

The Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum



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

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(The English version prepared by Ryuichi Suzuki)

p.1 2014 Hall of Famers Elected

Shinichi Hirose, President

The Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum announced its Hall of Famers for 2014 at the press conference held at the Baseball Hall of Fame from 3 p.m. on Friday, January 17, 2014. The Players Division of the Players Selection Committee elected Hideo Nomo, who garnered 201 wins combined in NPB and MLB, Koji Akiyama, manager of the Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks who as a player has a career record of 2,157 hits and 437 home runs, and Kazuhiro Sasaki who notched 381 saves combined in NPB and MLB. The Expert Division of the PSC failed to elect any successful candidates. On the other hand, the Special Selection Committee elected the late Choichi Aida, manager of Waseda University Baseball Club, who played a big role in preserving baseball in the turmoil of WW II and in recovering it after the war. He is remembered as a key person in the realization of the “last” Waseda-Keio game in 1943. (For further reference to his bio, please see below, page 4 of this NL and our Website)

N.B. Nomo was too busy for preparing for his NOMO CUP to attend the press conference in Tokyo and a special one was held on the same day in Toyooka in Hyogo Prefecture where the tournament was scheduled to be held.

The press conference began with the announcement of the names of the 2014 Hall of Famers by Atsushi Ihara, chairman of the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, followed by the report of the selection procedures of the Players Selection Committee by its representative director, Gotaro Nagase, and by that of the Special Selection Committee by its chairman, Yoshiaki Arimoto. The presentation of the induction notification to each of the 2014 inductees were followed by their acceptance speeches. Akiyama said, “I feel it a special honor, as I am well aware that there are many seniors who are more worthy than myself of being inducted to the Hall of Fame. I am glad that I was credited for the very thing I have done in my life which I can enjoy only once.” Sasaki said with deep emotion, “I am all the more glad for winning this wonderful honor because I began to play baseball to overcome my physically weakness when I was a kid.” Nobumasa Aida spoke for his deceased father, “If he was here, he would be thinking about his peer baseball players who were killed in the front and about those with whom he tried to restore baseball after the war. I will report this honor to him at the family grave.” Nomo in Toyooka said, “I am thankful and honored for being inducted to the Baseball Hall of Fame. I am determined to promote baseball through my activity as director of my NOMO Baseball Club.”

Each of the guest speakers told an interesting episode about his respective inductee. Osamu Higashio, 2010 Hall of Famer and teammate of Akiyama with the Seibu Lions: “If he was 30 years old now, he would surely be a free agent and showing a spectacular showing in the MLB comparable to Sasaki and Nomo. I am proud to have played with him in the heyday of the Lions.” 1988 Hall of Famer Masaichi Kaneda, a 400-game winner and former

manager of the Lotte Orions, said, “I remember shaking hands with the young Sasaki as a member of the Orions’ fan club. Later when I happened to meet him in Hawaii, he was walking in sandals. I pointed out that he was liable to get injured and told him to walk in shoes immediately.” Masaharu Motomura, former president of *Tomon* (Waseda) Club, spoke of his senior: “Anticipating the lack of baseball implements after the war, he secured 300 bats and 300 dozens of balls and kept them at the training quarters. He supplied them to other university baseball clubs as well, which helped the early resumption of baseball after the war. Indeed he had slaved behind the scenes.” Peter O’Malley, former president of the Los Angeles Dodgers gave Hideo Nomo the following message. “Congratulations, Hideo, I am very happy for you. You deserve this extraordinary recognition by the Baseball Hall of Fame. Ever since we first met in 1995, I have admired your professionalism and the courage facing baseball’s finest batters. Everyone in the Dodgers respect you. You are a pioneer and have opened the door for others to follow you in Major League Baseball, well done.”



