

The Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum



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

Articles in **NEWSLETTER**, Vol.28, No. 3 (October, 2018)

p.1 The Induction Ceremony for the 2018 Baseball Hall of Famers elected by the Special Selection Committee

Shinichi Hirose, President

The Baseball Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony for the late Masao Taki by the Special Selection Committee was held on August 15 (Wed) at Koshien Stadium, where the 100th Summer National High School Baseball Tournament took place. On the 11th day of the tournament, between the first game (Shimonoseki Kokusai High School against Soshi Gakuen High School) and the second game (Naha Municipal Konan Senior High School against Kisarazu Total High School,) the induction ceremony was held following the commendation ceremony of the *“Ikusei Kourou Sho”* (Coach of the Year Award) that is carried out by the Japan High School Baseball Federation each year on the anniversary of the end of the Pacific War.

As a member of the Chukyo Shogyo (current Chukyo University Chukyo Senior High School) baseball team, Taki won both the 1937 summer and 1938 spring Koshien tournaments. After the war, he became the manager of the school, and led the team to win the 1954 summer and the 1956 spring tournaments, thus accomplishing the remarkable feat of winning both the spring and the summer tournaments both as a player and a manager. In 1956, he became the manager and general manager of Chukyo University baseball club, winning a total of 28 Aichi University Baseball League championships. In 1970, he led the team to become the first and only baseball club representing the Tokai region to earn the All Japan University Baseball Championship title. He was truly committed to training coaches, and made significant contributions to the development of Japanese amateur baseball.

The weather forecast on the day of the award ceremony was sunny, and the consecutive days of intense heat was worrisome, but the forecast was wrong, and it began raining from the morning. The heavy rain intensified temporarily, but it weakened right before the award ceremony and it was able to go on as planned. The stadium was packed with spectators to commemorate the memorial tournament, as the ceremony was conducted in front of the backstop as the large crown looked on. Images introducing the late Mr. Taki were played on the big screen, and his son Katsumi Taki stood on the field as his father’s achievements were introduced through the PA system. First, a commemorative replica was presented by Atsushi Saito, Chairman of the Baseball Hall of Fame Museum, followed by a bouquet of flowers presented by Eiji Hatta, Chairman of the High School Baseball Federation. Later, Katsumi Taki expressed his gratitude to everyone involved in the ceremony, stating, “I pray that this peaceful society is sustained, and that high school baseball continues to develop. Before my father passed away, he told me to be grateful to all of those who have supported him. I’m more than honored to be able to stand here today to convey his thanks.” Finally, a commemorative photo session was held as the ceremony was concluded without a hitch.



Photo from left: Atsushi Saito, Katsumi Taki, Eiji Hatta

P.2 2018 Independent Study on Baseball! in Review

The “Independent Study on Baseball!” that supports elementary school students with their baseball-themed independent research projects was conducted, and seven different events were implemented as a part of the efforts.

Independent Study on Baseball!

Period: July 1 (Sun) ~ August 31 (Fri), 2018
 Venue: Library and event hall



As part of the “Independent Study on Baseball!,” files were generated by organizing documents that could be used as source materials for the research projects, books and magazines relating to the history of baseball, baseball stadiums and high school baseball were neatly arranged to create an environment that would make it easier for students to engage in their independent research projects. The students were also given the opportunity to actually touch various types of balls, including regulation baseballs and soft rubber baseballs, as well as metal bats (for regulation baseballs) and wooden bats (used by Masataka Yoshida of the Orix Buffaloes,) to experience the differences between them firsthand.

This year, 732 elementary school students took part in the “Independent Study on Baseball!” (an increase of 84 students compared to the previous year,) making it the highest number of students since the figures were first tallied.

Looking at the themes selected by the students, it was found that nearly of them chose to research on the different types of familiar baseball equipment such as balls, gloves, bats and uniforms. Other

themes included the history of baseball, high school baseball and the science behind breaking balls. Also, the ongoing “High School Baseball: 100th Summer” special exhibition was believed to be a major reason as to why many students chose high school baseball as the theme of their project.

Mini-mini Experimental Corner

Term: July 21 (Sat) ~ August 26 (Sun) (*Excluding days with scheduled events.)

