising the level of Japanese soccer and boosting its popularity. In 1992, the decision was made to establish a professional league. The JSL was divided into the J. League, comprised of professional teams, and the Japan Football League, made up of nonprofessional teams.

### *The Birth of the J. League*

In May 1993, 50,000-odd fans attended the launching of Japan's first professional soccer league, the J. League, at the National Stadium in Yoyogi, Tokyo. Famous players from all over the world, including Brazilian hero, Zico (who later became 2006 World Cup coach of the Japanese team), joined the new Japanese teams. Fans flocked to games to watch Japanese and foreign players play up close. The birth of the J. League wiped away shadowy images of soccer, stimulated local in-





J. League inaugural ceremony.

©J. LEAGUE PHOTOS

terest in the game, thereby broadening the base from which players could be sought, and fostered improved performance by Japanese players.

### *The World, Still Out of Reach*

As soccer grew more popular, the Japanese national team attracted more attention. People had great anticipation for their team's participation in the 1994 World Cup. The Japanese national team made it through the preliminary Asian Zone in first place and arrived in Doha, Qatar to play against Iraq in the final match of the qualification round. If Japan had won, it would have been the first time to qualify for the World Cup tournament. Japan had been leading 2-1, but in the last minute of injury time in the second half, the Iraqi team scored with a header. Many Japanese fans still remember this game as the "Agony of Doha."

Perhaps as a result of this game, J. League popularity began to wane. On the other hand, the number of teams seeking to join the J. League rose, and the league began to grow. The number of teams went from the initial ten to eighteen by 1998. In 1999, the Japan Football League was divided into the J. League Division Two, comprised of teams aiming to join the J. League, and the Japan Football League, comprised of teams that are not. Therefore, the professional teams are divided into two leagues, J1 and J2. As of 2006, there are eighteen teams in J1, and thirteen teams in J2, attracting over 7 million spectators per year.

### *Competition on the World Stage*

Finally, the opportunity for Japan to go to the World Cup for the first time presented itself. The qualifying playoffs for the 1998 tournament in France took place in Johor Bahru, Malaysia, and Japan was playing Iran, a powerful rival. The victor would win a ticket to the tournament. The two teams went into overtime with a 2-2 tie, and it was in the last minute that Japan scored a goal. This game is remembered by many Japanese fans as the "Joy of Johor Bahru." Forty years had passed since a Japanese team had first participated in the preliminary rounds of the World Cup in 1954 for the dream of qualifying to come true. At the 1998 tournament, Japan suffered three losses without gaining any tournament points,

but many fans were awed by the world-class plays they saw on the field.

Starting around this time, players such as Nakata Hidetoshi and Nakamura Shunsuke began to transfer to teams abroad. Sports news programs on television began featuring stories on European soccer leagues, and world soccer grew increasingly familiar to Japanese fans.

The 2002 tournament was the first World Cup to take place in Asia, and was jointly hosted by Japan and Korea. The Japanese team reached the second round of the tournament for the first time in history. This World Cup became a huge craze in Japan, spreading to people who until then had had no interest in soccer. The 2002 World Cup had a great impact on Japanese soccer, prompting the construction of large-scale stadiums to host important matches and the establishment of new soccer teams.



Japanese national team at the 2006 FIFA World Cup tournament. ©J. LEAGUE PHOTOS

## History of Women's Soccer

Women's soccer has only recently captured popular attention, but in fact, it has a long history. In Europe during World War I, women's soccer flourished

as women appeared on the field replacing men who had left for war. With the end of the war, however, men's soccer resumed, and, arguing that "soccer is harmful to women's bodies," football associations in England, the Netherlands, and Germany prohibited the rental practice space to women's



teams. The unfavorable times for women's soccer continued for decades thereafter. Around the late 1950s, however, as the notion of gender equality spread throughout the world, women's soccer began to make a comeback. Women's soccer teams popped up in Eastern European countries and women started playing soccer in East Asia. In the United States, with the rise of the women's liberation movement, women's soccer flourished as teams were established on college campuses. In 1971, the first international women's match recognized by FIFA was held between France and the Netherlands. Finally in 1996, at the twenty-sixth Olympic games held in Atlanta, women's soccer became an official Olympic sport.