The press conference ended with taking commemorative photographs of the new inductees and the guest speakers. More than 100 media people participated in the interview here, while some 60 media people gathered in the other interview in Toyooka. Photo

(From left in the front row) Koji Akiyama, Kazuhiro Sasaki, and Nobumasa Aida.
 (From left in back row) Osamu Higashio, Masaichi Kaneda, Atsushi Ihara and Masaharu Motomura.

p.2 2014 Hall of Famers elected by the Players Selection Committee

Gotaro Nagase
 Representative Director of the PSC

A new age has come to the Baseball Hall of Fame. All of the new inductees have more to do with the Heisei Era (1989~) than with the Showa (1926~1988).

The 54th Players Selection Committee elected in the Players Division Hideo Nomo, who garnered 201 wins combined in NPB and MLB, Koji Akiyama, who has a lifetime record of 437 home runs and 303 stolen bases, and Kazuhiro Sasaki, who notched 381 saves combined in NPB and MLB.



The 22 eligible candidates were selected by the Screening Committee of the PSC from pro players who have ceased to be active for at least five years prior to selection and have been retired for less than 21 years. In the election in the Players Division, 324 out of 329 voting members with an experience of reporting baseball for 15 years or more selected the names of 7 candidates at most on a ballot, and Hideo Nomo received the most ballots of 267 (82.4 % of the total valid ballots).

In the draft of 1989, he was nominated as first choice by as many as eight clubs and joined the Kintetsu Buffaloes from Nippon Steel Corporation in 1990. With unique “tornado” pitching, he exerted an unprecedentedly marvelous performance (18 wins, 8 losses and 2.91 ERA) in his first year, sweeping almost all of the awards: MVP, Sawamura Award, the Rookie of the Year, and most strikeouts (287). In 1995, he pitched for the Los Angeles Dodgers, and with a record of 13-6, and 2.64 ERA, he won the Rookie of the Year. There existed no posting system between NPB and MLB in those days. He encountered much criticism in challenging MLB, but he dared to open the door which had been closed for 29 years after Masanori Murakami pitched for the San Francisco Giants (1964-5). He played for 7 MLB clubs and pitched a no-hit, no-run game both in the American and National Leagues.



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An event held by NOMO Baseball Club prevented him from attending the press conference at the Baseball Hall of Fame, but he was interviewed by the media at Kinosaki Spa in Toyooka City in Hyogo Prefecture. With all of his candid remark: “I am really surprised by this unexpected honor. It was an open secret that I was not with good terms with reporters,” his splendid achievements have been duly estimated. He was the third to be elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in the first year of eligibility after Victor Starffin in 1960 and Sadaharu Oh in 1994. He is now 45 years and 4 months old and the youngest inductee, which title was claimed before by Tetsuharu Kawakami who was inducted in 1965 when he was 45 years and 8 months. He passed away at the age of 93 on October 25, 2013.

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Kazuhiro Sasaki, who played an active part both in NPB and MLB following the trail cut by Hideo Nomo, received 255 ballots (78.7%) and was inducted in the fourth year of eligibility. In 1989, he was the alternative first draft choice by the Yokohama Taiyo Whales. In 1998, as a most dependable closer, he led his team to victory in the Japan Series. In 2000, he was transferred to the Seattle Mariners on free agent system. The forkballer DAIMAJIN notched 37 saves (the record for a rookie then) and won the Rookie of the Year. He is now 45 years and 10 months old, i.e., the third youngest inductee next to Nomo and Kawakami, but shares the honor with Nomo of being the first inductee who has played both in NPB and MLB. In his acceptance speech, he said, “In

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1988, when Team Japan practiced in preparation for the Seoul Olympics on the stadium belonging to Tohoku Fukushi University (my alma mater), I served as a batting pitcher for them. The ace pitcher of Team Japan was no other than Nomo. I feel very honored to be inducted with him.”

Koji Akiyama received 257 ballots (79.3% of the total valid ballots) and was inducted in his 7th year of eligibility. “It’s too early yet,” he said modestly, but he is the oldest among the three new inductees. Graduating from Yatsushiro High School, he joined the Seibu Lions outside of the draft system. He hit 40 or more home runs for three consecutive seasons (1985-87). He was a five-tool outfielder, as witness so-called three triple in 1989 (.301 BA, 31 HR, and 31 SB). He led the PL in stolen bases (51) in 1990.



