

The Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum



(<http://www.baseball-museum.or.jp/>)

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(Translated by Ryuichi Suzuki)

p.1 Two Induction Ceremonies for the 2012 Hall of Famers

Shinichi Hirose, President

The Induction Ceremony for the 2012 Hall of Famers elected by the Players Selection Committee was held on Friday, July 20, 2012 at Kyocera Dome Osaka preceding Game 1 of the 3-game All-Star Series.

After graduating from Miyakonojo Agricultural High School, Manabu Kitabepu joined the Hiroshima Toyo Carp in 1976 as the first draft choice. From 1978 when he notched 10 wins, he continued to win 10 or more games for 11 consecutive years. In 1979, when the Carp won in the Japan Series, he was the winningest in the team with 17 wins. In 1982, he notched 20 wins after starting the season with 11 consecutive wins, and led the Central League in wins, garnering the Sawamura Award. In 1986, he played a key role in helping the Carp to clinch the pennant, leading the League in wins, won-lost percentage, and ERA. He also won the MVP Award and the 2nd Sawamura Award. With his splendid command, he became the first 200-game winner with the Carp. After hanging up his spikes in 1994, he coached the Carp for four years.

After graduating from Nanyo Technical High School, Tsunemi Tsuda played for the Kyowa Hakko industrial league team before joining the Hiroshima Toyo Carp as the first draft choice in 1982. In his first year, he started 19 games and won the Rookie of the Year Award with a record of 11-6. After suffering a shoulder injury later in the second year, he came back in 1986 as a relief pitcher. He won the Comeback Award with 12 wins and 28 saves. He was called the “Blazing Stopper” for his aggressive pitching, but he died of a brain tumor at the age of 32 in 1993.

At the Induction Ceremony, all of the managers, coaches and members of the Central and Pacific Leagues’ All-Stars lined up in front of their benches. The public address system called in Manabu Kitabepu, and Teruyo Tsuda, widow of Tsunemi Tsuda, to the pitcher’s mound after the big screen introduced the playing days of the new Hall of Famers. Ryozo Kato, Chairman of the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, awarded them with a replica of their plaques which are to be displayed on the wall of the Baseball Hall of Fame. Then a bouquet presentation was made to Kitabepu from Koji Akiyama, his arch-rival in the All-Star Series and the Nippon Series and now manager of the Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks, and to Mrs. Tsuda from Tatsunori



Hara, manager of the Yomiuri Giants. After photo taking, Kitabepu made an impressive acceptance speech representing the two new Hall of Famers. “Today is the anniversary of Tsuda’s premature death. I firmly believe he will be glad to share the honor with me. As for me, I would like to do my best to contribute to the baseball world in the rest of my life.”

(Photo from left: Koji Akiyama, Manabu Kitabepu, Ryozo Kato, Teruyo Tsuda, and Tatsunori Hara)

p.2 **The Induction Ceremony for the 2012 Hall of Famers elected by the Special Selection Committee** was held on Saturday, June 2 prior to the first bout of the Waseda-Keio games at Jingu Stadium, mecca of student baseball.

Kiro Osafune caught for the Waseda University team and won the championship in the fall season of 1942 in the Tokyo Big6 University League. From 1952 to 2007, he worked for the Japan Student Baseball Association and played an important role in holding its big projects. In 1990, he took the initiative in organizing the Baseball Federation of Japan, consisting of all amateur baseball organizations. He was long active in its administration and became its president in 2007. In 1994, he helped organize Japan Baseball to promote mutual development of and interchange between pro and amateur baseball. As a result of his efforts, a joint team was sent to the Sydney Olympics in 2000, and “Nagashima Japan,” consisting of all pro players, was sent to the Athens Olympics in 2004.

