THE POWER AND LIMITATIONS OF BASEBALL AS A
CULTURAL INSTRUMENT OF DIPLOMACY IN US-JAPANESE RELATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Almost from the opening of Japan to the West in the mid-nineteenth century, baseball has been used by both the governments of Japan and the United States to further their national aims—whether those aims were to wage peace or wage war. Team work, fair play, dedication to improvement through practice, pursuit of physical well-being, competition, respect for authority and the law (or the rules of the game) are all concepts that can apply both to playing baseball and to being good citizens and good neighbors. The history of baseball in Japan, viewed within the context of US-Japanese relations, is an illuminating case study of how sports, politics, and diplomacy can interact because it spans the entire history of the relationship and touches on both the positive and negative aspects of sports diplomacy. In fact, the history of baseball in Japan generally mirrors the history of US-Japanese relations. Through baseball, transpacific friendships have been forged, negative perceptions of foreigners in Japan decreased, and the morale of a nation was restored. In addition, political elites have used baseball to improve friendships and advance their agendas. The immense impact that baseball has had on US-Japanese relations suggests that sports diplomacy can play a key role improving relationships even between countries that were once at war.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I decided to explore sports diplomacy as a thesis topic after hearing the news of Dennis Rodman’s travels to North Korea. To me, the concept of sending a tall, pierced, tattooed, loud-mouthed man with neon hair to improve US-North Korean relations through basketball seemed crazy enough that it might have worked.

The idea to narrow the focus from sports and diplomacy in general to baseball and US-Japanese relations was largely inspired by my mother’s near-fanatical adoration of Ichiro Suzuki. While she influenced this thesis during its first stages, my father played a large role at the end. As the former director of an English language program at a foreign university (and thus a veteran of clarifying inarticulate essays), his input was particularly helpful. Thank you both for your endless support.

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CHAPTER 1
SPORTS AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire, it has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope, where once there was only despair. It is more powerful than governments in breaking down racial barriers. It laughs in the face of all types of discrimination.

-Nelson Mandela, May 25, 2000

Sports are a big deal. They attract massive audiences worldwide, and they annually generate billions of dollars. Officials for the 2012 Summer Olympics expected four billion people would watch at least part of the Olympic Games in London. Considering that approximately one billion people watched the 2008 opening ceremony in Beijing, this was not an unreasonable estimate. FIFA, the international association responsible for governing soccer, claims that more than one billion people watched the 2006 World Cup final. Even though others estimate the number was more likely closer to 260 million, the size of the audience was nonetheless impressive. The 2014 World Cup generated four billion dollars in revenue for FIFA, while the IOC made twice that amount between 2009 and 2012. The World Cup and Olympics may be the world’s most popular sporting events, but there are other sports leagues around the world that are followed by millions each year, some generating billions of dollars. NASCAR statistics for 2013, for example, indicate revenue of 3.1 billion. Annually, television networks make hundreds of millions of dollars in profit solely from selling airtime for commercials during the Super Bowl.
While the economic impact of sports on the international stage is demonstrably huge and calculable, the role that sports can play in international relations and diplomacy is arguably even more impressive, though harder to measure. The central claim put forth in this discourse on the role of baseball in US-Japanese relations is that, almost from the opening of Japan to the West in the mid-nineteenth century, the sport has been used by both countries as a way to further their national aims—whether those aims were to wage peace or wage war.

Baseball and diplomacy are interconnected through the various values that the game can be perceived as promoting. Team work, fair play, dedication to improvement through practice, pursuit of physical well-being, competition, respect for authority and the law (or the rules of the game) are all concepts that can apply both to playing baseball and to being good citizens and good neighbors. Baseball has been used by people in positions of authority in the United States and in Japan to further their cultural, economic, political, and sometimes militaristic ambitions. It can be used for both overcoming differences and building friendship, as well as for fanning the flames of nationalism. The story of how baseball was introduced to Japan, and how the sport has been used to promote sometimes common, sometimes divergent agendas in US-Japanese relations is the basis of this thesis.

World history is replete with examples of how sports can be used by politicians to try to influence both domestic issues and international relations in both positive and negative ways. Ancient Rome had its Colosseum, its gladiators and lions to entertain the people and keep them from paying too much attention to government corruption and
excess. Notoriously, Adolf Hitler did his best to use the 1936 Olympics to promote his Aryan racist beliefs.\textsuperscript{9} Adding to the notoriety of Olympic history in Germany, Palestinian terrorists used the 1972 games in Munich as a platform to attack Israeli athletes.\textsuperscript{10} More recently, soccer games were organized by the Argentinian government as an attempt to reduce the number of people who watched a popular television program that was critical of the nation’s political leaders.\textsuperscript{11}

In a more positive vein, American ping pong players were deployed to help to establish relations between the United States and the Communist party in China in 1971, turning “ping pong diplomacy” into a popular phrase.\textsuperscript{12} Over the course of the latter part of the 20\textsuperscript{th} Century, pressure to end Apartheid in South Africa was exerted not only by foreign governments, but also by international sporting organizations which boycotted competition there or which refused to extend invitations to South Africa for participation in international competitions. Nelson Mandela and other South Africans who were imprisoned during the Apartheid years credit soccer for helping them communicate in secret as well as maintain their sanity.\textsuperscript{13} Recognizing the power of sport to unite people, Mandela helped bring the 1995 Rugby World Cup to his country, where the game helped to unite the racially bisected population of that country.\textsuperscript{14}

The history of baseball in Japan, viewed within the context of US-Japanese relations, is an illuminating case study of how sports, politics, and diplomacy can interact because it spans the entire history of the relationship and touches on both the positive and negative aspects of sports diplomacy. In fact, the history of baseball in Japan generally mirrors the history of US-Japanese relations.\textsuperscript{15}
Baseball thrived in the first decades after Japan was brought out of isolation by the United States in the 1860s. Yet tensions lurked beneath the surface when American and Japanese baseball teams competed against each other, just as there were barely veiled animosities harbored on both sides of the governments’ otherwise outwardly positive relationship. Leading up to and during World War II, baseball became a tool of the military and the quality of the game deteriorated along with Japanese governance. Then, as relations normalized after the war, baseball regained its popularity in Japan. This was in no small part due to the influence of American individuals both on and off the field. In the 1980s, as trade issues led to mutual enmity in political and commercial networks, tensions similarly flared up between foreign and Japanese players in Japan’s professional league.

Today, China occupies the minds of American politicians and businessmen in the same way that Japan did during the 1980s and early 1990s. The US-Japanese relationship is now strong, as is the state of Japanese baseball. Examining this long history of baseball in Japan through the lens of US-Japanese relations helps illustrate the various ways in which sports can impact society and international affairs.

**Sports Diplomacy**

One reason why baseball has had a stronger impact on US-Japanese relations than other sports is because baseball is America’s national pastime. The Japanese viewed it to be a symbol of the United States as much as Americans did. Especially during the late 19th century and early 20th century, Americans were proud of their association with baseball; it was considered to be an activity of a civilized nation. To Japanese people, that
meant excelling at baseball was a way to legitimize themselves, and to delegitimize characterizations of Japanese people as being an uncivilized, weak or unmanly population.17

Many Japanese were eager for the Americans to view them favorably for both practical and emotional reasons. After all, Americans had so famously opened Japan’s borders with a display of massive ships and cannons, and enjoyed the privileges the colonial era such as legal immunity and unequal trade arrangements. Baseball provided them with a path to improve their reputation and pride, and even avenge the indignities that came with forced modernization.18

In Western cultures, and particularly in America, sports are seen as a conduit for moral lessons. For example, Paul Finkelman, professor of law at the University of Tulsa, argues that participating in baseball (and other team sports) at a young age helps the American public understand and accept the American legal system. Rules govern what pitches are “strikes” and what pitches are “balls” but an umpire ultimately has to make a judgment on each pitch.19 The subjective decisions that an umpire has to make are akin to the subjective decisions a judge has to make. Like baseball, the legal system has both written laws and authority figures who are entrusted to interpret them.20 More generally, baseball has long been perceived by Americans as highly compatible with American values like freedom and democracy.21 As baseball was associated with core American values, spreading baseball outside of the United States became a deliberate yet roundabout way of trying to democratize or Americanize the rest of the world.22
Victor Cha, professor of international relations at Georgetown University, breaks down the interaction of sports and politics into different schools of thought in his book *Beyond the Final Score: The Politics of Sport in Asia*. First, national sports teams can be seen as embodiments of national sovereignty. Being represented at an international sporting event is a form of recognition, and outcomes of international competitions often reflect the strength and wealth of nations.\(^2^3\) Second, as may be seen in the above example of South Africa, non-state sporting organizations such as FIFA or the International Olympic Committee can play significant roles in international politics and compel real changes in intransigent societies.\(^2^4\) Third, sports can enhance a state’s reputation internally and internationally. Sports can also inspire patriotism and build or establish a state’s prestige.\(^2^5\) Lastly, Cha identifies a school of thought that suggests sports do not fit with traditional ways of thinking about world politics. According to this view, the impact sports have on the world suggests that conceptualizing international relations solely in terms of state power and state interdependence fails to grasp the field’s complexities.\(^2^6\)

To varying degrees, this paper will show how all four of these perspectives on sports can be seen in the history of baseball and US-Japanese relations. The third school of thought is particularly salient; namely baseball’s impact on both Japan’s patriotism and reputation as a state will become apparent early in Part I and remain so throughout this paper. Also, because Japanese baseball’s historical narrative is largely one of non-state interaction with the American people, this paper will attempt to give some credence to Cha’s last school of thought.
Cha also argues that, for a number of reasons, sports diplomacy (and sport in general) plays a larger role in the politics of Northeast Asian states like China and Japan than elsewhere in the world. International sporting events such as the Olympics or World Cup rarely take place in Asia, which makes each occurrence even bigger events. As a result, the sociopolitical impacts of each Olympics are more strongly felt in the region.27 Rapid economic expansion and social factors like emphasizing the group over the individual also enhance sports’ importance to politics.28 Most relevant to this thesis, Cha argues that sports matter more in Northeast Asia because of disagreements over the history of the region. “Sport acts as an outlet for pent-up historical resentments in ways that cannot be expressed through regular diplomacy. To put it bluntly, Japan’s imperial past in Asia causes most former colonies to view every contest with Japan as a historical grudge match.”29 The same is also true in terms of Japan’s perception of the United States. The tension arising from Japan’s experience on the world stage in the shadow of the United States is carried onto the playing fields and into the stands of each sporting exhibition between the two sides.
CHAPTER 2

MEIJI RESTORATION TO WORLD WAR II

Originated some time ago by Americans,
This wondrous thing called baseball,
One can never get enough of it.