In 1993 he was transferred to the Daiei Hawks in a 3-3 barter trade. He prodded younger players like Hiroki Kokubo (now manager of Samurai Japan) and slugger Nobuhiko Matsunaka to better performance and in 1999 he led the team to win its first pennant. At present he is managing the SoftBank Hawks. He is the second active manager to be inducted to the BHF after Hiromitsu Ochiai (now general manager of the Chunichi Dragons) in 2011. He said in his acceptance speech, “I had my mother Misue die three years ago. It was through her encouragement that I began to play baseball. She was so enthusiastic when I became a pro player. I believe she is overjoyed with my honor under the sod.”

© ditto. The Expert Division of the PSC failed to elect any successful candidate for the third time after the last election two years ago. There was a revision in the selection rules last fall. The candidates have increased from 10 to 20. Added voters were Hall of Famers inducted by the Special Selection Committee and baseball reporters with 30 years or more of baseball reporting. The Voters now can select 5 (formerly 3) candidates at most on a ballot. The valid ballots out of 112 voting members were 97, and no eligible candidates received 73 ballots or more (75% or more of the valid ballots.), with Masaji Hiramatsu receiving the most (50) ballots.

The result of the selection reminds me of Kihachi Enomoto. He led the famous Daimai Orions’ Missile batting lineup and widely admitted as a batting genius with a lifetime record of 2,314. When he was eligible for the first time in 1978 in the election by the PSC, he received only 2 ballots and lost his eligibility from the next year in this category. But the expansion of the eligible candidates in accordance with the revision of the election rules re-found him, so to speak. By a unanimous vote by the screening committee, he was added to the eligible candidates and received 49 ballots, second best among them. The importance of selecting candidates was brought home to the people concerned.

It is natural that the selection by the Players Division is focused on the baseball great in the Heisei Era, but at the same time those in the Showa Era must be reflected in the selection by the Expert Division.

p.4 2014 Hall of Famer elected by the Special Selection Committee

Yoshiaki Arimoto, chairman of the Special Selection Committee



The 14 members of the Special Selection Committee elected the late Choichi Aida by a unanimous vote to the Baseball Hall of Fame. Let me begin my article by paying homage for his amateur baseball career in which he had carried his original intention.

If he was alive and here in person, he would be much pleased. All the people here at the press conference were impressed by the heartfelt speech by Nobumasa Aida, his eldest son, who spoke on behalf of his deceased father. He came up to Tokyo from a snowy Hokkaido after graduating from Otaru Middle School and entered Waseda University. The fair-faced pitcher tried hard to catch up with talented peer players from all over the

© ditto. country, but the pain in his shoulder proved too much to continue pitching. He was persuaded to turn manager’s assistant and came to realize that pitchers were not all who were wanted in the baseball club. He decided to do indispensable chores for it behind the scenes. His job as manager’s assistant was varied and became

progressively a heavy one including looking after sub players. Seemingly he found different love in baseball. In due course of time, though he was still a student, he was told by Tobita Suishu, 1960 Hall of Famer, to take up managership.

After graduation, he was actively involved with Tokyo Big6 University League as one of its directors and umpires. Particularly as an umpiring consultant, he took a great part in improving techniques necessary for umpires. He actually umpired not only at Meiji Jingu Stadium for TBUL but also at Koshien Stadium for high school baseball and at Korakuen Stadium for Inter-City Baseball Tournament.