Time: 14:00~, 15:00~ (30 minutes per session)

Venue: Event hall



The “Mini-mini Experimental Corner” was implemented, where the museum’s staff introduced different topics that could be used as themes for the independent research projects. Many students participated in the event as they determined their independent research project themes based on the “mini-mini experiments.” The students were seen focusing their attention on reading the measuring instruments when working with the staff to measure the bats that were actually used in games by Yuki Yanagita of the Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks and Yoshitomo Tsutsugo of the Yokohama DeNA BayStars.

We believe that the experience that enabled the elementary school students to touch the baseball gloves and bats while wearing white gloves was extremely valuable to them.

14:00~

①The secret of breaking balls

The basic principles of breaking balls were explained using balloons and paper tubes.

②The secret of baseball gloves

Professional model gloves from the Meiji era (replica,) early Showa era (replica) and the current era were introduced and the gloves from the past were compared to modern gloves.

15:00~

①The secret of baseballs

The regulations of baseballs were explained and the manufacturing processes of regulation baseballs and soft rubber baseballs were introduced.

②The secret of baseball bats

The regulations of baseball bats were explained and the length, thickness and weight of Yuki Yanagita and Yoshitomo Tsutsugo’s bats were measured.

Hosting of the 3rd Independent Study Awards

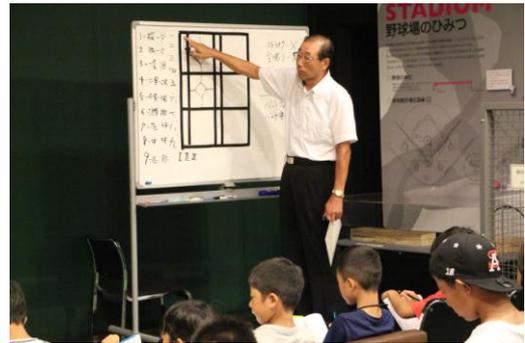
Entries were accepted until October 7 of this year, with 92 entries received in total. The grand prize winning entry, outstanding performance award entries and other entries that passed the initial screening process are scheduled to be displayed inside the museum starting from November 24 (Sat.). The winners of the grand prize and outstanding performance award will also be displayed on our homepage. We will be reporting about the screening results and award ceremony in the next issue of the newsletter.

p.3 Make Baseball 100 times More Fun! Let's Score a Baseball Game!

Date and time: July 22 (Sun,) August 1 (Wed,) August 6 (Mon) 10:30~, 14:00~ on all of the aforementioned dates.

Venue: Event hall

Speaker: Shigeo Ishii (Former chief scorer of the Central League)



Due to the popularity of this project each year, this year's event was implemented with an advance reservation system. The students who participated in the event learned about the simple positional notations (such as pitchers and first basemen,) pitch symbols (such as strikes and balls) and play-by-play actions (such as outs, pitch count, strikeouts and walks) commonly used in the "Waseda-style" scorekeeping system from Mr. Ishii. The children were focused on filling in the scorecards after each pitch while watching the footage of an actual game. The experience of learning how to keep score directly from a former professional scorekeeper and filling in scorecards while watching actual footage taught the children a completely different way to enjoy baseball. We received comments from the participants stating that the event was "easy to understand," "fun" and "was an opportunity to change the way they watched baseball."

Summer Umpire School!

Date and time: July 27 (Fri,) August 5 (Sun) 14:00~ on both dates

Venue: Event hall

Speakers: Umpire Masato Tomoyose

Senior Director and Umpire Technical Advisor Toshio Azuma

Umpire Technical Advisors Natsuo Yamazaki, Hitoshi Watarida, Takeshi Hirabayashi,

Takayasu Sakaemura (*Mr. Azuma and Mr. Watarida will only take part on July 27.)

Supported by: NPB



This year, on the day of the event, a ticket distribution system was implemented to provide a larger practice space.

First, each of the speakers spoke about the history of baseball, the tasks and equipment used by today's umpires and the instant replay "request" system. After a short break, following demonstrations of the plate umpire and base umpires, all of the participants took turn demonstrating their performances and calls.