-Masoaka Shiki, 1898

The Birth and Proliferation of Yakyu

Ever since the moment Commodore Matthew C. Perry appeared with his Black Ships in Yokohama Harbor in 1853, America has played a unique and prominent role in Japanese life. America forced Japan out of its isolation, and helped to modernize Japan, detonated nuclear bombs in Japan, rebuilt Japan’s economy, wrote Japan’s constitution, and helps protect Japan with numerous military bases that still span across the archipelago. Baseball is a way for Japanese people to test themselves against the country that did all of these things without incurring any serious consequences. Each time a Japanese team plays an American team, it is a measuring stick of Japanese progress as a society. The logic is simple, if simplistic: If a Japanese team can outplay an American team, at their own game no less, then perhaps Japanese people can equal or surpass America in other ways as well.

Baseball was introduced to Japan at a time when Americans considered playing sports and being active to be a moral imperative for modern society. Theodore Roosevelt, for example, was concerned that modern technologies could make Americans too comfortable or docile, and lose the values that made the country strong. He believed that sports were a way to maintain the spirit the nation was built on, as well as a way to keep
the “fires of adventure burning” for the country’s political leaders. Historian Donald Roden has written that “in an age when many assumed that only the fittest of nations could survive and flourish in a hostile world, athletics, patriotism, and the notions of manliness were inseparable.”

Thus if the Americans and other Western nations were to succeed in their mission to modernize Japan, baseball and other sports were essential to Japan’s progress as a nation. Of course, colonization was a much bigger motivation to Western states than the altruistic desire to modernize Japan for Japan’s sake, and the spread of sports to colonies around the world was also seen as justification for imperialism.

Countries like Japan that did not have a rich sporting culture were perceived as effeminate and weak, and therefore in need of Western intervention. Although sports played a role in shaping Japan’s reputation, Japan only began to change that perception after proving itself as a competitor militarily when it became a colonizer itself in the 1890’s. By that time, numerous sports that had been unheard of only decades before were fervently played throughout the country, and the Japanese thirst for athletics left a strong, positive impression on many Westerners.

Credit for organizing the first baseball game ever played in Japan goes to an American teacher named Horace Wilson. Wilson was a Civil War veteran who believed in the importance of physical exercise as much as math and English lessons. Wilson was one of thousands of oyatoi, or experts in various fields, who were brought to Japan soon after the Meiji Restoration (1868) to teach in schools or to help incorporate Western technologies and reform Japan’s government to better suit modern society. As Japan had
lived in self-imposed isolation for over 250 years prior to the American’s arrival, it had a lot of catching up to do, especially if it wanted to avoid the same detrimental effects of colonialism that many other Asian countries faced. Baseball was among the many new imports in that era.

Historically, team sports in general were a foreign idea to Japan. People may have enjoyed physical endeavors but the idea of exercising for fun was new. In addition, forming teams to play games that required specialized fields or equipment and complex rules was a new concept. Indeed, the Japanese language has no equivalent of “sports” so the Japanese borrowed the word and phoneticized it as “su-poh-tsu.” Martial arts and sumo were perhaps the closest Japanese activities to sports, and they remained the preferred form of exercise for the more conservative and traditional elements of Japanese society. Baseball initially caught on as an upper-class sport but quickly became extremely popular with Japanese youth and the public in general as the rules became more widely known and equipment more available. The popularity of the American game grew so fast that within just a few decades baseball became Japan’s unofficial national pastime.

The origins of baseball in Japan can be traced to more than the efforts of one individual. Other Americans who went to Japan and Japanese who had been to the United States also helped introduce the game to the Japanese people. Baseball was “born” in more than one place in Japan, but Wilson’s story is the first on record so it is the most famous. Because Western games were popular among Japanese students, and thinking that baseball would be a good way for his students to exercise, Wilson first taught his
students how to play baseball in 1872. According to the popular narrative, the game spread like wildfire across the country. The game quickly became extremely popular among students at Wilson’s school. By the time he left Japan, Wilson’s students were playing weekly, organized games on the weekend in front of local spectators who were curious to see what America’s national pastime looked like.\(^{13}\)

A popular belief in America during the late 19th and early 20th centuries was that if baseball was played in foreign lands, then the people who lived there would become more like Americans and the world would be more peaceful.\(^{14}\) The game’s popularity in Japan was interpreted as an absolutely positive sign by many Americans, who may have otherwise been more concerned of a pending war. Geopolitically speaking, at least, there was very good reason to be concerned. While it is true baseball was one of the many new aspects of Western life Japan thoroughly integrated into its society, in contrast to many Western imports such as clothing or railroads, baseball was adopted to reinforce Japanese values, not Americanize them.

The era’s distinguishing motto was “wakon yosai,” or “Japanese spirit - Western technology,” meaning that Japanese people were not to lose their traditions or national identity in the midst of extreme changes caused by imported technology. So, Japanese baseball may look the same as American baseball to American eyes, but the game in Japan has in fact been something a little bit different ever since the moment Wilson taught his students how to play it. Despite being an American game that was believed to instill values of freedom and democracy, for the Japanese, baseball reinforced a different set of values including loyalty, conformity, courage and discipline, in effect serving as a
modern manifestation of the Samurai spirit. The wakon yosai mentality can still be seen in the way Japan puts its own twists on imported food or goods. For example, one can order a teriyaki burger at McDonald’s or receive packets of dried seaweed to garnish a Domino’s pizza. “Yakyu,” literally “field-ball,” as baseball is known in Japan, has always been another good example of wakon yosai.

**Ichiko High School**

Yakyu and baseball are different not just in the sense that yakyu is less reliant on Ruthian home run hitters but also in the way the Japanese approach the game. A common cliché among American ballplayers in Japan’s professional league is that Americans play the game, Japanese work at it. True to the wakon-yosai spirit, early Japanese baseball was played and practiced as if the athletes were Samurais learning martial arts. According to Robert Whiting, managers in Japan regarded baseball “as a moral discipline, like kendo - a tool of education for developing purity and self-discipline.” The team that most famously embodied this mentality was the Ichiko High School squad, which was known for grueling practices that pushed players to their limits and beyond. Practices were nicknamed ‘bloody-urine’ because of a relatively common condition amongst Ichiko players. Japanese pitchers were expected to throw hundreds of times a day, a practice that is only slowly dying today, whereas American pitchers may take a few weeks to reach a similar pitch total in both practices and games. Ichiko pitchers were known to straighten their arms by hanging from a tree screaming “kayui!” (“It itches!”) because the Samurai code, or bushido, forbade them from admitting pain.
Ichiko’s dedication to the game led to success on the field, and the team quickly established itself as Japan’s premier team. Their rival Meiji played the game more like Americans. Meiji was not known for holding Ichiko-style practices, but the team was talented. Games between the two schools became huge events with thousands of spectators. One such game became a diplomatic incident that exemplified US-Japan relations in the 1890’s, although it was just another inevitable misunderstanding that often occurs when people from foreign cultures interact.

As Whiting explains in You Gotta Have Wa, during a home game in 1891, Ichiko was down by six runs and their fans were already in a dour mood when an American professor at Meiji named William Imbrie found the gate to the stadium to be locked and decided to jump the fence. Imbrie had a great deal of respect for Japanese culture and meant no harm, but this fence didn’t just mark the border of the stadium, it separated public space from sacred ground. In the same way that a martial arts dojo, or practice hall, is considered sacred, the space inside the fence was holier than the world outside of it. Just as one would not climb through a dojo window or enter a salt-purified Sumo ring, climbing the fence to the ballpark was an affront to Japanese sensibilities. That a Meiji professor would dare commit such an offense was insulting enough, but that an American did so was especially upsetting to the Ichiko squad and its fans. Ichiko’s judo squad was in attendance and retaliated with a bat, sending Imbrie to the doctor with a wound under his eye.20

Imbrie was embarrassed by what happened and was happy to forgive and forget, but other foreigners in Japan at the time were outraged. The American Embassy lodged a
formal complaint with the Japanese foreign ministry. English newspapers cast the incident as another example of Japanese xenophobia and lack of civility.\textsuperscript{21} At the time, the Japanese government had been preparing to renegotiate various treaties with the United States and feared that American anger over the incident could slow those negotiations down, so a message was sent to Ichiko to fix the situation. Representatives of Ichiko formally apologized to Imbrie in his home. Imbrie quickly accepted their apology, although some accounts differ and say Imbrie appeared hostile and defiant.\textsuperscript{22} That seems unlikely, however, considering Imbrie’s obvious affinity for Japan; he would later be decorated by the Japanese government for speaking on Japan’s behalf during the Russo-Japanese war.\textsuperscript{23}

Despite this incident, or perhaps in part because of it, the Ichiko players became unofficial representatives of their entire country when they were invited to play in the first formal game that pitted a Japanese team against an American team. The Americans, who were from the Yokohama Country Athletic Club (YAC), were amateurs living in Japan at the time. They were confident they could beat a team of Japanese high school students. Baseball was their game, after all, and the Japanese were people they considered to be inferior, be it athletically or otherwise.\textsuperscript{24} During the first decades after the Meiji Restoration, Japanese people were in many ways treated as second class citizens who weren’t allowed into designated areas, including the YAC’s grounds.

To the dismay of the YAC and Americans elsewhere in Japan, however, Ichiko dominated on the field and won the first contest by a score of 29-4. The Americans asked for and received a rematch, but the results were largely the same. Ichiko won the second
game by a score of 35-9. Even after incorporating better athletes from the US military, YAC lost a third game, this time by a score of 22-6.25 The Japanese lost the fourth game after the Americans had tweaked their squad yet again, but the fourth game did little to diminish the great boost in morale the Japanese experienced. Takeju Suzuki, formerly a professor of history at Meiji University, suggests that “foreigners could not hope to understand the emotional impact of this victory, but it helped Japan, struggling toward modernization after centuries of isolation, overcome a tremendous inferiority complex it felt toward the more industrially advanced West.”26 Ichiko’s victory symbolized Japanese capability; with hard work and dedication, not only could Japan adopt Western culture but could even surpass it. Japan began its military expansion into Asia in emulation of Western states only a few years after Ichiko faced the YAC.

Ichiko boastfully accepted the outpouring of gratitude from the public. Letters flooded into the school praising its triumphs over the Americans. These letters helped cement Ichiko’s perception of itself as emancipators of a population suppressed by foreigners.27 Negotiations over international treaties that Japan considered to be unfair were already underway, but according to Roden, Ichiko players believed that “the humiliating legacy of the settlements could never be erased without some form of retribution,” and that “baseball was ideally suited for this task.”28 To the great satisfaction of Ichiko players, members of the YAC also became more friendly and respectful of Ichiko players as the games progressed. Essentially, Ichiko provided their nation with a great emotional boost akin to a military victory without any of the risks associated with war.29
In terms of the game itself, Ichiko’s victories against YAC led other baseball teams to emulate Ichiko’s style, but that was not the only way Ichiko played a pivotal role in shaping yakū into what it is today. Players were often celebrities by the time they graduated, and many Ichiko players became coaches at other schools. Thus, their brand of baseball would spread via the players themselves. While few teams actually fully adopted the extremes of Ichiko’s methods, Ichiko’s emphasis on discipline and practice had become common characteristics of yakū that color the game to this day.