A special mention must be made on his a-la-Aida umpiring style which he devised himself by looking into a mirror. He stood with his legs planted firmly back and forth apiece. When he called a strike, he flung out his right arm forward and simultaneously called out in a loud voice. It was an inimitable, Aida way of umpiring, which I still remember vividly. He was indeed one of the great umpires in the Showa Era. When he was faced with a protest from a manager, a coach or a player, he gave his explanation concisely in an easy and clear wording, thus he was called the doyen of umpires. Through his career as both a player and a manager, he was versed in baseball rules not only literally but in their inner meanings. Though protesting managers had a rule book in their pocket, they were not equal to him on the playing ground. That was why there were many umpires who wanted to imitate his manner of umpiring. Though they might have succeeded in imitating him physically, they would not have gained understanding of the rules as deeply as he did.

Let me end this essay by expressing respect for him again.

p. 5 Revision of the Election Rules for the Hall of Famers

Shinichi Hirose, President

The first election rules of the Hall of Famers were stipulated when the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum was inaugurated in 1959. Several changes in the articles had been made after that according to the changes of the times and the last revision was made in 2007. With the lapse of five years, the need to renew some of the articles began to be felt in and out of the museum. The alteration of the name of the institution in Japanese in 2013 was the latest incentive to start a subcommittee for the revision of the election rules with a special aim to improve the Hall of Fame project in general.

The subcommittee was set up on January 29, 2013 with the following members. Gotaro Nagase, representative director of the Players Selection Committee, Tetsuo Ikeda, a member of the Special Selection Committee, Kunio Shimoda, director of the BHFMM, and myself, with a few members of the staff as the secretariat. It held a monthly meeting till last December and in the meantime a partial change of the articles was approved in last October. However, the changes of election rules are perennial and the subcommittee will be actively continued.

a) Changes in the election rules in the players Division of the Players Selection Committee

In the new rules, any eligible candidate who has failed to receive a minimum of three percent (3%) of the ballots cast cannot return for consideration in the following year. In the former rules, the 3% rule was applied only to those retired players who were nominated as eligible candidates in the first year of their eligibility.

b) Changes in the election rules in the Expert Division of the Players Selection Committee

In the new rules, electors will consist of (1) all the living members of the Baseball Hall of Fame, (2) members of the Players Selection Committee who have been baseball writers for 30 years or more, and (3) directors of the PSC elected by the Committee from among its members ~ totaling some 110 members. Formerly, (1) HOFs elected by the Special Selection Committee were not included, nor (2) were included.

It has widely been admitted that it is difficult and unreasonable to select former pro umpires in the same category as former pro players. Accordingly the selection of former pro umpires is to be done by the Special Selection Committee hereafter.

In the new rules, with the remarkable increase of candidates, electors may select as few as zero (0) and as many as five (5) (formerly 3) eligible candidates from a list of 20 (formerly 10) at most of eligible candidates prepared by the Screening Committee.

c) Changes in the election rules in the Special Selection Committee

In the new rules, candidates are (1) amateur players, coaches, and umpires, (2) pro umpires, and (3) those persons who contributed, or have contributed to the promotion and development of pro and/or amateur baseball in Japan not only in terms of its organization and management but in the wider perspective,

p.6 Inductees Remembered (42)

A Memory of my fond “Grandpa”

Nanae Kiriyaama

Daughter of Shigeru Chiba, 1980 Hall of Famer



It was on a snowy morning on December 9, 2002. On receiving a sudden notice of my father from my parents’ home, I hastened there not knowing how he died. He seemed to be sleeping, and did not respond to my call. Honestly speaking, it was immediately after this that I realized what a distinguished personage he was. His death was reported in the newspapers and a great many people came to attend his funeral. Even now when I am writing his memoir, he will surely be worried that I may not write well. Every time he left a memo to me, he used 400- squared writing papers. Probably he needed them to write his manuscripts. (He had such a talent for writing?)

I was born in the year when he hung up his spikes, so I do not know anything about his active days. In my memory, he spent a life with the day and night reversed. He went out in the evening and was asleep when I went to school in the morning. “What was he doing?” I wondered. On holidays, he took me out to the garden to play catch with him. “It’s a fly ball.” “Bend your knees when you catch a grounder!” Curiously enough, many passersby were watching us outside the gate. When he visited my school to observe classes, he was surrounded by other parents asking for his autograph. When he was at bat in the parental baseball game after school, he was greeted by the biggest cheers from spectators. Why? It was only when I was in the higher grade at elementary school that I knew he was a baseball player, and that a famous one, which shows

clearly how little we talked about baseball at home.