Osamu Ohmoto, president of Shibaura Institute of Technology from 1991 to 1997, exerted himself to set up the safety standard of aluminum bats. Later in 1985, he studied how to prevent wooden bats from breaking as chairman of the Advisory Committee on Various Problems on Bats. In 2000, set up the Society for Nurturing *Aodamo* Resources. Following the wish of the deceased Ohmoto, planting *aodamo* has been kept on with wide support from pro and amateur baseball.

At the Induction Ceremony, all the members of the Waseda and Keio teams lined up in front of their benches. While the achievements of the two Hall of Famers were introduced on the big screen, Hiroko Osafune, widow of Kiro Osafune, Itaru Osafune, the eldest son of Kiro Osafune, and Akiko Ohmoto, widow of Osamu Ohmoto gathered around the pitcher’s mound. Ryozo Kato, Chairman of the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, awarded them with a replica of their plaques which are to be displayed on the wall of the Baseball Hall of Fame. Then a bouquet presentation was made to Mrs. Osafune from Kohki Sasaki, captain of the Waseda Nine, and to Mrs. Ohmoto from Ren Yamasaki, captain of the Keio Nine. After photo taking, Itaru Osafune made an impressive acceptance speech representing the two inductees, concluding by quoting a stanza from the Waseda University Song which Osafune had loved in his time and wishing for the development of university baseball.



(Photo from left: Itaru Osafune, Hiroko Osafune, Ryozo Kato, and Teruko Ohmoto.)

p.3 **Inductees Remembered (36) In Memory of My Dear Uncle**

Tamae Fukushima, niece of Goro Taniguchi, 1979 Hall of Famer



It all started by father’s remark when he came back to Kumamoto from Tokyo. “Won’t you go up there to help Uncle Goro?” Our uncle had his wife die of apoplexy when he was coaching the Giants. He was often away from home with road games and there was no one to do housework properly because his three daughters had been married and lived independently. I was still in my late teens and busy learning dressmaking and knitting. Though I was not confident in housekeeping, I said yes because it was a request from my father who loved his younger brother so dearly. My

younger sister had been boarding at Uncle's house. Though she was a student, she proved to be my good helpmate.

My uncle was the youngest of three brothers. The eldest was a teacher in Tsuyama in Okayama Prefecture. The second was my father, who worked for a factory of Korean Railway company in Pusan. He was a kind of stepfather of Uncle Goro because their father had died young. Uncle graduated from Pusan Commercial School and entered Waseda University, where he pitched for the Waseda Nine. After graduation he played for Dalian Industry, a strong amateur club, but when Japan lost the WWII, he was interned in Siberia. He had bad nutrition there, and was suffering from beriberi when he returned to Japan.

His work being what it was, he was very careful about his health. We lived at Umedacho in Ota Ward. Unlike today, there was no beef shop nearby, and I had to go all the way to Ginza by bus going the Second National Road from near the Ikegami Honmonji Temple. The beef shop at the basement of Matsuya Department Store was famous for its quality. He liked foreign liquors. On the next day after he drank, he used to take soup extracted from a lot of corbicula clams We bought as much clams as a half of waterless cooker from the door-to-door fishmonger. Washed clams in the cooker were cooked over a medium flame, and were taken out when shells opened. Though clams heaped up in the cooker, produced extracts were as little as a half of a teacup. He often requested this saying it was good for his health.

On holidays, when four members were ready, he enjoyed playing mah-jongg. At a late-night snack, sushi rolls with a filling of bonito shavings were their favorites as they could eat them with one hand while playing with the other. His favorite souvenir from Shikoku was an ash-dredged *wakame* seaweed. We enjoyed eating it with vinegared dish or *miso* soup. When he was back from road games, his uniform was sent to a cleaner's, but undershirts and socks were washed by hands, as, believe it or not, there was no washing machine half a century ago. Spikes were also duly cleaned. At the time of his re-marriage, I came back to Kumamoto and some 50 years have passed since then. But whenever I watch baseball on TV, I think of pains endured by a player's family rather than his performance.