A.G. Spalding and Private Baseball Clubs

Japan’s first private baseball club was assembled by Hiroshi Hiraoka, who was the rebellious son of a wealthy man. To get Hiraoka out of Japan and away from trouble, his father arranged for Hiraoka to be educated in the United States. Hiraoka arrived in San Francisco in 1871 at the age of 15, where he saw a moving train for the first time. This inspired him to go against his father’s plans for him to receive an American education. Thus he became an apprentice for a railroad company instead. Hiraoka was in Boston between 1872 and 1875 when the Red Sox won four consecutive national championships. During those years, Hiraoka fell in love with baseball. He returned to Japan in 1877 with loads of railroad expertise and baseball equipment.

Hiraoka found employment at the Shinbashi Railroad Bureau. After work hours he taught the managerial staff how to play the game. Soon, the Shinbashi Athletic Club (SAC) was established. The SAC derived its name from the Athletics of Philadelphia, where Hiraoka had also spent time. In addition to starting a team, Hiraoka also built Japan’s first playing field devoted to baseball. He set up the space as a public area where
people could watch the American game. To Hiraoka the exhibitions displayed a structured, pleasurable activity that involved both team work and discipline.\textsuperscript{35} The SAC baseball team was the first entity in Japan other than the military, police, or fire brigades to wear uniforms. Its exhibitions became popular spectacles.\textsuperscript{36} Over the course of the early 1880s, other wealthy aristocratic families followed in Hiraoka’s footsteps and started their own private baseball clubs. The most famous family to do so was the surviving family of the Tokugawa Shogunate.\textsuperscript{37}

While people marveled at the speed of Shinbashi’s trains, they also gathered to watch its railroad engineers play against the company’s bureaucrats. According to Rice University historian Sayuri Guthrie-Williams, because railroad companies openly associated themselves with baseball, “the American game became modernity incarnate, establishing its popular appeal and respectability as a civic enterprise to an urbanizing society eager for social experimentation and cultural innovation.”\textsuperscript{38}

Hiraoka helped to spread baseball in other ways as well, including securing better equipment. One impediment to the spread of the game was simply the lack of baseballs. Ichiko players made balls with lead pellets for cores, further increasing the pain catchers endured from receiving hundreds of pitches daily. Catchers’ masks were another item of highly specific baseball equipment that was basically impossible to find in Japan. Lacking such protective gear, the SAC’s catchers used \textit{kendo} masks intended for protection from sword fighting. They used material made for railroad cars as chest protectors and shin guards.\textsuperscript{39}
In hope of receiving better equipment, Hiraoka sent a letter along with a photograph of the club team to sports equipment entrepreneur A.G. Spalding. The part-idealistic, part-businessman Spalding responded by sending a package of assorted equipment along with catalogs of Spalding’s goods. To Spalding, spreading baseball equipment was a profitable venture. In addition, he wanted to spread the game that he felt embodied American values of manliness and democratic virtue. He was more than happy to help spread the game to Japan for both of those reasons. Unfortunately for his business, Japanese companies like Mizuno were able to reverse engineer Spalding’s goods. They were able to sell cheaper sporting goods made domestically with cheaper sources of labor and materials from Southeast Asia. Japanese manufacturers met the demand for baseballs much more adequately than could expensive imports. This became one of the first examples of a Japanese import substitution.

Spalding also included his company’s “Official Baseball Guide” in the package to Hiraoka. The guide would help set baseball standards in Japan. Japanese books based on Spalding’s guide, or direct translations of it, were later sent across the country by the Ministry of Education. This enabled baseball to be played in schoolyards all over the country. By being a conduit for American equipment and influence, the SAC had a strong and lasting impact on baseball’s standardization and its status as a symbol of modernity in society. That being said, the popularity of SAC and other similar teams would soon wane as they were ultimately but a pastime for wealthy club owners, who soon became more interested in other ventures. Japan’s first private clubs disbanded after just a few years. The SAC played its last game in 1887.
Widespread participation in baseball was due more to the popularity of clubs like Ichiko that were sponsored by schools. The emergence of rivalries among college teams especially helped to fuel the spread of baseball. By the turn of the century competition between schools including Meiji University, Waseda University, and Keio University represented the pinnacle of the sport. Both Waseda and Keio beat Ichiko in 1904, enhancing their status as the country’s best teams. Over the first decades of the 20th century, many of these university teams would play against an influx of American teams who visited Japan. The teams that travelled across the Pacific came from various US leagues, including Major, Minor, Negro, Collegiate, and Industrial leagues.

**College Baseball and Transpacific Interactions**

As university clubs emerged as Japan’s most talented baseball teams, they became eager to test themselves beyond Japanese borders. Waseda was the first school to test its team abroad. In 1905 they played exhibitions against other college teams in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, and Tacoma. Although Waseda won seven games and suffered 19 losses against American teams, this overall record was far from embarrassing for the Japanese. Japanese-Americans were especially happy to see Waseda in the United States, and many attended the games. This tour and the similar tours that would soon follow created an “important social nexus” between Japanese nationals and Japanese-Americans. As will be described in more detail in the following chapters, various American baseball players with connections to San Francisco would later have an immense impact on US-Japanese relations and Japan in general.
Back in Japan, the rivalry between Waseda and Keio became so heated and the fans so unruly that the two schools had to cancel a highly anticipated game in 1906. They would not organize another game against each other again for almost two decades, when they agreed to form a collegiate league together called the Big-6—a league that continues to this day. While the two teams did not play one another during the early years of the 20th Century, their rivalry continued off the field. Not to be outdone by Waseda’s trip to the United States, Keio organized for a Hawaiian semi-pro team to tour Japan in 1907. In a new development, the exhibitions against the Hawaiians were the first baseball games in Japan to charge admission, which helped to pay for the visiting team’s travel expenses and player salaries. The commercial success of that tour eventually led other collegiate teams to start charging admission, which helped to fund more travel abroad as well as to pay the costs of hosting other teams from the United States.

With the popularity of these competitions, transpacific baseball games soon became regularly scheduled events in both countries. Keio was invited to Hawaii in 1908. Teams from the University of Wisconsin and the University of Chicago visited Japan in the following years. Both Keio and Waseda returned to tour the United States in 1911. By one count, twenty Japanese, Filipino and American teams travelled in transpacific tours between 1905 and 1915. Between 1905 and 1929, there were 16 American college baseball tours of Japan and 17 Japanese college baseball tours of the United States.

College teams were extremely popular during this era largely because the Japanese associated sports with purity and amateurism. Japan’s first professional and semi-pro baseball leagues did not last long for this reason. With the growing popularity
of amateur sports, even the Asahi newspaper, which was known for publishing articles criticizing baseball’s popularity because it clashed with Japanese tradition, reversed its position. In 1915 it began sponsoring a national high school tournament called Zenkoku Chuto Gakko Yusho Yakyu Taikai, now referred to more simply by the name of the stadium where the finals take place, Koshien.\textsuperscript{57} Today, both in its ability to captivate a nation and in terms of the almost nostalgic appeal of amateur sports, Koshien is akin to the Japanese version of America’s March Madness, the annual collegiate basketball tournament. Koshien quickly became a platform for many of Japan’s best young baseball players to emerge into the national consciousness and the eyes of college scouts.

The first Major League players to travel to Japan were with a team assembled by the A.J. Reach company, which was initially one of Spalding’s competitors before Spalding bought Reach and kept the company intact as a dummy-competitor.\textsuperscript{58} The “Reach-All-Stars” toured Japan in November, 1908. The team featured four Major Leaguers in addition to talented Minor Leaguers.\textsuperscript{59} Their domination of Japan’s college teams crushed Japanese ballplayers egos, and planted the seed among Japanese players that Japan would also have to start paying professionals, if it wanted to compete against the world’s best.\textsuperscript{60}

On the other hand, the Japanese had some reason to be optimistic as they held their own against teams made up of American sailors who had come to Japan in the same year with a naval fleet that included 16 battleships. With rising concerns over Japanese expansion, the American military was forming contingency plans based on protecting their interests in the Philippines against a possible Japanese invasion. The flotilla was
intended to shock and awe the increasingly uncooperative Japanese government by reminding them of their Navy’s considerable capabilities. As it happened, though, the baseball games and receptions that followed them blunted the intended display of military power. The fleet’s visit to Japan came to symbolize friendship as much as it did the increasing bi-national disagreements.

A few years after the Reach-All-Stars toured Japan, the owners of the New York Giants and Chicago White Sox hatched a plan to send a combined team on a tour around the world during the winter of 1913-14. Both John McGraw and Charles Comiskey, respectively of the Giants and White Sox, wanted to upstage Spalding’s world tour that took place 25 years earlier. Like Spalding’s other ventures, his tour had been motivated equally by an opportunity to sell sporting goods and an idealistic desire to civilize the world. McGraw and Comiskey disliked the carnival-like atmosphere of Spalding’s tour, which they found unbecoming of their grand game. Determined to have their world tour be perceived as grander and more sophisticated than Spalding’s, McGraw and Comiskey made a point of having their tour stop in countries Spalding had circumvented, including China, the Philippines, in addition to Japan.

The belief that American life and values were superior, and the desire to use baseball as a tool for civilizing parts of the world that clearly needed it from some American perspectives are made explicit in some media coverage of the proposed tour. According to a Harpers Weekly report from the time, the countries selected were deemed to be the most in need of “enlightenment” to the sport that was “backed by the bluest blood of our bleacher democracy as well as by those who have reached the swivel-chair
stage in the White House and forum.” By that point baseball in Japan was already widespread, so there was little sense in making an effort to enlighten the Japanese by teaching them a game they already knew well. Perhaps ironically, in light of the organizers’ original intent, the tour’s popularity in Japan and the positive coverage of how American ballplayers were treated helped to cement international friendships.

Fourteen years later, the Philadelphia Royal Giants of the Negro League visited Japan in 1927 with less fanfare. Evidence of this is suggested by media reports in Japan that mistakenly identified the team as being an “American Indian pickup team,” likely confusing the Royal Giants with a different team that had previously toured Japan. Although Japanese teams that had toured the United States and other baseball insiders were aware of the Negro Leagues, many in Japan were not. Most people in Japan at the time thought baseball was a game for white people in the United States until the Royal Giants disproved that notion. Japanese spectators were impressed not only by the Royal Giants’ talent on field, which led them to a 23-0 record against Japan’s best collegiate teams and one tie versus an semi-pro industrial league team, but also by the Royal Giants demeanor on the field. They were heralded as impeccable sportsmen, exemplified in one particularly memorable moment when an inexperienced Japanese umpire made a call that was obviously wrong. The Royal Giants did not protest and continued to play. Not only did their behavior contrast with that of other American teams who were more likely to argue with an umpire, the Royal Giants style better suited the respectful nature of the Japanese game during that era. Nowadays, in a sign of how far baseball has come, for better or worse, Japanese managers regularly berate umpires in Japan’s professional
league. The Royal Giants also impressed the Japanese with their hitting power and home runs. The star of the Royal Giants, Biz Mackey, became a legend in Japan by blasting the first three home runs out of Japan’s vaunted Jingu Stadium, which had just opened in the previous year.\textsuperscript{72}

The Royal Giants displayed the kind of behavior that many organizers of these tours had hoped for, as better reception from Japanese fans led to higher attendance and more profits. Money and commerce were the real motivation behind many of these transpacific tours, and the players were more interested in either putting on a show or simply winning the contest. On the other hand, politicians and journalists openly praised the positive effect of the tours on US-Japan relations. President Warren Harding was among those who spoke in praise of the tours.\textsuperscript{73}

During this period of regular transpacific play, the US news media began to espouse the benefits of baseball as a diplomatic tool. The \textit{Sporting News} magazine printed numerous articles before and during World War II voicing support for baseball as a tool of civility, Americanization, and diplomacy.\textsuperscript{74} Other publications such as the \textit{Literary Digest} suggested that “baseball would be more important to the peace between the U.S. and Japan than all of the efforts of diplomats combined.”\textsuperscript{75} Similarly, regarding the Giants and White Sox tour, \textit{Harper’s Weekly} added: “A visit of this kind did more to cement the friendship than battleship fleets or diplomatic missions, and yet there was an innate desire on the part of the Nipponese to whip the Yankees out of their boots.”\textsuperscript{76} Japanese media also expressed similar sentiment on baseball having a greater impact than politicians could on US-Japan relations. Japanese journalist Kinnosuke Adachi noted that
Japanese youth seemed especially enamored with Americans despite growing anti-American sentiment in Japan during the early 20th century.  