Now that I have grown up, I must own myself in the same lifestyle as he was. I did a part-time job at Korakuen Stadium in my university days. One day I was suddenly assigned to another post, which turned out to be at my father's instigation. He was commentating a baseball game at the same time on the radio, but he complained that he could not concentrate to the job as he was unable to get me off his mind. Unlike his nickname, "Buffalo," he was timid, almost in a dither, when I was concerned. That showed conversely how he wanted to protect me. He loved and pampered me. Though he seemed to be trying hard to step back a little after I got married, he came to the maternity hospital in an unprecedentedly gorgeous attire to see the new-born baby. He had prepared a new suit and a new necktie. At the suggestion by Warren Cromartie (the Giants, 1984-90), he once brought baby powder with him, but the good-intentioned grandfather steeped the baby in a sea of baby powder.

Later in life, he often went back to his home town Matsuyama and did all he could to have the All-Star game held in the non-franchised city. He loved Matsuyama so much that he knelt formally when he watched a game by Matsuyama Commercial High School, his alma mater. I am very glad to hear that his grave in Matsuyama had been visited by so many people. I believe he is glad, too. After he died, I noticed a brand-new Burberry coat hung on the rack in the entrance. He had not lost the desire to dress fashionably! It came home to me that he had wanted to continue to be connected with baseball in a new coat. It is difficult nowadays, but he was able to lead a happy life by devoting himself to his favorite baseball. Surely he is rooting from Heaven the Yomiuri Giants, his first and fondest pro team.

p.7 A Topics from Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum、 October, 2013 through December, 2013

Wednesday, October 16 A souvenir photo was presented to Mr. Jackie Robinson



A photo taken in Nikko and showing Mr. and Mrs. Jackie Robinson together with the members of the 1956 Brooklyn Dodgers was presented to Mrs. Robinson at Tokyo Dome prior to the first game of the Central League's Climax Series. Mrs. Rachel Robinson (91) was in Tokyo to promote the film, "42," a biography of her late husband who had broken the color barrier in the Major League in 1947. The framed photo was reproduced from a memorial album prepared by the Yomiuri Shimbun, the sponsor of the 1956 U.S.-Japan Goodwill Baseball Series.

Wednesday, November 22 Visit by Seiji Kobayashi and 7 other rookies of the Yomiuri Giants

After making a tour of the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum (and the Memorial Cenotaph dedicated to the war dead), they had a photo taken with the uniform of their manager, Tatsunori Hara (uniform No.8)



Friday, December 20 Visit by Manabu Tashiro, Sankei Sports.



He was the first Japanese scorer at the World Series. On October 23 and 24, he served the job with the other two scorers at Fenway Park in the first and second games of the 2014 World Series between Boston Red Sox and St. Louis Cardinals. The scorebook for the 2nd game was donated to the BHF^M by the MLB and now on display (see photo) in the Baseball Museum.

B News from the Baseball Museum

- 1) Change in officials New Chairman Atsushi Ihara, secretary general of the NPB

Retired Ryozo Kato, Chairman
Kunio Shimoda, director
Atsushi Ihara, councilor

- 2) On Sale A) 5 Postcards in an original BHF^M envelope
@ ¥500 (tax included)

Depicted in their back are: Entrance, Japan's Pro Baseball Gallery,
Amateur Baseball Gallery, Baseball Hall of Fame, and Event Hall.



- B) Keyholder @ ¥500 (tax included)

Original key holder made from cow hide used for
official baseballs, of gold tooling, green in color.
100 mm x 40 mm.



- 3) Guide to the Baseball Museum

The entrance is located to the right of Gate 21 of Tokyo Dome.