## Japanese Women's Soccer

Japanese women slowly began playing soccer in the 1960s. In the 1970s companies and universities established women's teams, and teams across the

country played against each other.

In 1980, the All Japan Women's Football Tournament took place, open to teams from all over Japan. In 1986, the women's national team was organized by players selected from teams around the country.

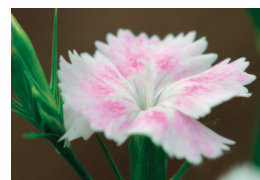
In 1989, six teams joined together to form the Japan Women's Football League. With hopes of riding on J. League popularity, the Japan Women's Football League was nicknamed the L. League ("L" is for "lady"). The league attracted widespread attention, and though not a professional league, some players began to sign on as professional players. Players from abroad, moreover, flocked to join Japanese teams. After the Japanese women's team lost all of its three games at the Atlanta Olympics as well as the opportunity to play in the Olympic games in Sydney, spectators at L. League games began to drop off, and the league remained at a low ebb for a while. In 2003, however, after a close game in the World Cup preliminary round, the Japanese women's team received heavy media coverage for winning a ticket to the World Cup set to take place the following year. This led to a revival of interest in the L. League. In 2004, the league switched to a two-league system (each consisting of eight teams) and invited the public to submit ideas for a league nickname. The league adopted the name "Nadeshiko League," and the Japanese national women's team is now referred to as Nadeshiko Japan. The *nadeshiko*, or dianthus flower, traditionally represents the ideal Japanese woman.



Nadeshiko Japan playing game in blue uniforms.

©J. LEAGUE PHOTOS

Approximately 25,000 girls and women play soccer in Japan. Though these numbers have been increasing steadily in recent years, it is far from the 8 million who play in the United States. Girls who play soccer in elementary school often have to give up once they go to junior high or high school because there are no girls' teams at that level. Convinced that "no advance can be made in Japanese soccer without advance in Japanese women's soccer," Japan Football Association (JFA) Chairman Kawabuchi Saburo has embraced the creation of opportunities for junior high and high school-aged girls to play soccer, thereby broadening the playing base of women's soccer. The nurturing of women's players is one of the major goals of the JFA. The establishment of the JFA Academy (see Meeting People) is one of the steps being taken to achieve this goal.



Nadeshiko (dianthus)

## Soccer as a Familiar Sport

Elementary school children engrossed in soccer games on school fields after school and on weekends is today a familiar sight. There are different types of

elementary school-level soccer teams, including local teams such as junior sports clubs, as well as club teams. Both boys and girls have a chance to play at the junior high and high school level on school teams. For students who play on school teams, the All Japan High School Soccer Tournament is one of the most important events. The playoff game of the Tournament held in January is televised, and is watched not only by high school students, but people of all ages. For children playing in club teams, the Club Youth Football Tournaments (U-12, U-15, U-18) are the most significant.

A look at the soccer careers of professional players in the J. League today reflects the variety of paths they followed: some played in junior sports clubs and on school teams in junior high and high schools; some played on club teams from junior high school; some started on high school teams and went professional after taking a club team test; and there are those who played on school teams from junior high school through university. This is a testament to the broadening range of opportunities in soccer, and to the fact that it has become an increasingly familiar sport in Japan.

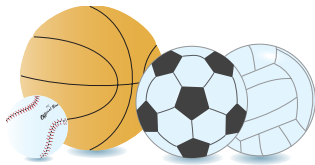


Soccer games are held all over the country on weekends.