On July 27, the umpiring crew for that day's game at Tokyo Dome made a surprise appearance. The calls demonstrated by umpire Naoto Shikita, who is known for his "manji (Buddhist cross) pose" drew excitement from the participants.

Some of the comments from the participants included, "it was fun to learn the different gestures," and "I understood how difficult umpiring is."

Why does a breaking ball break?

Date and time: August 12 (Sun) 14:00~

Venue: Event hall

Speaker: Professor Shinji Sakurai of Chukyo University Health and Sports Science Department



Continuing from last year, Professor Shinji Sakurai from Chukyo University spoke on the theme of “why balls break,” a question wondered by many children.

After introducing himself, the Professor Sakurai explained the state of various pitches as they break and when they are spun as images were displayed simultaneously.

Next, he continued to talk about what is important when thinking about the movement of the ball, including “thinking only about the force from gravity and the air,” “the lift and drag” and “the law of action and reaction” using illustrations to provide specific examples of experiments conducted in space, the wings of an airplane and baseballs.

The children also took part in an experiment that consisted of wrapping a rubber band around a plastic cup and putting a spin on it and letting it fly, enabling them to learn about the science behind breaking balls in an easy-to-understand way.

Some of the comments from the participants included, “the explanations were very easy to understand” and “listening to his stories made me want to practice on my own.”

Summer Vacation Parent and Child Glove Making Class

Date and time: August 20 (Mon) 14:00~

Venue: Event hall

This year we had a total of 230 applicants, and 15 pairs of parents and children that were selected by the lottery participated in the event.



On the day of the event, the participants spent approximately 2.5 hours creating the shape of the glove and conducting the lacing work by attaching the webbed parts between the thumb and index finger under the supervision of Shinpei Yamada and Shoichi Horiuchi from Mizuno Corporation. Many of the parent and children pairs took photos as part of their independent research project and actively asked questions to the staff members as they worked together to create their own original gloves.

p.4 Bat-Making Demonstration

Date and time: August 21 (Tue,) August 22 (Wed) 11:00~, 13:00~, 15:00~

Venue: Event Hall

Supported by: Mizuno Corporation



This year, we had craftsman Takahiro Watanabe provide a demonstration once again. The demonstration has been a huge success, as evidenced by the filled up seats before the start of each event, and many of the children passionately observed the demonstration with memos and cameras in hand. Mr. Watanabe spoke about the types of wood used as the raw materials, the process of bat manufacturing, and a bat making and bat polishing demonstration (2-4 elementary school students per time.) During the Q&A corner, there were many technical

questions posed from the children who were participating for the purpose of completing their independent research projects as well as baseball fans, and each question was answered carefully. After the demonstration, the participants were given the opportunity to hold the bats crafted by Mr. Watanabe and used by professional players to feel their weight and texture, and the event was very well received.

Special Lesson by Mr. Baseball Glove

Date and time: August 23 (Thu) 13:30~, 15:00~

Venue: Event hall

Supported by: Mizuno Corporation

Continuing from last year, the “Special Lesson by Mr. Baseball Glove” was hosted with the support of Mizuno Corporation, and this year we invited Yoshihiro Toyama to speak about baseball gloves and cleats, among other topics. He provided easy-to-understand explanations about how to



maintain baseball gloves and cleats and their manufacturing processes. Each event was a success, with many of the children passionately taking notes and listening intently. During the question corner, many questions were asked by the participants, ranging from technical questions about the glove making process and the materials used, to practical questions about how to break in a baseball glove. It was clear that the students conducting their independent research projects were very inquisitive about baseball gloves.

“110 Years of Japanese-U.S. Baseball” Exhibition

Period: October 13 (Sat) ~ November 18 (Sun,) 2018

Hosted by: Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum

Venue: Exhibition Room

In 1908, the “Reach All Americans” arrived in Japan, marking the first “Japanese-U.S. baseball” game involving professional players from America visiting Japan for a series of exhibition games. The first game was held on November 22 against Waseda University, and the first ceremonial thrown by Waseda University president Okuma Shigenobu marked the first time this ritual was introduced in Japan. In 2018, 110 years since that memorial game, coinciding with the “MLB Japan All-Star Series,” which will be held for the first time in four years, we will be hosting a special exhibition that introduces the long history of baseball between Japan and the United States as well as the many star players who have added excitement to that history.