Later in his long baseball career, Uncle Goro had the honor of being inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1979 as a great pitcher in the Taisho Era (mostly in the 1920s) who had built the heyday of Waseda Baseball team. We are sincerely grateful for the warm support given by baseball fans. He was hale and hearty afterwards, but on September 26, 1980, he died of a rupture of abdominal aneurysm at the age of 79. He had a really happy baseball life and now rests peacefully with his parents and former teammates.

I would like to extend my thanks again to the people at the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, and to many people who had kindly supported him. In concluding, I wish for the increasing prosperity of baseball world.

A) Events

1) Baseball Study by Elementary and Junior High School Students; through Sunday, September 2

At Baseball Library and its adjacent area



Baseball terminology, stadiums, equipment, statistics, and history of baseball will provide good topics for free study for juvenile students during their summer vacation.

The two librarians and student assistants will be ready to show them how to read books in the library and use artifacts on display ~ bats and balls~ to help them with their free study. (Photo from 2011)

Mini-mini Experiment Corner

Two times every day: 14:00, 15:00
Through Sunday, September 2, excepting August 17, 18, and 20
At the Baseball Hall of Fame Gallery
Subjects: Principles of curveballs; Weights and lengths of various bats, etc.



(Photo from 2011)

2) Demonstration of bat making

Friday, August 17 and Saturday, August 18
11:00-12:00, 13:30-14:30, and 15:00-16:00



At the Baseball Hall of Fame Gallery; with cooperation by Mizuno Corporation

It will mark the 9th year of bat making demonstration at the baseball museum.

The craftsman at work will be ready to answer any questions from the floor. It will make a good subject for free study. (Photo from 2011)

B) Exhibition

3) Special Exhibition “Hall of Famers for 2012, Part II”

Through Sunday, September 23
At the Baseball Hall of Fame Gallery

The exhibition features the two 2012 Hall of Famers; Manabu Kitabepu and the late Tsunemi Tsuda. Artifacts and photos related to the new inductees and their plaques are on display with their biographies and records.



p.5 Column: Much to See, Much to Enjoy (43)

A Fond Memory of Promoting Elementary School Baseball

Kenji Edagawa, Former executive director of the Japan Rubber Baseball Association

Now a sustaining member of the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum



A half a century have passed since I began to work as umpire and official for the Mito Baseball Association, a subsidiary organization of the Japan Rubber Baseball Association. Without encounters with many people and their cooperation, my relations with baseball must have broken off long before. I really appreciate the importance of encounter and I sincerely express my thanks to those people who have earnestly supported my baseball activity.

Now let me tell you about the All-Japan Elementary School Rubber Baseball Championship which started in 1981. McDonald's Japan, became its sponsor in 1986, giving it an additional title, McDonald Tournament, to its appellation. In 1997, a trophy was given by Prince Takamado, and the Championship has finally been named "Prince Takamado All-Japan Elementary School Rubber Baseball Championship ~ McDonald Tournament." It has been widely regarded as an elementary school version of traditional high school tournaments at Koshien Stadium. Its regional eliminations take place in all of the 47 prefectures of Japan.

In the course of my involvement in its administration from the prefectural to national level, I am proud to say that Mito City in Ibaragi Prefecture had hosted the national tournament for 19 consecutive years from 1990 to 2008. This was only possible by the integrated organizational strength and their able staffs. I cannot thank them enough for their kind cooperation. Moreover, I cannot forget a moving scene at the annual opening ceremony surrounded by a large crowd. Young players representing their prefecture marched one by one by the pitcher's mound with sparkling eyes and smiles, searing their images deeply into my eyes. I was especially moved by their cheering grandpas and grandmas in the stands.

Hereafter I would like to expect organizations concerned to have more mutual cooperation and exert themselves to develop baseball in Japan in close relations to baseball abroad. In conclusion, I would like to express my deep thanks to managers, coaches and players' parents who have volunteered to cooperate with us for the sake of the participating schoolchildren.