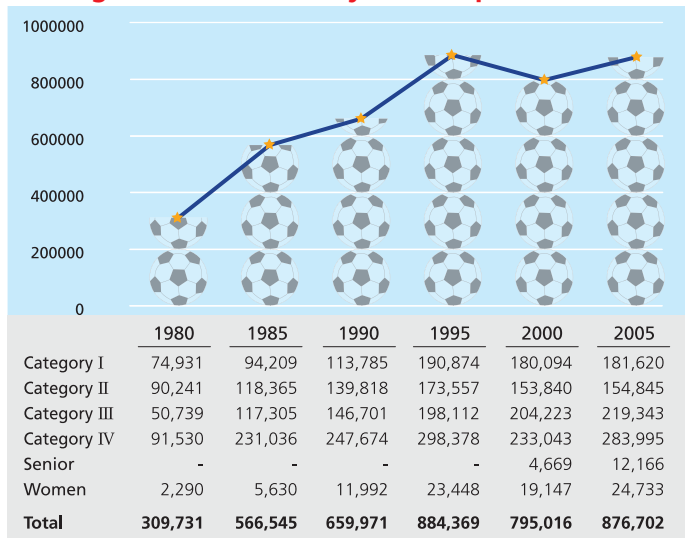
©Sato Masaki

## Children's favorite sports

According to a 2005 survey entitled "Seishonen no supotsu raifu deta 2006" [Data on Young People's Participation in Sports 2006] conducted for a sample of 2,500 girls and boys aged 10 to 19 by the Sasakawa Sports Foundation, the top three sports played on a regular basis by boys were 1) soccer, 2) basketball, and 3) baseball. Among girls, the sport played the most on a regular basis was volleyball. Sports at which respondents have been firsthand spectators were 1) professional baseball, 2) high school or college baseball, and 3) J. League soccer. In addition, sports they wanted to see in the stadium were: 1) Japanese national team soccer, 2) professional baseball, and 3) volleyball.



## JFA-registered Soccer Players in Japan



[Source: Japan Football Association]

Category I: Teams made up of members without age limit.

Category II: Teams made up high school students or others under 18 years old.

Category III: Teams made up of junior high school students or others under 15 years old.

Category IV: Teams made up of elementary school students or others under 12 years old.

Seniors: Teams made up of members 40 years and older.

## Community-Based Soccer Teams

In order to join the J. League, teams are required to establish a home town in cooperation with a local municipal governing body, secure a stadium that can accommodate over 10,000 people with nighttime lighting and a natural grass field, and establish an organization devoted to nurturing its lower branches, in other words, to have teams that accommodate elementary, junior and senior high school students.

These requirements are closely related to the goals of the JFA. By drawing on the roots set down by club teams in local communities, the JFA aims to make sports a part of people's daily lives, encouraging the health and happiness it nourishes. JFA Chairman Kawabuchi Saburo has said that he was moved as a young man by the sight of people of all ages playing soccer on grass fields in Germany. From then on, it became his dream to make the same thing possible in Japan. The passion of others who shared his dream and wanted to take a part in it engaged many people and led to the establishment of the J. League and the birth of many club teams.

The JFA idea about sport was something quite new in Japan. In the vastly popular sport of professional baseball, teams are owned by corporations and named after their owners. There is a tendency for teams to be concentrated in large cities such as Tokyo and Osaka. In the J. League, on the other hand, club teams feature place names because of their strong ties to local communities. Among them are quite successful teams based in smaller cities. In addition, because the teams aspire to appeal to a local community, they refer to them as "supporters" rather than "fans." Moreover, teams conduct soccer lessons for local children and value opportunities for interaction with local residents. It is these aspects, perhaps, that are increasing the number of people playing and watching soccer in Japan.

## Captain Tsubasa

*Captain Tsubasa*, a serial manga started in 1981 in the weekly comic magazine *Shonen Jump* (published by Shueisha), is a huge hit among children. It is a story about the experiences of the soccer-loving boy Tsubasa, as he grows through the friendships and rivalries he makes through the sport. Tsubasa, who has now become a professional soccer player, appears today in the weekly comic magazine *Young Jump*. More than a few professional players started playing soccer after reading *Captain Tsubasa*. Over 50 million copies of the book *Captain Tsubasa* have been sold, and the anime is televised in over 100 countries.



"CAPTAIN TSUBASA GOLDEN-23"  
©2005 by Yoichi Takahashi/  
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## Why do we call it soccer?