Various items collected by the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, including posters, admission tickets and signed baseball, in addition to equipment such as the uniforms, bats and gloves used by the long line of Major Leaguers who visited Japan, will be displayed as part of the special exhibition.



In the previous MLB Japan All Star Series, Samurai Japan played against an all-star of Major League players, and in the third game of the series, four pitchers from Samurai Japan combined to throw a no-hitter to claim the victory, and achieved a winning record against the United States for the second time since 1990 with three wins and two losses. The winning ball from this no-hitter and the uniforms worn by the Japanese team are among the items displayed in the exhibition.

(Next exhibition) “Baseball Coverage Photo Exhibition 2018”

Period: December 15 (Sat.) 2018 ~ March 3 (Sun.) 2019 (Tentative schedule)

This exhibition initially started in 2015, and this year marks the 4th year of the event.

Approximately 70 photographs shot by various cameramen from the Tokyo Press Photographers Association capturing the highlights of the 2018 baseball season will be put on display, enabling visitors to take a look back at the various events that took place in the baseball world during this season.

p.5 Inductees Remembered (61)

Memories of my father, Masao Taki

Katsumi Taki (Eldest son of 2018 Baseball Hall of Fame inductee Masao Taki)



My father, Masao Taki, was born on September 8, 1921 as the fourth child and second son of six siblings of a farming family, encountered baseball when he was an elementary school student and was able to engage in baseball for many years until he passed away at the age of 90.

After being recruited by the late Mr. Seimei Umemura who persuaded my father’s family and obtaining the understanding of his older brother and father, he made the decision to attend Chukyo Shogyo (current Chukyo University Senior High School.) I also heard from him that his transfer from Chukyo Shogyo to Nagoya High School of Commerce (current Nagoya University School of Economics) was due to a recommendation made by Mr. Umemura, who helped persuade my father’s family once again. He felt a strong sense of “gratitude” throughout his life to the late Mr. Seimei Umemura, his parents and his siblings for giving him the opportunity to engage in baseball for so many years.

Other than being a “big fan of baseball,” my impression of my father was that he was (1) a hard worker, (2) a very lucky person, (3) attentive and (4) a big fan of people gathering together. I believe that my father, who was born into a poor farming family, was only able to advance to the schools mentioned earlier due to an enormous amount of effort. His achievements in baseball included winning the Koshien High School Baseball Tournament twice as a member of the Chukyo Shogyo baseball team and twice as a high school manager, and winning the National Athletic Meet twice. Furthermore, he also won led his team to a title at the “All Japan University Baseball

Championship” as a manager of the Chukyo University baseball team. He often credited his success “to his encounter with great players and staff members.” During his war experiences, he fought in numerous fierce battles in the Southeast Asian region, and was taken as a POW, but was able to return home alive. After going through these war experiences, he stated that he was “absolutely against war.” After returning home, he suffered from tuberculosis and had to have his right lung removed, but he continued to enjoy baseball with great enthusiasm right up until his passing at the age of 90. He often repeated the phrase, “luck comes with hard work,” but I believe that these words were based on the experiences that he gained throughout his lifetime. He loved seeing his former students leading their teams to the Koshien High School Baseball Tournament, and he enjoyed baseball throughout his lifetime surrounded by many of his former pupils.

After turning 80, he often said, “I was able to lead a happy life thanks to everyone that I encountered.” During his twilight years, he also said, “that if anything happened to me, make sure to express my gratitude to everyone!”

However, my father rarely talked about baseball at home, so I wasn’t exactly sure who supported my father. Judging from the large amount of New Year's greeting cards that were exchanged and the many people who attended his funeral to send him off, I understood that many people were very supportive of him, but I was able to realize how many friendships he forged throughout his life with his induction to the Baseball Hall of Fame.