N.B. "The 32nd Prince Takamado All-Japan Elementary School Rubber Baseball Championship ~ McDonald Tournament" is scheduled to be held Sunday, August 12 through Friday, August 17 at Jingu Stadium and four other stadiums in Tokyo.

p.6 Fans Appreciation Day Newly Celebrated

Members of each of the 12 Fan Clubs of the NPB were invited free to the Baseball Museum on their Fan Day set up for them between May 17 and July 26. The diagram below shows their attendance and the total attendance of the particular day.

It is to be hoped that this event will prove an incentive for them to re-visit the Baseball Museum.

Pacific League	Date		Central League	Date	
Orix Buffaloes	Thursday, May 17	33 (333)	Yomiuri Giants	Sunday, May 27	536 (998)
Tohoku Rakuten Golden Eagles	Thursday, May 31	25 (230)	Tokyo Yakult Swallows	Sunday, June 24	135 (399)
Saitama Seibu Lions	Friday, June 8	264 (504)	Chunichi Dragons	Sunday, July 1	191 (658)
Chiba Lotte Marines	Sunday, June 10	906 (1,347)	Hanshin Tigers	Sunday, July 8	156 (621)
Hokkaido Nippon Ham Fighters	Thursday, June 28	173 (238)	Hiroshima Toyo Carp	Thursday, July 12	104 (339)
Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks	Monday, July 2	347 (497)	Yokohama DeNA Baystars	Thursday, July 26	66 (605)



On these occasions, every preparation was made to cater to particular fans; the plaques of their Hall of Famers were marked with ribbons; their artifacts were specially on display; their club's appearance in the Nippon Series were shown in the movie theatre (NB: TRGE with no league title were represented by their games in the pennant race last year); three team mascots visited the Museum (Giants, Dragons, and Hawks); easy access to their literature at the Baseball Library, etc.

Library Note Books on the history of prefectural high school baseball associations
Akiko Ogawa, Co-librarian



Of all 47 prefectural high school baseball associations, 43 of them have published their history book and it is to be noted that all of them are available at our baseball library. Let's glance at two of them and see how the 2012 Hall of Famers, Kitabeppu and Tsuda, played in their high school days.

Kitabeppu graduated from Miyakonojo Agricultural High School in Miyazaki Prefecture. According to "Baseball History" (1983), he appeared in an invitational game with Sakushin Gakuin in May in his first year and pitched against the Phenom Egawa as a reliever. SG won the game 4 to 0. In his three years, MAHS did not find their way to Koshien either in spring and summer, but in April, 1975, he pitched a perfect game at a game against Jishukan HS in the Kyushu HS Baseball Tournament.

Tsuda graduated from Nanyo Technical High School. “Yamaguchi Prefecture High School Baseball History” (1994) says that in the preliminary game for the summer tournament against Kumage-kita HS in 1977, he pitched a perfect game, but his NTHS did not win through the following Subo regional preliminary, thus failing to appear in the final game in Yamaguchi Prefecture. But in the following year, he pitched in and won all of the six games (two of them were called games, two others were scoreless, allowing only 4 runs in all) and led his NTHS to Koshien.

Thus each and every volume of histories of prefectural high school baseball association is a treasury of records attained by high school baseball players. Their titles can be accessed through our Website.

p.7 Topics From May, 2012 to July, 2012

May 29 Visit by Brady Liang, secretary general of the Chinese Professional Baseball League.
(right in photo with Hirose, president of the BHF)



June 7 Visit by JR East Japan Baseball Club members.
They were winners in the 2011 Inter-City
Baseball Tournament.



June 9 Press conference on “Lions Classics 2012” were held at the Baseball Hall of Fame Gallery attended by Yasumitsu Toyoda, 2006 Hall of Famer, manager Hisanobu Watanabe, infielder Takeya Nakamura, pitcher Takayuki Kishi, and pitcher Kazuhisa Makita. Toyoda talked on Kazuhisa Inao, 1993 Hall of Famer, and on former uniforms.