In England where soccer was born and in many other countries, the sport is called "football." Yet in Japan, it is generally known as "soccer." It is also called soccer in the United States, Canada, and Australia. Why is that? The rules of modern soccer were standardized by the Football Association in England, and the sport was originally called association football. In England at the time, it was common to add the suffix "-er" to words. Hence "association football" became "assoccer," and then "soccer." During the time around World War II, the game was called *shukyu* (kick ball) or *a-shiki shukyu* ("a" (for association)-style kick ball). After the kanji for kick 蹴 (*shu*) was removed from the list of *toyo kanji*,\* however, the term *sakka* (soccer) became increasingly common. Even today, the University of Tokyo and Waseda University formally use the term *a-shiki shukyu bu* ("a"-style kick ball club).

\* A government-announced list designating the range of kanji for daily use, this is the standard used by newspapers.

The emblem on the Japanese national team uniform is the *yata-garasu*, a type of raven seen in Japanese mythology. The three-legged bird also appears in Chinese classical literature. The J1 league champions are allowed to wear the emblem on their uniforms the following year.



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# I Love Soccer!

## Yuki

16, first-year student at Fukushima Prefectural Tomioka High School; member of the inaugural class of the JFA Academy Fukushima

*In April 2006, the Japan Football Association, in cooperation with Fukushima prefecture and the cities of Hirono, Naraha, and Tomioka, founded the JFA Academy Fukushima for the purpose of nurturing future Japanese national team members. The Academy will select approximately fifteen girls and fifteen boys every year from all over Japan. The students live in dormitories and attend local public junior high and high schools. In order to create an environment supportive to soccer training, arrangements have been made with the schools they attend to recognize parts of their training at the Academy as credit toward graduation. Training at the Academy is aimed not only to nurture an elite group of soccer players, but young people with an aptitude for leadership who can go on to careers in international environments. Classes on deportment and communication skills are part of the curriculum.*

*The Academy's first class of students—seventeen boys in their first year of junior high school and twenty-three girls ranging from first-year of junior high to first-year of senior high school<sup>1</sup>—have already been selected and started their lives at the Academy. In this issue, we introduce an interview with one of these students, Yuki, a first-year high school girl from Hyogo prefecture.*

**1** Because the Academy is a six-year unified secondary school, new students will generally be students in their first year of junior high school. However, an exception was made in the case of girls for the inaugural year.

**2** J Village: Japan's first national training center created in 1997. The grounds extend over an area of 490,000 square meters in Naraha and Hirono cities in Fukushima prefecture, with a stadium that can accommodate 5,000 people, ten natural grass playing fields, indoor training facilities, and overnight lodging facilities. The Japanese national team and foreign teams use the Village for training.

**Q:** *The entrance evaluation test for the JFA Academy was very competitive. Out of 455 boys who applied, seventeen were accepted, and out of 202 girls twenty-three were accepted. What kind of process was it?*

The first stage of the test took place last August. We spent a day doing the fifty-meter dash, lifting, playing a mini game, and other exercises. The second stage was held over three days, two nights, and we did long-distance running, sprints, played games, and so on. The third stage was three-nights and four days, and in addition to a physical aptitude examination, the test included playing games outdoors in which we had to cooperate in teams. We were also interviewed with our parents.

**Q:** *What were you asked in the interview?*

I participated in the interview with my mother. The question that was most memorable to me was "Do you think you are prepared to enter the Academy?" I said, "It's a decision I've made, so I'm planning to do my best." My mother was also interviewed alone. It was apparently so that they could ask her what she really thought. Later, I heard that my mother said, "I'm actually sad, but I respect the decision she has made."

**Q:** *Why did you apply to the Academy?*

I wanted to see what kind of kids would be applying, and I also wanted to put my abilities to the test. But I didn't think I would actually get in. I was really intimidated in the first stage be-

cause everyone was so good. I thought I didn't have a chance.

We got our letters of rejection or acceptance in the mail. In the envelope was a list of the registration numbers of people who passed the first stage. As soon as I unfolded the list, my number, 53, jumped out at me. "It's there!" I said, in spite of myself. I just couldn't believe it.

**Q:** *How did you feel in the second and third stages of the test?*

I felt like two nights and three days would be long, but I wasn't scared. Actually, the excitement of going to J Village,<sup>2</sup> where the second stage was to take place, was greater than anything else. I was able to score a goal during a game in the second stage, and that gave me a lot of confidence. In the second stage, there were twenty kids in my grade, half the number in the first stage, and in the third stage, the number had shrunk even more to seven. It was really exciting to meet the others again! We hugged each other with joy (laughs). We all took part in the third stage determined to pass the test together. Five of us ultimately made it, and we really celebrated when we were reunited at the dorms!