Unfortunately, what many of these reports from both sides of the pacific did not recognize was the fact that baseball in Japan was increasingly becoming a tool to raise nationalistic sentiments and eventually militarism rather than promote democracy or freedom. While the popularity of individual Americans was obvious to American sportswriters from that era, they only assumed that baseball in Japan was instilling American values. Instead, by the 1930s, Japanese baseball was being used to instill values more in line with those promoted by the nationalist and militant regime such as obedience to authority, discipline, and conformity. Japanese teams didn’t want to become American, they desperately wanted to prove their superiority to Americans by beating them at their own game. To them, the ability to play baseball well emphasized traditional Japanese values, not Americanness.

From the time Ichiko beat the Yokohama Athletic Club to the present day success of Japanese players such as Ichiro Suzuki or Masahiro Tanaka in the Major Leagues, baseball has had the power to instill a strong sense of national pride in Japanese people. That power can be perfectly benign in times of peace, but with rising international tensions during the 1920s and 30s, baseball eventually became a tool of militarism rather than democracy and peace as Americans had hoped. This coincided with Japanese nationalists gaining influence in government. That does not mean that baseball diplomacy was a failure, however, as the game did indeed positively impact each population’s perception of the other. Also, while the militarization of baseball occurred to varying
degrees in both Japan and the United States, the relationships baseball created during this era between Japanese and American people never completely disappeared even during World War II. Those relationships proved to be crucial to Japan’s recovery after the war, as will be discussed in more detail in Part II.

**The Great Bambino**

By the 1930s, baseball exchanges had become a staple fixture in US-Japan cultural trade. Guthrie-Williams argues that this was an element of continuity in US-Japanese relations that helped to keep long term relations from irreversibly splitting because of World War II.81 Some of the individual transpacific relationships made through baseball in the decades leading up to the war would resurface during the occupation of Japan. These would play key roles in restoring Japanese morale. Many of those relationships were developed during Babe Ruth’s tour of Japan in 1934.

The tour was considered to be one of the greatest moments in the history of sports diplomacy. Of course, 1934 was just seven years before the attack on Pearl Harbor, which also demonstrates the limitations of sports diplomacy. Advocates of baseball diplomacy thought that this trip would ease tensions and eliminate growing concerns of a looming transpacific war. Unfortunately, many Japanese people in the early 20th century resented Western countries including the United States. The nationalists who were gaining power during the 1930s believed that military victories in mainland Asia proved that Japan had mastered and surpassed the West. They were angered by the fact that the United States and other Western countries did not recognize Japanese equality in international naval treaties.82
Considering the geopolitical realities of that era, only the most ardent idealists likely believed baseball was a reason why Japan would never go to war with the United States. Baseball diplomacy later showed how futile a tool it is at preventing war, but Babe Ruth and the other All-Stars did in fact improve relations in ways that have had lasting impacts to this day. Other Major Leaguers had played exhibitions in Japan before Ruth, but no athlete came close to having the kind of impact or exposure in Japan that Ruth had before or even since then.

Matsutaro Shoriki, President of the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, or Yomiuri Newspaper, was one of Japanese baseball’s most influential figures of his day. He played a major role in organizing Babe Ruth’s tour of Japan. Interest in collegiate baseball had waned some by 1930, so Shoriki was seeking ways to use professional baseball to increase sales of his newspaper. He hoped that sponsoring a tour of Major Leaguers, which would then be covered extensively in his newspaper, would do just that.\(^{83}\) Shoriki first succeeded at arranging a tour of Major League All-Stars in 1931, but he was slightly disappointed because he could not convince Ruth to participate. The *Yomiuri Shimbun* had been losing money before Shoriki purchased it. The profits from the 1931 tour Shoriki sponsored were mostly taken by the Americans, leaving Shoriki with a net loss. Shoriki was ultimately right, however, as sponsoring these tours eventually helped to make the *Yomiuri* one of the most prestigious newspapers in Japan.\(^{84}\) The *Yomiuri*’s ascent required much luck and hard work. For example when Shoriki was in jail for war crimes during the occupation of Japan, instead of being executed, he befriended some of Japan’s most influential people.\(^{85}\) *Yomiuri’s* success even teetered on a determination to survive.
Controversy surrounding Shoriki’s baseball ventures led to a failed attempt on his life by a Japanese nationalist wielding a samurai sword.

To help organize the All-Star tours of 1931 and 1934, Shoriki enlisted the help of numerous individuals, including Toshio Shiratori, an employee of Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). Shiratori and his superiors in the Japanese government thought that bringing Ruth to Japan could help to ease tensions with the United States. He instructed the Japanese consul in New York to negotiate with Ruth. At first, Ruth declined because of a contract he had with Universal Pictures, which covered his activities during baseball’s offseason. Not all the news, however, was bad. Although MOFA officials informed Shoriki that the Babe was not available, Herb Hunter was planning to bring a Major League All-Star team to Japan in 1931. Shoriki was asked if he would like to cooperate.  

The 1931 team was formidable. It included numerous future Hall of Famers, as well as Frank ‘Lefty’ O’Doul who is considered to be one of the best players to not be inducted into the American Hall of Fame. While playing for the New York Giants, O’Doul had become friends with Sotaro Suzuki, who was another man hired by Shoriki to help organize the 1931 and 1934 tours. Suzuki was an asset to Shoriki because of his connections to Major Leaguers made while living in New York. O’Doul’s excellent performance during his initial trip to Japan (his batting average was at .600 against Japanese pitching before getting hurt) cemented his legacy there. This would become valuable to Shoriki and future baseball tours to Japan, as O’Doul became the game’s primary ambassador after his own playing career was over.
O’Doul was infatuated with Japan. He adored its culture, the food, and the people he met. He built relationships with many Japanese players who eagerly absorbed his baseball lessons. O’Doul’s fondness for Japan was tested during his first trip there, in an incident that most likely would have negatively impacted anyone else’s view of Japan. During one particularly competitive game, O’Doul decided to lay a bunt down the first base line. The second baseman, who had gotten on the American players’ nerves with his feisty play, would have to cover first base. Just as O’Doul planned, the two collided there. The Japanese player was up to the challenge, however, and O’Doul ended up with two broken ribs. He spent the rest of his time during that trip to Japan coaching Japanese players and taking in the culture instead of partaking in games.

There were a few cultural misunderstandings. For example, the American team wanted to entertain the fans so infielders would occasionally make an unnecessary throw to an uninvolved player before getting the batter out. It was the sort of harmless fun and hijinks common to exhibitions in America at the time. The Japanese were unaware of this, however, and thought the Americans were showing off. In addition, the intense competition between the players themselves could not always be characterized as being diplomatic. Still, the Americans’ overall popularity was proven by the tours’ financial success and ticket sales. Approximately 400,000 people attended the games, generating approximately $140,000.

O’Doul enjoyed being in Japan so much that wanted to return as a coach. He expressed those sentiments in a letter to Sotaro Suzuki, the friend he made while playing for the New York Giants. Shoriki was among the many in baseball who disliked Hunter,
so he was eager to enlist O’Doul’s help in arranging for Babe Ruth to participate in the next tour of Major League All-Stars. O’Doul was very happy to oblige.

Ruth’s trip to Japan was profitable for all involved, especially for Shoriki who gained many new subscribers to the Yomiuri. Money, however, was not what convinced an initially reluctant Ruth to travel to Japan. There are differing stories on why Ruth agreed to the trip. The first is that Ruth only agreed to the trip after being unceremoniously released by the Yankees. Seeing an advertisement for the tour that prominently featured Ruth’s face and no one else’s had apparently restored Ruth’s wounded ego enough that he agreed to the trip despite his initial reluctance. The other narrative is that O’Doul came up with a clever ploy to convince Ruth to visit Japan. O’Doul explained to Ruth’s wife and step-daughter that the Babe was adored by the masses in the magical and mystical land of Japan. He also told them that his accomplishments as a baseball player were widely known there. Once the women were sold on the idea visiting Japan, they eventually persuaded Ruth to agree to go. Either way, Ruth’s popularity in Japan was a central reason why he travelled to Japan. It was also the reason why he was able to have such a large impact on how millions of Japanese people viewed Americans.

The rest of the team that travelled with Ruth included a total of 9 eventual Hall of Famers including Lou Gehrig, Jimmie Foxx, and Lefty Gomez. One inducement for big name players to participate in these sorts of tours involved scheduling in time for leisurely activities. The Japanese hosts were eager to share their culture with the Major Leaguers, not to mention their sake. Numerous Americans were playfully suspicious that
their hosts were deliberately attempting to induce hangovers so the Americans would perform worse during the games.

Before departing for Japan, Ruth and his teammates all agreed to Manager Connie Mack’s rules that the team act as good Ambassadors of the United States by being friendly and respectful to their hosts. By and large, the team adhered to Mack’s rules as they understood the potential impact of their behavior both on and off the field on greater US-Japan relations. Once in Japan, they were regularly reminded of the need for good behavior. For instance, the American Ambassador to Japan, Joseph Grew, finished his welcoming speech to the team by stating he was “confident that the result of your visit here will be a further contribution to the ideal of mutual understanding, mutual respect, and mutual friendship between our two countries.”

There were, of course, occasional hiccups. For example Ruth mistook a Geisha for a prostitute, however, for the most part, the American team was perceived to be very gracious during their trip. This was a good contrast with some other showboating American teams that had previously toured Japan. The good will generated by the trip was famously encapsulated in images of Ruth playing in the outfield while holding an umbrella presented to him by a fan during a game that should have been called off due to pouring rain. Except while he was batting, Ruth played the entire game with the umbrella in hand.