Hours: 10:00—18:00 (March through September)

10:00—17:00 (October through February)

(Visitors are requested to enter at least 30 minutes prior to the closing time.)

Admission: ¥500 (¥300) Adults

¥200 (¥150) Primary & Junior High School students

(* Per person in groups 20 or more)

¥300 Senior citizens aged 65 or more

Closed: Mondays except those 1) during the spring and summer vacations,
2) that fall on National Holidays,
3) when a pro baseball game is held at Tokyo Dome.

N.B. In other words, from February to April, the museum will be closed on:
February 3,10,17, and 24; March 3,10,17 and 24; April 7, 14, 21 and 28.

P. 8 Essay (55) High School Baseball

Katsuhide Kawakami, Kyodo Press
Director of the Players Selection Committee

I like high school baseball now, but I remember I was in a depressed mood toward the end of the Summer HS Baseball Tournament at Koshien Stadium in my university days. To be precise, it was in the summer of 1983 when I was a senior and “manager” of the baseball club. It was a custom in those days that when the tournament was over, a pick-up team, which was formed with the members of the champion team as its core, went over to Korea or the U.S., and played a goodwill game with the Korean team which was invited to Japan. The baseball league to which my university belonged rented a room at the headquarters of the Japan HS Baseball Federation and I was obliged to help the pick-up team in their daily chores.

In 1983, PL Gakuin under skipper Junji Nakamura and with a superb combination of pitcher Masami Kuwata and slugger Kazuhiro Kiyohara (both freshmen) defeated Ikeda HS in the semi-finals and finally won the championship. Ikeda HS was the champion in the preceding two tournaments at Koshien Stadium. The pick-up team was comprised of so many future pro players: Kuwata, Kiyohara, Katsuhito Mizuno (Ikeda), Tetsuhiro Nonaka (Chukyo), Masaaki Miura (Yokohama Commercial), Mitsuru Ogiwara (Sendai Commercial), Takahiro Ikeyama (Municipal Amagasaki) and Tetsuo Hayashi (Gifu First). High school baseball was at its zenith of popularity. Super stars appeared in quick succession topped by Daisuke Araki (Waseda Jitsugyo) in 1980, Mizuno in 1982, and Kuwata & Kiyohara in 1983.

The young players were as popular as movie idols, and a crowd of girl fans surrounded their lodgings trying to ask for autographs and to take photographs. The players were strictly prohibited from going outside. When a player was spotted through the window, there raised a shout of excitement and many of the anxious fans rushed to the spot, causing some of them to almost collide with a passing car. All of the curtains were shut immediately after that. It must have been a joyful but severe collective life for young players of 17 and 18.

My job was to put up at the same lodgings and go shopping for them, receive gifts from fans on their behalf, and participate in their practice in the playing ground. It was half a token of gratitude to the Federation, but actually it was not thrilling or rewarding for a senior to work for high school players. But Kuwata and Mizuno gave me a deep impression. Kuwata was the only, tacit and gentle freshman. I took him to a barber’s in my car to have his hair shingled. When I reminded him of this later as a beat writer for the Giants, his answer was a disappointing one. “I remember going there, but not with whom I went.” If I had favored him more as a promising player, I would be a different sports writer now.

I was most friendly with Mizuno. We knew each other because he had been selected to the pick-up team in the previous year. When I met him again, he amiably shook hands with me, saying, ”Long time no see, Mr. Kawakami!” He knew how to cope with the uncomfortable life. He partially forgot himself by being idolized,

but as far as baseball was concerned, he was pure and simple. We have kept contact ever since. On 26, last October, I heard his joyful voice after a long absence. Ikeda HS, his alma mater, entered the final in the Shikoku tournament and won the berth in the Spring Invitational Tournament in Koshien Stadium. His alma mater was unrivaled when he pitched for it under great skipper Tsuta, but it had to bite the dust as long as for 22 years. He told me out of breath, “Times have changed, but I am overjoyed!”