**Q:** *Please tell us about your first encounter with soccer and the path that led you to the Academy?*

I started playing soccer when I was in fourth grade. I was also playing softball around the same time. My brother, who is a year younger





**Left:** With classmates in the Academy dormitory cafeteria. Our classmates are both comrades and rivals.

**Right:** Cooling down after a practice match on the municipal field near our dormitories.

than me, happened to start playing these two sports, and since I loved playing sports as well, I joined him. I played softball on a Japan Junior Sports Clubs Association team.<sup>3</sup> Soccer, I played with my friends at a nearby park. I played soccer twice during the week, and softball on Saturdays and Sundays. I loved both games. But we all had to retire from our softball team in sixth grade, and since the nearby junior high school didn't have a softball team, I quit.

There was only a boys' soccer team in my junior high school. I asked my teacher many times to be allowed to join the team. It was brought up in a faculty meeting, and I was given special permission. I was the only girl on the team, so at first it was very uncomfortable. Getting changed was the biggest problem. There were many times when I felt like I couldn't keep up because the boys were faster and stronger. But I wanted to play soccer no matter what.

*Q: Do you ever get homesick or feel lonely, living away from your parents?*

Right now, I'm just having a lot of fun. We get instruction from top-notch coaches, and play soccer to our hearts' content. I've never felt homesick. I went home during the five-day Golden Week holiday in May, but I was at a loss for things to do. My friends at the Academy said they also suffered from "Academysick!" So when we met again five days later, we hugged each other with joy (laughs).

*Q: Have you encountered any problems with everyday life?*

My woe is that I don't have any free time. But the one thing that I found out from not having any time is that television is not a necessity! Through junior high school, I would aimlessly watch television whenever I had the time. But having become accustomed to life without TV here, I realized it was something I didn't need. I don't need a beauty parlor either (laughs)! I have my friends cut my hair. I often cut my friends' hair, too. So I don't need spending money. I

don't have the time or place to spend it. If anything, I'll buy a small snack, sunscreen, or face wash. Even if I wanted to buy clothes I'd have to go far away to go shopping, and unless I have a full day off from practice. Not that I have that much of a desire for clothes, anyway . . . If I had free time, I'd want to sleep or go to karaoke.

*Q: What do you want to accomplish at the Academy, and what are your dreams?*

If it weren't for the Academy, I don't think I would've been able to continue playing soccer. I'm really glad to be here, where I can play as much soccer as I want. But I know that things are going to get harder. I want to live every day in a way so that at the end, I'll be able to say that I'm glad to have done what I did. I want to become someone who's hard on herself and easy on others. My goal is to become a member of Nadeshiko Japan and go to the World Cup. *Gambarimasu!*

### Imaizumi Morinao Head Coach



We have a support system for the students in which in addition to four full-time staff, there is a doctor who comes in regularly. Since students at the Academy are in junior and senior high school, their first priority is their studies. It is vital that they build a basic rhythm in their schoolwork before participating in training. In addition, at the Academy, we value our connections with the local community. We invite local families to become part of our support system, asking them to invite students to their homes on the weekends and treat them as if they were their own children.

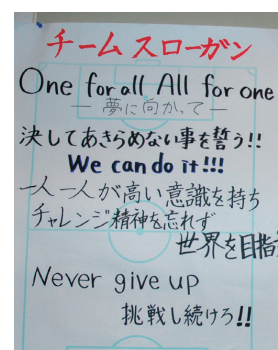
We hope that through soccer, our students will learn to become independent and self-reliant. Not all of the students will be able to make teams in the future, but we hope that they will grow up to become women who are active in the international community.

<sup>3</sup> The Japan Junior Sports Clubs Association was established by the Japan Amateur Sports Association in 1962 to give young people more opportunities to enjoy sports. These locally based groups are comprised of ten or more children and an instructor, and there are 35,000 nationwide. Groups play various sports such as soccer, baseball, and kendo.