The 1934 tour would also have a curious but direct role in the United States’ military strategy during World War II. The story has been sensationalized in some accounts but what is verifiable is remarkable nonetheless.
Moe Berg was the backup catcher for both the 1931 and 1934 squads. His inclusion on each roster was somewhat odd, given that the rest of the members were among the best of their craft and he was not. Berg had a few good years, but he was otherwise an average catcher at best. Another difference about Berg that set him apart from his teammates is that he was more interested in intellectual pursuits such as learning languages and studying the law than he was in baseball. Teammates joked that Berg spoke numerous languages but couldn’t hit in any of them. Though injuries and academics limited his playing time back in the US, his interest in travel and languages helped him get on both the 1931 and 1934 rosters. Still, his baseball abilities had eroded considerably by 1934 so his inclusion on the roster was especially curious to historians. To the Japanese public, on the other hand, being the only player on the roster to speak Japanese made him a popular figure. In any case, most people were too distracted by Ruth to care much about the backup catcher anyway. During the tours, Berg generally kept to himself, and he was well liked by his teammates.

More curious than his inclusion on the roster, though, were some of his actions while in Japan. During one of the games, Berg feigned illness. When he was taken to a hospital, he managed to sneak a video camera in with him. While seemingly all of Japan was either at the exhibition or listening to it on the radio, including many of the doctors and nurses at the hospital he had been taken to, Berg snuck onto the roof of the hospital and filmed a number of important landmarks in Tokyo. Berg’s actions on the roof that day were illegal. He risked being jailed if caught, not to mention the diplomatic uproar it surely would have caused. As it happened, Berg escaped unseen, and his
footage was later used to help the American military choose what to target during their air raids of Tokyo. Berg’s luck at evading capture would run out later in life. Berg was stopped by Chinese, Russian, and Polish authorities at different times in his life either filming a sensitive location or with footage of sensitive locations that he had gathered. Berg was let go each time after authorities confiscated his film.\textsuperscript{106}

Berg’s earliest biographers, Louis Kaufman, Barbara Fitzgerald, and Tom Sewell, suggest that Berg’s actions on the hospital roof and his odd inclusion in the tour are evidence that he was a spy as early as 1934. It is a historical fact that Berg did become a spy for the OSS and CIA during World War II and the Cold War, but baseball historian Robert Fitts disagrees with Kaufman, et al, about Berg’s actions in Japan. According to Fitts, there is no evidence to suggest that Berg was hired by the CIA before the Cold War, or that he was ever asked by the military to make such a film.\textsuperscript{107} Berg’s application to the OSS made no mention of previous clandestine work.\textsuperscript{108} The risk Berg took while in Japan is peculiar all the same and remains somewhat of a mystery.

The dichotomy between rising anti-American sentiment and the popularity of the 1931 and 1934 tournaments resurfaced after the tours were over. On February 22, 1935, Shoriki was attacked by a member of a right wing organization that called itself the War Gods Society. At some point leading up to Babe Ruth’s visit to Japan, the founder of the War Gods Society, Sukeyasu Atsuta, met with the sales manager of \textit{Nichi Nichi} newspaper to discuss the \textit{Yomiuri}’s baseball tours. The tours helped the \textit{Yomiuri} amass subscriptions at the expense of other papers like \textit{Nichi Nichi}.\textsuperscript{109} Shoriki ran the \textit{Yomiuri} like a dictator and had firm control over the company, so Atsuta concluded that Shoriki
needed to be killed. The attention surrounding Shoriki during the baseball tours was too great to carry out the murder at that time, so they waited until the attention faded.\textsuperscript{110}

Though these motivations behind the murder attempt were hidden from court, the reaction of the courts revealed a deep sympathy for anti-American and pro-Emperor sentiments.

Shoriki was lucky to survive. His attacker was one of Atsuta’s disciples in the War Gods Society named Katsutake Nagasaki. Nagasaki struck Shoriki in the head with a small samurai sword and left a six inch gash two inches deep running from the back of Shoriki’s head to his neck.\textsuperscript{111} With the help of his employees Shoriki managed to walk into the Yomiuri infirmary and change his shoes before falling unconscious.\textsuperscript{112} Later that day, Nagasaki walked into a police station to give his full confession. His stated motive was his love for his country. He declared that Shoriki deserved to be punished for defiling the memory of Emperor Meiji by allowing foreigners like Babe Ruth to play in the stadium named in his honor.\textsuperscript{113} Nagasaki also argued in court that he did not mean to kill Shoriki, just maim him. He stressed that Shoriki survived the incident and was back at work after fifty days in the hospital and a short stay at a hot spring.\textsuperscript{114} Perhaps swayed by the pure intentions presented by the defendant, the judge sentenced Nagasaki to a remarkably short 3-year prison term.\textsuperscript{115} Although the American ballplayers believed that the perpetrator must have been some kind of crazy extremist, there was a great deal of empathy for Nagasaki’s purported love of country and Emperor. As Fitts notes, he was not the anomaly, the true anomaly was the goodwill exhibited during the 1931 and 34 tours.\textsuperscript{116}
The Yomiuri Giants and Professional Baseball

Between the two tours, in 1932 Japan’s Ministry of Education forbade students from playing with or against professionals. This meant that the college teams from the Big-6 needed an exemption to participate in future tours against Major Leaguers. As a result, Shoriki had to organize a team of players who would be willing to forgo their status as amateurs in order to have the opportunity to test themselves against American All-Stars. For recent graduates this was not a difficult choice, however, for others it was a big sacrifice. This was particularly the case for an 18-year-old pitcher named Eiji Sawamura. He had to decide between challenging Major League baseball players for a month, or matriculating as a freshman at an elite University. Figuring that he would forever regret passing up a chance to pitch against Babe Ruth and other Hall of Famers, Sawamura accepted his invitation to join the team. If fame and popularity are measures of success, he made the right decision.

Sawamura became famous the same way many other Japanese ballplayers have, by starring at Japan’s annual national high school baseball tournament, Koshien. Current New York Yankees’ star pitcher Masahiro Tanaka is another example of someone who became a household name by excelling at Koshien. Sawamura was the ideal Japanese baseball player. During his teens, Sawamura was obsessed with improving through practice. He constantly asked his friends to play catch with him. Although he fell ill from fatigue after pitching his first game and cried from fear of never playing again, he developed an explosive fastball and a sweeping curveball. When only 18 years old, he used those pitches to strike out baseball greats Lou Gehringer, Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig,
and Jamie Foxx — in succession. The only run scored in that game was a home run hit by Gehrig in the bottom of the 7th inning. Regardless of another loss for Japan, Sawamura became a national star. He was even offered a contract to play in the Major Leagues. American culture and cuisine clashed with Sawamura’s tastes, however, and Sawamura declined to move from Japan.

After the American team left Japan he continued pitching for Shoriki’s team, which was then named the Dai Nippon Tokyo Yakyu Club (Greater Japan Tokyo Baseball Club). Expressing disbelief that Shoriki would choose such a wordy name, O’Doul convinced his friend to change it so Americans could say it more easily during their tour of the United States in 1935. The club was then called the “Tokyo Giants” before eventually settling on the “Yomiuri Giants.” This name combined the names of Shoriki’s newspaper and O’Doul’s last Major League team.

The Yomiuri Giants are the oldest professional team in professional Japanese baseball today. That does not make them Japan’s first professional team. Prior to the Giants, there were the private clubs that came and went like the SAC. In addition, former Waseda players had established a professional league in 1921. Unfortunately, the public’s adoration of amateur athletics and distrust of professional sports proved to be too high of a hurdle for the league to overcome. Many thought that compensating people to play baseball adulterated the game, so the league never gained the popularity of amateur leagues and tournaments like the collegiate Big-6 or high school Koshien. As previously mentioned, sports and baseball were infused with the bushido spirit, so baseball was meant to enhance the body and spirit, not attain worldly goods.
to play a game went directly against the point of sports to Japanese at the time. The league disbanded in 1929.\textsuperscript{126} Thus when the Tokyo Giants were established, there was no professional league for it to join and the team had to travel abroad to find opponents.

Baseball diplomacy between the United States and Japan was not a one-way street. While Japanese teams were not as celebrated in America as American teams were in Japan, they promoted peace and friendship in similar ways. When Suzuki was appointed as the Giants’ business manager, he planned to schedule 60 to 80 games. The tour eventually grew into a “four-month, 104 game, 59-city grueling expedition crisscrossing the western half of the North American continent.”\textsuperscript{127} Japanese-American communities, who were at the time the target of recurring anti-Japanese policies and campaigns over issues such as land ownership, were especially eager to watch the Giants play. Thus, games were added to meet the demand.\textsuperscript{128} On the other hand, many communities without large Japanese-American populations were not as enthusiastic. The tour almost went bankrupt, which would have left the team stranded in the Canadian Rockies.\textsuperscript{129}

Though the tour was not a financial success, it was successful in increasing subscriptions to the \textit{Yomiuri} and in other ways as well, especially in helping to bridge racial divisions. In addition to teams from the Pacific Coast League and the Minors, the Giants also played against a Black semi-pro team, bringing together two races of people that rarely interacted otherwise.\textsuperscript{130} Even in an era during which Asians were treated poorly in the United States, the Giants were generally well received. One example is the
that car manufacturers like Ford and General Motors, who were eager to cash in on the Asian market, made a point of welcoming the Giants.¹³¹

O’Doul arranged for the Giants to meet with local politicians in San Francisco, who openly welcomed the team.¹³² The press coverage of the tour lauded the team for its civility, teamwork, and manly sportsmanship. Similar to the way the media portrayed American tours of Japan, Guthrie-Williams writes that “these attributes were often cited as evidence to support broader social commentaries, such as US-Japanese brotherhood and the reconcilability of their cultural differences and the diplomatic agendas of the two countries.”¹³³

Overall, the Giants improved the perception of both Japanese people and of Japanese-Americans in the United States. The American press cited the team’s civility and politeness on the field as a sign that the two nation’s greater differences could be diplomatically reconciled.¹³⁴ The tour was also successful in Shoriki’s eyes, or at least successful enough that he sent the team back across the Pacific again the following year. By 1937, however, Japan was mobilizing for war and tours to the United States ended.

The Giants’ initial tour of the United States captivated the Japanese public and helped to increase subscriptions to Shoriki’s newspaper. Despite the attempt on his life, Shoriki was able to convince other companies that baseball was a good way to promote their businesses as well.¹³⁵ With memories of the previous failed league long behind them, and eager to fill the void of domestic opponents for the Yomiuri Giants, three other media companies and three railroad companies partnered with Shoriki to form a professional league in the winter of 1935-36.¹³⁶ This time, having read of the Giants’ play
in America and witnessed the Great Bambino himself, the Japanese public was much more eager for a professional sports league. Although 1950 is listed as the official birth year of Japan’s current professional league, the Nippon Professional Baseball League (NPB) actually traces its roots to Shoriki and his Giants who were initially organized to compete against the almighty American All-Stars. In a sense, not only did Babe Ruth and his teammates improve US-Japan relations immediately during their trip, they also played a significant role in helping to create an organization that helps to foster a greater understanding between the two populations to this day.