When I was an elementary school student, I saw my father in uniform several times during the TV broadcasts of the Koshien High School Baseball Tournament, but I only ever saw him in his uniform in person once in my life. He said to me, “This is my last game so I want you to come watch me,” and so we went to see his last game as the general manager and manager of the Chukyo University baseball team at Mizuho Stadium (current Paloma Mizuho Baseball Stadium.) The appearance of him being tossed in the air in celebration by his students in front of a large banner that read, “Thank you for the memories Manager Taki!” was the first and last time I ever saw him in his uniform in person.

I only ever played catch with my father once in my life when he invited me to when I was in the third grade of elementary school. He had seen many athletic players at Chukyo Shogyo, so I think that he had already determined that I wasn’t suited to become a baseball player. As I grew older, I heard from friends of my father that he had told them that, “he knew that it would be a struggle for me to become a baseball player because I did not possess the athletic abilities, and he didn’t want to cause any hardships or trouble to my coaches.”

In the words of my father, Masao Taki was able to lead a very happy life thanks to everyone who supported him. Our family is also very grateful for everyone involved in his life.

p.6 Rara avis (89)

2014 The winning ball from the no-hitter during Game 3 of the MLB Japan All-Star Series

This year, the MLB Japan All-Star Series will be held for the first time in four years, but during the exhibition games held in 2014, Samurai Japan achieved an unprecedented feat. That year’s Samurai Japan team, which was led by manager Hiroki Kokubo, positioned the MLB Japan



All-Star Series as a valuable experience to strengthen the team ahead of their attempt to reclaim their championship at the 2017 World Baseball Classic.

After winning the first two games of the series, Samurai Japan sent pitcher Takahiro Norimoto (Tohoku Rakuten Golden Eagles) out to the mound to start Game 3 that was played at Tokyo Dome. Norimoto pitched five perfect innings, and was relieved by Yuki Nishi (Orix Buffaloes,) Kazuhisa Makita (Saitama Seibu Lions) and Yuji Nishino

(Chiba Lotte Marines) to record Japan's first ever no-hitter in the history of the MLB Japan All-Star Series. Only four batters were allowed on base via walks, and the pitchers combined for a total of 13 strikeouts. Norimoto, who recorded a then-personal record pitch speed of 155km, struck out six batters, which included sluggers such as Robinson Cano (Seattle Mariners) who batted .314, Evan Longoria (Tampa Bay Rays) who hit 22 homeruns and Justin Morneau (Colorado Rockies) who led the National League with a batting average of .319 during the 2014 season, said after the game, "I was able to pitch the best game of my life."

On the offensive side, Hayato Sakamoto (Yomiuri Giants) and Sho Nakata (Hokkaido Nippon-Ham Fighters) both hit homeruns to lead the team to a 4-0 victory. Five exhibition games were played that year, and Samurai Japan won the series by three games to two to achieve their second-ever winning record against the Major League All-Star team since 1990.

Along with the scorecard of that game (copy provided by NPB,) the winning ball, which was signed by manager Kokubo and the four pitchers who threw the no-hitter, was displayed at the "101 Years of Japanese-U.S. Baseball" exhibition that will be held from October 13 (Sat) to November 18 (Sun.) We look forward to your visit to the exhibition.

Curator Yuta Inoue

Library Note

Yomiuri Baseball Almanac

This month we will be introducing the "Yomiuri Baseball Almanac" that provides an overview of the various events that occurred throughout the year in the amateur and professional baseball seasons. The 1953 and 1954 editions of the "Yomiuri Baseball Almanac" are owned by the Baseball Hall of Fame Museum. The 26 cm thick, 404-page 1953 edition almanac, which was edited by Ema and published by Yomiuri Shimbun on March 20, 1953, features a forward that reads, "The almanac of Japanese baseball was something that should exist but has not until now. It is meaningless to publish just a single year edition. Therefore, we spent two years preparing to create the 'Yomiuri Baseball Almanac.'" This project was developed by our company with the intention of covering the events that occurred that year in professional and amateur baseball in Japan to enable fans to enjoy it without the formality of a standard almanac while avoiding to incorporate our company's



consciousness into it. At the same time, Kenzo Hirose (1973 Baseball Hall of Fame inductee,) the authority of the archives over active records was truly committed to organizing the records that were incorrectly conveyed until now, and the efforts to publish the best possible end product was clearly evident from that year's almanac, which summed up the events that occurred in the baseball world.