June 21 Visit by Kaname Yashiki, who played for the Taiyo Whales and the Yomiuri Giants. He talked with six elementary school children from Niigata Prefecture at an event, “Baseball Forever,” held by Japan Baseball Promotion Association (or OB Club of NPB.)



July 6 Visit by Katsuya Nomura, 1989 Hall of Famer, for an interview with a magazine editor..



NB In other words, from August to October, the museum will be closed on the following days.
August, None/ September 3, 10 and 24/ October 1,15, 22, and 29
(October 15 and 22 are likely to change according to the Climax Series)

Editor's Note: Regrettably, "Rara avis" is suspended in this issue.

p.8 Essay (49) In Memory of a Great Manager

Hachiro Mohri, Kansai Television
Member of the Players Selection Committee

Yukio Nishimoto, who was called a great but ill-fated manager, died at the age of 91 on November 25, 2011. He is sleeping peacefully in the grave in his hometown, but even now he may be encouraging his players vigorously on the other side. It was only six days before he died that he said, watching a Japan Series game on TV, "In recent years very tense situations are too many in the Japan Series. Strong combativeness and spiritual toughness are required of players. It's very impressive to see them playing in the tight schedule of the Japan Series preceded by the Climax Series." Comparing with his many appearances in the best-of-7 Japan Series, he was ardent in praising the present players with a TV camera before him. He really loved baseball to the very end of his life.

I first saw him at close distance when I covered his spring training camp for the first time as an announcer. It was a snowy day at Sukumo in Kochi Prefecture. He stood firm behind the batting cage, with a bat in hand, keeping attention to practicing batters. It was too horrifying for a new-fledged announcer to ask a question or go near to him. The first impression was so strong that for some time I could not bring myself to accost to him easily. Two years later, however, when we were a play-by-play announcer and a commentator, he said to me casually, "I'll teach you everything about baseball. Ask any questions to me. But I am new to broadcasting. Please tell me frankly if I say something awkward." Availing myself of his openhearted manner, I asked him about everything I could think of: combination of pitches, defense positions, how to bring up and use players, and so on. Even to a question which I feel now ashamed of asking, he answered politely, keeping a good countenance. When I said casually, "That's a wonderful fine play!," he retorted, with a smile, "Nonsense. It's simply an inferior play. The truth is, he was one step late in starting." He detested cutting corners on every job.

Speaking of Nishimoto, there is another unforgettable episode. He was an unbelievable "rain man." I can't remember how many times a game on our beat was rained out when the good weather was unmistakably expected. For example, one cloudless day at Fujiidera Stadium (now extinct), Nishimoto began to speak to the mike on testing 30 minutes before going on the air, when a drop of rain fell on me. Immediately after that, thunder rumbled and it began to rain like the bucket turned over. The playing ground was flooded in no time and the game was rained out five minutes before the starting time. For another example, a game between Hanshin Tigers and Yomiuri Giants at Koshien Stadium began at six. On the sports corner in the news program on TV, I spoke to the listeners, "The game is being played without hitch. In 10 minutes from 7 o'clock, the game will be on the air with a commentary by Nishimoto. Please wait and see." On the spot, however, it had begun to rain simultaneously with this announcement, and when the broadcasting started, the game was being suspended. Nothing but rain and idle players on the benches were on the TV screen for thirty minutes and I could do nothing but ask him to fill the gap by talking about various topics on baseball. The game was rained out eventually and the prime time broadcasting of a golden matchup ended in a fiasco!

As I am afraid I might be scolded by him, I must stop quoting other episodes about the “rain man” who would cause it to rain despite himself. It is a pleasant memory indeed that whenever we met at a stadium, he looked up at the sky and grinned at me with joy as if to say that it would never rain that day. He was wholly serious about baseball and refused to accept a compromise, but at other times he was a mischievous and amiable person who hated to admit defeat. I am really grateful for meeting a great manager Nishimoto, who taught me the joy and profundity of baseball right from the beginning.