The first few years of the NPB league were tumultuous, which was perhaps inevitable as it was formed in an era of rising international tensions and political instability in Japan. During the Giants’ first tour of the United States, rightists in the Japanese military assassinated members of the government and their guards in a second attempted coup. The coup succeeded in taking over the government, and many high-ranking officials were killed. The military officers were ready to transfer more authority to the Emperor. Unfortunately for the young men, they had failed to properly consider how the Emperor might react to his top advisers being murdered. The Emperor rejected their offer and instead ordered the coup to disband. The officers were executed, which eliminated a faction of the military that had been strongly focused on domestic reform. As a result, the military leaders were more focused on foreign expansion. Within just a few years the military was busy expanding its territory in Asia and covertly planning its attack on Pearl Harbor.
CHAPTER 3
WORLD WAR II AND THE OCCUPATION OF JAPAN

To hell with Babe Ruth!

(Commonly heard by US soldiers during combat with Japanese)\(^1\)

**From the Japanese Perspective**

Between World War I and World War II, sports and physical education were emphasized by many governments around the world to improve the fitness of their military recruits, especially in more authoritarian countries.\(^2\) Japan was by no means an exception to this trend. In 1932, student baseball came under the control of Japan’s Ministry of Education. Games organized under its administration from then on were used as demonstrations of loyalty to the state.\(^3\) Participants in national tournaments pledged allegiance to the *bushido* code as well as to “make all of their bodily faculties available to serve in national exigencies.”\(^4\) Players and spectators alike had to bow towards the imperial palace in a prayer for Japan’s fallen soldiers before each game.\(^5\)

In 1937, the Big-6 voluntarily adopted the Ministry of Education’s baseball agenda. It even started to donate significant amounts of its revenue to the Army and Navy in hope of avoiding intervention from a militant state that was increasingly suspicious of foreign influences.\(^6\) In the end, their efforts were unsuccessful, as multi-team tournaments were banned in 1943. The Big-6 disbanded because it was unable to hold its main event.\(^7\) The Japanese professional league operated for one season after the fall of the Big-6, but like practically every other aspect of Japanese life in 1944, it fell victim to the war effort.
That year, the league played only 35 games even though it had scheduled between 84 to 104 games per year until then.\(^8\) Play was canceled altogether in 1945.

As the war progressed and the population lived in increasingly dire conditions, baseball fields were put to other use to support the war effort. Some stadiums were converted into farms, reflecting the nation’s food shortages during the war. Others were used by the military as ammunitions depots. One stadium was reported to have been used as a military hospital where experiments on POWs were conducted.\(^9\) The steel used in some stadiums’ infrastructure or seating was removed and recycled by the military, which was increasingly desperate for raw materials.\(^10\) With fewer places to play and less access to equipment, baseball was largely reduced to being played in empty lots with makeshift bats and balls. The game was merely an afterthought for a population completely engulfed by the war effort.

While yakyu had always been interpreted and expressed somewhat differently from American baseball, the Japanese government rebranded yakyu to be devoid of any American traces during World War II. Signs that baseball was originally foreign disappeared. This was especially true linguistically. “Strike” and “ball” became “yoshi” (good) and “dame” (bad).\(^11\) Teams changed their names as well. For example, the Giants became the “kyojin-gun,” which is a militaristic way of saying “Giants-squad.”\(^12\) Baseball magazines in Japan also had to adjust to the new reality of war as they were the target of hostility from anti-American radicals. As was the case with the professional teams, some were forced to change their name as well. The magazine “Yakyukai” (“Baseball World”) tried using “Sumo to Yakyu” (“Sumo and Baseball”) for a few months before dropping
baseball from their title altogether and ultimately adopting just “Sumokai” (“Sumo World”).

In addition to the nominal and linguistic changes, baseball in Japan was influenced by the military in other ways as well. Grenade throwing contests by players became a pre-game attraction in the professional league. Uniforms were changed to look more like those in the military. Eventually names and numbers were no longer placed on the backs of uniforms in an effort to remove all signs of individualism from the game. The rules were even changed to emphasize and reflect the masculine and militant values of the era. To stress the importance of victory, games were no longer allowed to end in a tie. In an effort to emphasize the players’ physical toughness, the number of innings that had to be played before a game could be rained out was extended.

The war’s biggest impact on Japanese baseball was the military’s recruitment of players from all levels. Professional players were eligible for the military draft as soon as full-scale war broke out in China. The college exemption lasted until 1943, by which time every aspect of Japanese life was increasingly devoted to the war effort. Sawamura was among the numerous Japanese players who were drafted to serve in the army. In fact, Sawamura was deployed three times.

Japanese propaganda promoted the ballplayer-cum-soldiers and their willingness to fight as manifestations of the masculine and patriotic ideals favored by the military. Sawamura was one of numerous baseball players who participated in the propaganda efforts. He published a nine-page piece to improve Japanese morale in Yakyukai’s November 1943 issue, before the magazine changed its title. His article reflects how war
propaganda had permeated baseball media, as well as the role baseball played in the war effort despite being of American origin. Like other propaganda that was willingly produced by the Japanese public, Sawamura’s piece in *Yakyukai* reminded readers that the sacrifices the military was making for them were far greater than the sacrifices civilians had to make in the war. He stressed that everyone had a moral obligation to support the war effort.20

While Sawamura was training for the military in the winter of 1937-38, the Thirty Third Infantry Regiment that he was about to join was killing scores of civilians during events that later became notoriously referred to as the Rape of Nanking.21 The unit was known as one of the most savage in the Japanese military; Sawamura became one of its most avid soldiers. Sawamura was already a hero to Japan for his impressive play against Babe Ruth and his time with the Giants during its first few years as an organization. His legend grew during the war, when he was publicized as being a reliable soldier who was often called on to accurately throw grenades great distances.22 Unfortunately for his baseball career, Sawamura’s skills on the pitcher’s mound diminished with each deployment. Throwing so many grenades apparently took its toll on his arm, forcing Sawamura to adjust his form and become a side-arm pitcher.23 By the third time he was called to duty, Sawamura had lost the control and velocity that made him such a formidable pitcher. In his final playing days, Sawamura was reduced to being a pinch hitter.24

On December 2, 1944, while on his way to the Philippines to reinforce Japanese troops who were largely outnumbered by the Americans led by General Douglas
MacArthur, an American submarine intercepted Sawamura’s ship off the coast of Saipan and sank it. In life, Sawamura was a hero who validated the Japanese belief that obstacles can be overcome with the proper fighting spirit. He famously sacrificed his talents and livelihood for the war effort just as millions of other Japanese did. In death, Sawamura became a symbol of the many Japanese who were victims of their own government’s militarism, and a prominent example of the many lives and dreams shattered by a misguided war effort. Sawamura was one of a total of 69 Japanese professional baseball players who lost their lives to World War II.

Another baseball player who perished in the war was Shinichi Ishimaru. Ishimaru was an infielder for the Nagoya club and a Japanese Zero pilot in the war. Ishimaru’s final act before taking off on a kamikaze mission to Okinawa was to play catch with a former player in the Big-6. Ishimaru asked a newspaper reporter to call his throws yoshi or dame. He said he was ready for his mission after throwing ten strikes.

Baseball had originally been demonized by the Japanese military because of its American origins. Yet people like Sawamura and Ishimaru, some of Japan’s most militant and patriotic traditionalists, absolutely loved the game. Their fondness for baseball underscored how yakyu embodied the values they held dear.

In Japan, one can see a disconnect between the policies that clamped down on playing the game at home and the military’s promotion of baseball for its soldiers. This difference suggests a conflict in values when it comes to the place of baseball in the national war effort. Evidence of the difference between the situation on the Japanese home front and in the war zones may be found in the practice of tearing baseball stadiums
down or converting them to other purposes at home, whereas in the war zones, baseball diamonds were built whenever Japan gained new territories. This was also true of the American side. In fact, existing diamonds were retained after exchanging hands from one army to the other.\textsuperscript{28}

\textbf{From the American Perspective}

Unlike the Japanese, the American military did not have to contend with contradictions between their nation’s pastime and their patriotic ideals. Instead, baseball in America was widely promoted both within the United States and by its military abroad. Organized baseball, mindful of having almost been shut down during World War I, publicly identified itself with the war effort and was one of the loudest supporters of the American military during World War II.\textsuperscript{29}

As a symbol of the goodness of life in America, baseball was one of the things for which American troops were fighting.\textsuperscript{30} One poll taken at Walter Reed Hospital found that wounded veterans overwhelmingly supported the continuation of the Major Leagues during the war by a tally of 300 to 3.\textsuperscript{31} The game was not just a supplement to military training, but it was a fundamental part of it. One member of a West Point Academy team boasted that all of the team’s members became Generals.\textsuperscript{32} Just as the Japanese attributed Sawamura’s expertise in throwing grenades to his baseball pitching skills, many in the United States credited baseball experience for being a reason why American soldiers were so adept at throwing grenades.\textsuperscript{33}

Beyond the contribution that expertise in the game may have made to the fighting skill of American soldiers, baseball served as a therapeutic or psychological outlet for the
war-weary. One story from the Pacific War especially exemplifies this point. One day, while in the Solomon Islands, Marine Sergeant Dana Babcock saw what appeared to be a pickup game being played by other soldiers in his unit. As he approached the game to get a better look, he could see the players pitch and round the bases after hitting home runs, argue with the umpire, and enthusiastically cheer each other as the game progressed. What the Sergeant could not see until he was much closer was that the players were using a broken branch for a bat, and they only had their imaginations to use for a ball. The game the Sergeant came across was not baseball but rather what the Marines called “ghost ball.” Babcock commented that somehow the imagined game helped the soldiers maintain their sanity. He concluded that in the chaos of war it made perfect sense that the lack of an actual baseball did not preclude the therapeutic game from being played.