Looking at the table of contents, you can see that the almanac features an appendix with information about professional baseball, American baseball, non-professional baseball, student baseball, high school baseball, Japanese rubber baseball and youth baseball. In addition to the result of various major tournaments, their history and past performances also appear in the almanac, which lets readers conveniently learn about when they began and what teams won certain games in one convenient book. The history of cultural exchanges between American baseball and Japanese baseball, the comparisons and contrasts and history of the development of Japanese-U.S. Baseball featured in the appendix makes the almanac an extremely interesting read for fans of the sport.

Only the 1953 and 1954 editions of the "Yomiuri Baseball Almanac" are listed in the chapter titled "Yomiuri Publishing Business" in the "Yomiuri Shimbun, an 80-year History" (published by Yomiuri Shimbun on December 1, 1955,) so it is believed that the almanacs were only published during those two years. Even though there are only two year's worth of data, we highly recommend that you browse through the "Yomiuri Baseball Almanac," which clearly conveys the ideal image of its editors and publisher.

Librarian Akiko Ogawa

p.7 Hosting of Team Day



The "team days" of three baseball teams were held in August (Hanshin Tigers/August 7~9, Chiba Lotte Marines/August 20~21, Hiroshima Toyo Carp/August 28~30,) concluding the schedule for all teams for the 2018 season.

September 2 Special Exhibition "High School Baseball: 100th Summer" Commemorative Panel Session

Hosting of the "Classic games and memorable plays seen through my eyes" event!

Speakers:

Seiichi Hayashi (Former umpire, Japan Little Senior Baseball Association Chairman)

Kazushi Kijima (Former NHK high school baseball commentator, former Keio University manager)

Saburo Kudo (NHK Global Media Service announcer)



To commemorate the 100th Summer National High School Baseball Tournament, panel session was held between the three men who have closely followed high school baseball games from the different perspectives as an umpire, commentator and announcer. The three speakers fondly recalled their most exciting memories of high school baseball, including the intense 15-inning battle between Toyota Otani High School and Ube Commercial High School during the 80th Summer Tournament, where Mr. Hayashi served called a game-ending balk as the chief umpire and the pitching performance displayed by Shintaro Fujinami (Osaka Toin High School, currently a member of the Hanshin Tigers) during the game between Osaka Toin High School and Kosei Gakuin High School during the 94th Summer Tournament.

September 11 Isao Hirono's visit to the Baseball Hall of Fame Museum



Isao Hirono (former member of the Chunichi Dragons, etc.) who holds the record for being the only player to hit two “walk-off grand slams” in the history of NPB has donated items relating to his feats to the Baseball Hall of Fame Museum. This summer, we displayed the two bats that he used to hit the homeruns, the ball from his first homerun and the official scorecard (copy) provided by NPB at the professional baseball history section.

Essays (72)

The word “miracle” in the game of baseball

Director of the Players Selection Committee

Yuji Nakamura (Announcer at Asahi Television Broadcasting Corporation)

In a general sense, a “miracle” refers to a “performance that exceeds the bounds of common sense, or an almost impossible (positive) accomplishment that goes beyond human intellect and strength.”

I've actually experienced a situation that was later referred to as a “miracle.” That experience was during a TV broadcast of the “miraculous throw to home plate” that occurred during the game between Matsuyama Commercial School and Kumamoto Engineering School during the 1996 Summer National High School Baseball Tournament championship game. That year's tournament was already “miraculous” because all of teams that made it to the semi-finals were public high schools, but the championship game was fought between Matsuyama Commercial School and Kumamoto Engineering School. The “miraculous throw to home plate” occurred during the 10th inning of that game, but looking back, this game was filled with a series of “miraculous events.” After the top of the 9th inning, Matsuyama Commercial School led by a score of 3-2. In the bottom of the 9th inning, Kumamoto Engineering School was down to their final out with no runners on base and trailing by one run. However, freshman Koumei Sawamura hit an epic game-tying homerun to send the game to extra innings. If another runner had been one base when that homerun was hit, it would have gone down as a memorable moment in the history of high school baseball with the “miraculous walk-off homerun by a freshman player to win the championship title.” In the back of my head, I remember starting to think about “what and how I would have expressed that moment.” However, the reality was that the game was still tied and entering extra innings. Matsuyama Commercial School was held scoreless in the top of the 10th inning, and in the bottom of the 10th