### Daily Schedule of Yuki

<b>6:00 a.m.</b>
Wake up
<b>6:15-</b>
Cleaning (bedroom, hallways, study room). There is cleaning duty for the hallways and the study room. We've just naturally ended up taking turns.
<b>6:30-</b>
Breakfast
<b>7:45-</b>
About a twenty-minute bus ride to school.
<b>8:50-</b>
Classes
<b>3:30 p.m.</b>
Leave school
<b>5:00-7:00</b>
Soccer practice*

\*Practice usually held 5:00-7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and 1:20-4:00 p.m. on Thursdays (credit toward graduation for training during fifth and sixth periods), and 4:30-6:30 p.m. on Fridays. Half-day practice on Saturdays and Sundays, either in the morning or the afternoon. Occasional practice games. On Saturdays or Sundays, we also have classes on deportment, communication skills and so on.



Team motto.



# Access This Page!

## TJF's New Website Top Page

<http://www.tjf.or.jp/>

Reopening with a whole new look, TJF's new top page is easier to grasp at a glance. The redesign incorporates a number of features that make it simpler and faster to get to the information you want to find.

- The top page has new "Information" and "TJF Toplines" corners. The Information corner presents a list of all new topics at a glance. The TJF Toplines introduces the freshest topics TJF especially wants to call to your attention.
- The main content featured on the site can be readily accessed under four main topics: Japanese Language/Japan, Chinese Language/China, Korean Language, and Student Exchange and the different topics under each of these areas is presented in a simple table. Japanese language teachers will be most interested in the Japanese Language/Japan and Student Exchange sections, but we hope you will check the other parts of the site as well.
- Users who already know which TJF program they want to access will find the column of icons listed on the right side of the top page the short-cut to that part of the site.



## Access Free Photographs!

[http://www.tjf.or.jp/photodatabank\\_j/](http://www.tjf.or.jp/photodatabank_j/)

Approximately 3,000 photographs about Japan can be found in TJF Photo Data Bank, Japan. Most of the photographs are real life images photographed by Japanese high school students about their own lives. They are available free of charge and may be used freely if for educational purposes.

The photographs can be selected from 16 thematic categories and can be found by searching with keywords. For example, "autumn" evokes for Japanese images like *minori no aki* ("season of harvest"), *undo no aki* ("field day season"), and *dokusho no aki* ("season for reading"). You can find images relating to such topics for use in your classes.

- For example, a search for "reading" takes you to:



Left: She just loves books. Right: Studying at the library.

- And you can click freely back and forth between the English and Japanese pages. The Japanese and English captions may not be exactly the same; it can be interesting and instructive to read both.

- Now, search for "sports day" and you'll come to:



Left: A relay race at the school athletic festival. Right: Tug-of-war is one of the customary events on Sports Day (high school).

- ◆ Related lesson plan: "What X Means to Us"

[http://www.tjf.or.jp/takarabako/PDF/TB05\\_LP.pdf](http://www.tjf.or.jp/takarabako/PDF/TB05_LP.pdf)

- Or, search for "harvest" and you'll come to:



Left: A field of rice. Right: She plays happily among the stalks.

- ◆ Related lesson plan: "Rice" from Japanese Culture and Daily Life

<http://www.tjf.or.jp/eng/content/japaneseculture/01rice.htm>

<http://www.tjf.or.jp/eng/content/japaneseculture/01rice2.htm>

- ◆ The lesson plans using photographs from the TJF Photo Data Bank can also be found by looking at the back issues of *Takarabako*.

TJF Photo Data Bank: Japanese Classes Using Photographs from the TJF Photo Data Bank

[http://www.tjf.or.jp/takarabako/PDF/TB05\\_SOZAI.pdf](http://www.tjf.or.jp/takarabako/PDF/TB05_SOZAI.pdf)

[http://www.tjf.or.jp/takarabako/PDF/TB05\\_LP.pdf](http://www.tjf.or.jp/takarabako/PDF/TB05_LP.pdf)

### Help Us Enrich the Data Bank!

If you have any suggestions for themes or scenes you would like to see added to the TJF Photo Data Bank, please contact us at the address below. Please be as specific as possible in making your request. [forum@tjf.or.jp](mailto:forum@tjf.or.jp)