The Major Leagues supported the war effort in a variety of ways. Just as many players from the Japanese league served in the military, the most apparent contribution to the war effort was the number of American players who fought on the front lines. Over 1,700 Major Leaguers and 3,700 from the Minors served in the war effort at one point or another. Obviously, the quality of play on the field declined in their absence, but the games continued. Many games were used as charity events or fundraisers for the military. Baseball equipment was donated so soldiers could play the game in their down time, and soldiers were admitted to Major League games free of charge. Fans threw back foul balls so they could also be donated to the military. Players helped to sell war bonds and patched American flags onto their uniforms to display their patriotism.
Although the plan never materialized, American military officials discussed an idea with Babe Ruth that would have sent the Great Bambino to Guam to do radio broadcasts urging the Japanese to surrender. Japanese soldiers may have been cursing Ruth while on the battlefield, but there was still a belief among American officials that Ruth was revered in Japan.\textsuperscript{38} They were right. Even though MacArthur led the American Occupation in Japan during the first years after the war, Ruth came in ahead of MacArthur in a poll taken in 1954 to see who the Japanese thought were the most important people up to that point in the 20th century.\textsuperscript{39} Ruth was probably willing to do the broadcasts, as he felt personally betrayed by the Japanese when they attacked Pearl Harbor. He became highly active in the war effort in other ways, largely by partnering with the Red Cross to make celebrity appearances, visit hospitals, and play in celebrity fundraising baseball games. Ruth even went door to door to seek donations.\textsuperscript{40} He bought $100,000 in bonds himself, and raised many times this amount through his efforts.\textsuperscript{41}

The American military also capitalized on Moe Berg’s popularity in Japan, as well as his ability to speak Japanese, by having him speak in radio broadcasts aimed at Japan. In one of them, Berg asked the Japanese, “What sound basis is there for enmity between two people who enjoy the same national sport?”\textsuperscript{42}

Although the Japanese government banned radio broadcasts of baseball games during the war, they often used baseball metaphors in radio broadcasts meant to demoralize American troops in the Philippines. For instance, the conflict was depicted with imagery of the World Series, with Generals Tomoyuki Yamashita and MacArthur
playing the roles of Managers leading their men. “Yamashita is ready to lead East Asia to victory in the big game,” warned the Japanese broadcaster.43

**Prisoner Baseball**

Living conditions in Japan’s prisoner of war (POW) camps were notoriously horrific. While 1.1% of POWs in German camps died while in captivity, approximately 40% perished in Japanese camps.44 The percentage of American civilians who died while in Japanese captivity was less but still much higher than the corresponding number in Germany: 11% versus 3.5%.45

The Japanese underestimated the number of British and American prisoners they would capture. Caring for the unexpectedly large numbers became a logistical nightmare. This does not excuse the unconscionable conditions, but it does partially explain why the Japanese violated nearly every tenet of the Geneva Convention on the treatment of POWs. Japan had signed the convention, but the country never ratified it.46 Treatment of American soldiers in places like Shanghai, where Westerners had a larger presence, was better than in camps based in the Philippines or Burma.47 The Japanese also treated civilian prisoners much better than they did POWs. For example, they allowed food to be brought in by outsiders for civilian prisoners, who were also permitted more recreational activities including baseball.48 German authorities permitted baseball much more regularly in their camps compared to the Japanese, but baseball games did take place in many Japanese camps.49

Unfortunately, many of the games American POWs took part in while in Japanese captivity were a propaganda sham. These “games” were staged as mere fabrications of
fair treatment so the Japanese could demonstrate to Red Cross observers or the media their benign treatment of the prisoners.\textsuperscript{50} Living conditions were so poor, and prisoners’ bodies so weakened, that the fact baseball was played at all is remarkable.\textsuperscript{51}

Another feature of baseball in POW camps was the seemingly arbitrary attitude toward the role the game should have in prisoners’ lives. Indeed, the Japanese prisoner system was chaotic, and conditions differed radically from camp to camp. Many of the camps confiscated baseball equipment provided by the Red Cross.\textsuperscript{52} On the other hand, American prisoners at one camp in Manila were allowed to form a league with 30 teams. One American POW was quoted as saying that the prisoner-guard relationship was forgotten on the field.\textsuperscript{53} American teams were even known to occasionally lose a game on purpose against their Japanese captors so the guards could save face.\textsuperscript{54} In camps where baseball was genuinely allowed, it proved to be a positive force that improved living conditions and provided a space for more cordial interaction that may not have been possible otherwise.

In stark contrast to the schizophrenic use of baseball in Japanese prisons, Americans promoted baseball in its camps. This is true of both POW camps where German or Japanese soldiers were imprisoned, and the internment camps where Japanese-Americans were incarcerated inside the United States. The use of baseball in prison camps reflected the belief that baseball could instill players with American values, in particular, an appreciation for democracy.\textsuperscript{55}

Over 120,000 Japanese-Americans, 75 percent of whom were American citizens, were sent to ten different internment camps, primarily in the western United States.\textsuperscript{56}
Playing baseball was one way for the Japanese-Americans to display their loyalty the United States. It was also an outlet for anxiety and frustration that provided psychological relief to a population that lost not only its possessions but also its dignity because of its mass incarceration. Baseball teams were allowed to leave the camp to play games against other camps and even against local teams. Although they endured racist resistance during these games, baseball was one of the few freedoms Japanese-American internees could enjoy. Inside the camps, the game was immensely popular. There was also a practical benefit for the Americans, as authorities thought allowing the Japanese-Americans to play organized baseball helped to diminish any urge to rebel.57

The Occupation of Japan

When the war ended, Japan was not only defeated, much of it was destroyed. American occupation officials had an enormously difficult task on their hands in rebuilding Japan’s cities, government, and economy, as well as restoring the people’s physical and psychological well-being. Food shortages threatened to starve the population. Economic and political institutions had to be rebuilt from the ground up. 6.5 million Japanese people, including 3.5 million military personnel, remained spread across Asia.58 To make things worse, despite being the aggressor during the war, Japanese civilians were very much a victim of their government’s war effort. Losing the war for which they had sacrificed so much depressed the population.

If there was any reason for hope, it lay in the generally positive intentions of the Americans and the fact that most Japanese now rejected the militancy that led them to war. This pacifist sentiment led many to willingly accept Article 9 in Japan’s new,
American-imposed constitution. This provision redefined the role of Japan’s military so that it could only be used for purposes of self-defense. The Americans’ job was made easier by the fact that many in Japan resented their own government even more than they did the Americans who defeated them. Indeed, many troops were surprised by the welcome reception they received as democratic reformers. Japan’s quick economic recovery in the post-war era is a testament to the success of the occupation. Baseball, again, played an important role in this stage of US-Japan relations.

General MacArthur and the occupation authorities, commonly referred to as SCAP (the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers), purposefully used baseball as a means to establish better relations with the Japanese population. Efforts to restore baseball to its pre-war status were undertaken early in the occupation. Already by the end of 1945, SCAP had authorized the restoration of Koshien, the popular national high school baseball tournament. SCAP must have been aware of the potent symbolism of Koshien, because it required changes to the tournament’s organization, and attempted to detach the tournament from its history by proposing that it be branded as a new event. In the end, SCAP allowed the tournament to be promoted as the 28th iteration, not the first, but the media companies that sponsored Koshien before the war were prohibited from being involved. The Americans also arranged for the tournament to open on August 15, 1946, marking the first anniversary of Japan’s surrender, no doubt reminding spectators of more recent history. When the games began, the American military had a strong presence at the tournament. The Army’s brass band played and Lieutenant General Robert Brown of the Sixth Army was given the honor of throwing out the ceremonial
first pitch. Brown repeated a familiar refrain by calling baseball a “vehicle for peace and democracy” during his remarks at the opening ceremony.

In another innovation for the re-started competition, the tournament champion was presented with new Spalding baseball equipment. This surely made the sting of defeat even more acute for every team except the champion. Soon, other American companies began to be featured at baseball games as well. One of the most salient examples is the Coca-Cola Company, which built a bottling factory in Japan early in the occupation at the request of SCAP officials. At the time, the dollar to yen exchange rate was yet to be established so Coca-Cola could only be sold to American soldiers who could pay in dollars at the military exchange. The company was first able to sell its famed soda to Japanese people at a baseball game in the fall of 1949. The company used the advertising slogan: “Between innings… Enjoy a Coca-Cola!” Along with Coca-Cola, Japanese fans also relished the opportunity to eat hot dogs and popcorn, giving them a chance to experience some of the joys and tastes of America.

Baseball was more than just an enjoyable spectator event employed to boost morale and distract the Japanese people from the strain of the immediate post war years. Activities surrounding the games were specifically crafted to represent the Americanness of baseball. The American promise of a better life was stressed in contrast to the Japanese experience under the militant regime. Baseball’s popularity, a general adoration for American pop-culture, and a constant American military presence in Japan during and since the occupation combined to create an atmosphere conducive to transpacific business that entertainment, food, and other industries continue to profit from today.
Japan’s education system was one of the many Japanese institutions overhauled during the occupation. The reform extended to physical education. Because of their associations with militarism and soldier training, SCAP banned martial arts such as sword fighting and spear throwing from being taught or even engaged in as extracurricular activities in schools. These activities were replaced with American team sports.\(^{71}\) Belief in the formative powers of the game and the enduring popularity of baseball led SCAP officials to make the game a central part of their reformation plan for education in Japan. Just as with the transpacific tours before World War II, education reform was motivated by a belief that engaging in team sports and American pastimes would democratize Japan in the long term.\(^{72}\)

Despite baseball’s potential as an instrument of educational reform, implementation of the strategy encountered difficulty. In addition to a severely malnourished student population, a lack of necessary equipment presented officials with obstacles in placing emphasis on American team sports in their physical education reform agenda. Indeed, procuring resources of all kinds was one of the many problems SCAP officials faced in trying to rebuild Japan. Evidence of the importance that SCAP officials placed on re-introducing baseball into the school program may be seen in the fact that it prioritized diverting rubber and leather away from other utilitarian needs for the manufacture of baseballs so that it could realize its educational goals.\(^{73}\) In addition to SCAP’s efforts to restore stadiums that were taken over by the Japanese military during the war, SCAP allocated enough steel and concrete to build a new stadium in Osaka.\(^{74}\)
Only three months after the war was over, SCAP helped to gather the best Japanese baseball players in Japan to play in an All-Star game which was attended by 6,000 people. That SCAP would do so at a time when food, housing, and electricity were all scarce shows the kind of value they thought baseball had. The following spring, professional league play resumed but the league was marred by internal strife and an unstable business environment during the first years. SCAP officials were concerned that the league’s model was inferior to the Major Leagues, so it helped to install a system based on the Major League’s model consisting of two-leagues, an independent commissioner, and rules regarding players to stabilize team rosters. With a new system in place, “Nippon Professional Baseball” (NPB) played its inaugural season in 1950.

Promotion of the new league’s games was another issue. The main media outlet from the pre-war years, the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, was compromised because its owner, Shoriki, was charged with war crimes relating to the spread of propaganda through the newspaper. Sotaro Suzuki’s ability to speak English, his relationship with O’Doul, and his familiarity with professional baseball before the war made him well suited to fill the void created by Shoriki’s absence. Suzuki worked with SCAP officials to guide NPB in its first years while Shoriki worked through his legal issues. Mindful of the recent history and of American control over Japan, Suzuki believed that friendships and having positive relations with Americans was essential for Japan’s survival as a nation. Baseball was Suzuki’s way of ensuring and strengthening that friendship. For Suzuki, as with so many others in this tale of baseball and international relations, baseball was much more than just a passion or game.
The San Francisco Seals

SCAP created a secret fund from money the Japanese imperial army had accumulated during its occupations of China, Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines. Because the money was not on Japan’s books and kept secret even before SCAP gained control of it, SCAP officials were able to fund initiatives to rebuild Japan’s political and social institutions, including baseball, without legislative action. Both MacArthur and his chief economic advisor, Major General William Marquat, were avid baseball fans. Together, they supported initiatives to promote their favored game and ensured that these efforts were adequately funded. The state of baseball during the war may have deteriorated badly, but MacArthur’s leadership during the occupation helped to make the game even more popular than it was before the war.