inning, Kumamoto Engineering School had a huge opportunity to walk-off the game with the bases loaded and just one out. Then, Matsuyama Commercial School manager Katsuhiko Sawada made the decision to replace right fielder Hirotaka Nitta with Masatsugu Yano. Kumamoto Engineering School's 3rd hitter in the batting order Daisuke Honda stepped up to the plate, and did showed his true ability by popping a deep fly ball towards right field. Everyone who witnessed the swing must have been convinced that the ball was hit well enough for a sacrifice fly...

Yano steps back. That was basically what I recall saying in the broadcast at the point. "Kumamoto Engineering School has the bases loaded with one out. They just need to score one more run to win their first ever championship title. The 3rd hitter in the batting order Honda steps up to the batter's box. The pitcher throws the ball and... It's hit! It's a deep fly ball to right field! The right fielder steps back... And catches the ball! The third base runner tags up to score the winning run! Oh!! What a throw from right field! Did he make contact with the runner? OUT!!! Yes! He did it! Look at the right fielder Yano's smile as he's congratulated by his teammates!" These were the full details of the "miraculous throw to home plate" that occurred before my very own eyes. However, at the time, I wasn't able to include the word "miracle" in my play-by-play commentary.

And there was a reason for that.

Today, the concept of apprenticeship is no longer found in sports announcing, and it has become a much less severe industry. However, in the past (close to 25 years ago,) the "teachings of your superiors" were extremely important and constantly etched into our mind.

One of my great announcing mentors was a man named "Sadao Uekusa." He hardly ever provided advice, but once he mentioned to me "that the word "miracle" should not be used casually by an announcer, as abusing that word would lessen its true value." I believe that this was during our one and only baseball play-by-play announcing business trip together.

This "miraculous throw to home plate" occurred several years later. At that moment, I did not have the courage to say the word "miracle" under the situation where the outcome of the game was not yet decided (there were still extra innings left to play.) I probably would have said it if they had won with that play, but if Kumamoto Engineering School had pulled of the walk-off win in extra innings, that throw to home plate would have been buried. That thought crossed my mind in that instant, and I remembered the advice from my mentor and hesitated. However, in reality, Matsuyama Commercial School was reenergized from that miraculous throw to home plate and scored three runs in the top of the 11th inning to settle the game. After the game ended and I read the sports newspaper the following morning... I regretted it. I thought to myself, "I should have said it! This is the true meaning of a miraculous moment."

From then on, it wrung my heart whenever that play was occasionally replayed on TV. I couldn't let go of that feeling of regret.

However, around ten years ago, I had to opportunity to work with Mr. Uekusa on a special TV program. The theme of the show was "high school baseball." The "miraculous throw to home plate" was replayed, and I boldly shared the gloomy feeling that was left in my heart to my mentor. I told him the reason why I didn't use the word "miracle" at that moment, and that thinking back now I wish I had the courage to do so. Mr. Uekusa, who was usually a very calm and reserved person replied, "You couldn't say it. And I think that's fine. I don't think that an announcer should use such

flamboyant expressions so casually. I think that you made the right decision... It was an excellent decision.” Tears rolled down my eyes as I listened to him. At the same time, that feeling of regret that was hidden deep inside my heart melted away, and I became proud of myself, who was involved in the play-by-play commentary of that miraculous throw to home plate, that I was able to hesitate to use the word, “miracle.”

Looking back at it now, the advice that I received from my mentor Mr. Uekusa was a “miraculous piece of advice” that I will continue to treasure forever.

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: ¥600 (*¥500)	Adults
¥400	High school and university students
¥200 (*¥150)	Elementary & Junior High School students
	(* Per person in a group of 20 or more)
¥400	Senior citizens aged 65 or over

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.