A Japanese-American soldier from Hawaii named Tsuneo “Cappy” Harada was instrumental in MacArthur’s effort to rebuild Japan. Harada, a first lieutenant, was in charge of reestablishing Japanese athletics. Harada recalled that during a staff meeting in 1949, MacArthur asked what could be done to raise Japanese morale. Harada responded with the idea to bring an American baseball team to tour Japan. Knowing that Major League officials had been cold on the idea of sending one of their teams abroad since 1934, Harada approached Lefty O’Doul, who by then was managing the Pacific Coast League’s San Francisco Seals.

O’Doul had actually gone to Japan earlier on his own in 1946 to lay the groundwork for a team to travel to Japan. He was enthusiastic about his new partnership with SCAP because he “knew if we brought a baseball team over there it would help cement
friendship between them and us.”\(^{85}\) Seals’ officials thought the tour would help validate the Pacific Coast League, which at the time had aspirations of being a third major league.\(^{86}\) To the satisfaction of the organizers, tens of thousands of people lined the streets of Tokyo to greet the Seals upon their arrival, just as O’Doul witnessed during his tours as a player. Unlike when O’Doul and Babe Ruth had paraded down the same street 15 years earlier, however, the crowds did not respond to O’Doul’s cheers of “Banzai! Banzai!” (Banzai translates to 10,000 years of age, so technically it is a cheer for long life but a translation of its spirit is closer to “hooray” or “bravo.”) Harada told O’Doul that the reason the Seals’ were brought to Japan was so that the crowds would cheer banzai again.\(^{87}\)

Over the course of six weeks in 1949, the Seals played in 11 games and made a variety of other good will appearances across the country. Over half a million people watched them play, including 140,000 who watched one game during a rainstorm. This must have been reminiscent of Babe Ruth’s famous exhibition in 1934.\(^{88}\) O’Doul spread optimism wherever he went, including a number of orphanages and schools where he held free clinics. One game was organized so children under the age of fifteen were admitted for free. O’Doul had enough energy left after pitching a few innings (he was 15 years past retirement) to “cavort” with a champion sumo wrestler to entertain the younger audience at the game’s conclusion.\(^{89}\) The tour raised more than $100,000—a considerable sum at the time—for Japanese charities. More importantly, it succeeded in raising Japanese morale. The tour is credited with having significantly eased rising tensions between occupation forces and the Japanese public who were beginning to tire of the
Americans’ presence. The diminishing reputation of the Americans will be examined in more depth in the next segment. Both Japanese and American people involved spoke of the tour almost hyperbolically. Shoriki’s son Toru and MacArthur are both quoted as saying that the tour was the greatest piece of diplomacy ever.\textsuperscript{90}

One moment during the tour was especially meaningful. Harada obtained MacArthur’s permission to play both the Japanese and American national anthems at the opening ceremony while raising the Japanese and American flags together. The ceremony took place on October 15, 1949 and it was the first time that was done during the occupation. Harada drew criticism from some SCAP officials for saluting the flags during both anthems, which according to his recollection was his natural inclination from his time in the military.\textsuperscript{91} Other sources say MacArthur instructed him to do so.\textsuperscript{92} Either way, the image of an American soldier saluting both the Japanese and American flags was such a strong display of respect that it brought tears to many in the stands. The Japanese population, which had felt shamed by both their military’s atrocities and defeat, now began to feel they could let go of that shame and become a proud nation again.\textsuperscript{93}

The Japanese imperial family arranged for Crown Prince Akihito, currently the Emperor of Japan, to attend his first professional baseball game and to meet O’Doul.\textsuperscript{94} The cheerful occasion was seen as an opportunity to visually recast the changing US-Japan relationship.\textsuperscript{95} The imperial family was undergoing a willful change to their image and reputation, most relevantly their adoption of American values including baseball. Wholesome values like an emphasis on the nuclear family were now projected. Husbands were now seen accompanying their wives to events, and the men of the family were seen
playing sports. Emperor Hirohito was so pleased by the Seals’ tour that he invited O’Doul and two Seals’ officials to the Imperial Palace to thank them personally. “It is by means of sports that our countries can be brought closer together,” Hirohito told O’Doul. Thus, in addition to boosting Japan’s overall morale, the Seals tour was able to support SCAP and the imperial family’s deliberate efforts to use baseball as a part of the reconstruction of the Emperor’s image.

By the tour’s conclusion, many thousands of Japanese were cheering *banzai* at O’Doul again. Proceeds from the Seals’ tour became an endowment known as the “Seals Fund,” which helped to finance numerous transpacific baseball tours for years as well as the construction of Japan’s baseball Hall of Fame in 1959. Many decades later O’Doul would become the first foreigner inducted into that Hall of Fame in recognition of the various tours he led and their impact on Japan. O’Doul’s funeral in 1969 was attended by a delegation of Japanese officials led by Consul-General Seichi Shima. During the eulogy, Monsignor Vincent Breen remarked that “no single man did more to reestablish faith and friendship between our great nations than did Lefty O’Doul.”

**Baseball and the Emerging Cold War**

In the late 1940s, the world’s geopolitical landscape was undergoing great change. While recovery from the war was far from over in Japan, a new perceived threat to American values was emerging in the form of what was to become known as the Cold War. Within Japan, advocates of communism were becoming more vocal. MacArthur had relied on the good will generated by baseball, not only to raise morale in Japan, but for other political purposes as well. Those purposes now began to shift in an attempt to
counter the rise of enthusiasm for communist principles. During 1948, SCAP was in the process of reversing many of its own policies in order to help suppress the rise of communist sentiments and parties. One specific instance of this was SCAP’s imposition of restrictions on labor strikes.\textsuperscript{103}

One of the most significant reversals SCAP made was in its stance towards those it initially branded as Class A War Criminals. SCAP released many of those originally accused of war crimes by finding some innocent and by dropping the charges all together in other cases. Shoriki, whose \textit{Yomiuri} newspaper was suspected of being a propaganda arm for the Japanese government during the war, was one of the released prisoners.\textsuperscript{104} SCAP officials concluded that there was not enough evidence to convict Shoriki, and that the charges against him were made with political motivations.\textsuperscript{105} After his release, Shoriki served a short stint as commissioner of Japan’s professional baseball league in the 1950s. He also continued to run the \textit{Yomiuri} newspaper and its team, the Giants.\textsuperscript{106}

Though the occupying Americans were initially welcomed into Japan with great hope from the Japanese political left, the “reverse course” began to erode the good will SCAP had built with this segment of Japanese society. MacArthur and Marquat wanted a non-political way to win back the many hearts and minds America was losing because of the changed policies. Once again, they saw baseball as a logical way to do so.\textsuperscript{107} SCAP began to try to use the game’s popularity for both direct, short-term goals, and indirect, long-term goals as part of its efforts to suppress communism in Japan and in Asia.

Baseball events began to be orchestrated to engineer good will for Americans not just in contrast to the prior Japanese regime but also against Japan’s neighboring
communist regimes as well. One salient example of this shift to a wider focus involved a mission to release a former Japanese baseball player from captivity in Siberia. During the spring of 1949, months before the Seals’ first arrived in Japan, Tsuneo Harada learned of an ex-Yomiuri Giant named Shigeru Mizuhara who was one of the 650,000 Japanese soldiers and civilian men who were assigned to forced labor in Siberia. As SCAP’s baseball liaison, Harada flew to the Soviet Union to expedite Mizuhara’s extradition to Japan. Most of the other Japanese who were released after imprisonment in Siberia underwent a “de-brainwashing” program before reentering Japanese society, but Mizuhara was taken directly from the airport to a Giants game where he gave a teary greeting to the crowd. The moment was powerfully symbolic of the contrast between the benevolence of the American occupation and of Soviet brutality. The crowd was surely aware of this, as they understood that other Japanese prisoners were still in Soviet territory.

After the Seals tour in 1949, Marquat began to work on organizing another tour the following year in 1950. This tour pitted a team of Japan’s best baseball players against the champions of America’s National Baseball Congress. Unlike other tours during the occupation, this tour was part of an elaborate plan to distract both the Japanese and North Korean populations. Sensing Japanese unease about the intent of some of its Asian neighbors, MacArthur and Marquat thought the Japanese would be leery of a large troop reduction in Japan. They also didn't want the North Koreans to be aware of their plans to relocate troops to the Korean peninsula. The tour Marquat was putting together was devised to serve both these purposes. The tour was so grandiosely portrayed and
advertised that the North Koreans didn’t expect a military operation to be launched at the same time. But that is precisely what the American forces had in mind. The diversionary tactic of promoting a baseball tour contributed to the success of the invasion. On September 15, 1950, 13,000 American Marines launched a surprise land-and-sea attack that forced the North Koreans to retreat.

By the end of the occupation, SCAP organized a system of governance in Japan through which centrists and conservatives held most of the power. Inclusion of socialists and communists in Japan’s national debate occurred at levels unthinkable in the United States, yet largely due to SCAP’s suppression of communism during the occupation, communist parties have long been minority players in Japanese politics. Similar to the participation of communist parties in Japan’s government, the participation of American players in the NPB has been limited by authority figures yet remain significant nonetheless. As US-Japanese relations entered an era of peace, transpacific baseball players had significant roles in shaping the relationship. Their stories are the subject of the following chapter.
CHAPTER 4

SINCE THE OCCUPATION OF JAPAN

Man blooms as a flower of the earth.  
Baseball is a drama—it is life.  
Knock down the Giant Star.  
Fly away, Yakult Swallows!

-Song of the Yakult Swallows fan club

Breaking Racial Barriers 1: Wally Yonamine

The role of race in baseball has a difficult, if ultimately inspiring, history in the United States. Jackie Robinson broke the Major League’s race barrier in 1947, right around the time American baseball tours were being discussed by SCAP officials. This aspect of the game and its impact on society was not lost on the officials who organized the baseball tours that brought American and Japanese people together.

In 1951, Tsuneo Harada became an advisor to the Yomiuri Giants, so he remained in Japan after the end of the occupation of Japan in 1952. While working for the Giants, Harada continued to arrange transpacific baseball tours, either by hosting teams put together by O’Doul, or by leading the Giants on tours in the United States, Australia, and the Philippines. Harada encountered some racism during those tours, especially in Australia where many people were strongly anti-Japanese, but Harada was able to diffuse those situations by reminding people that the Giants were merely a baseball team hoping to spread good will.

Harada was also deeply involved with arranging for the “Jackie Robinson of Japan” to join the Giants. The entry of non-white players into professional baseball in
the United States forever changed both the game and the people who watched it. Not unsurprisingly, race played a role in the changing face of baseball in Japan as well.

Wally Yonamine was a Japanese-American from Hawaii. He joined the Army just months before World War II was over, so he fortunately was never involved in any combat missions. He would have joined the 442nd Regimental Combat Team made up of other Japanese-American soldiers, which became the most decorated military unit of its size by the end of the war. After his discharge, a shoulder injury ended a very brief career in professional football as a member of the San Francisco 49ers. Following his release from the 49ers, Yonamine returned to Hawaii and joined a local semi-pro baseball league while working at a sporting goods store. Here his story intersects with that of the San Francisco Seals.

When the Seals had stopped in Hawaii on their way back from their successful 1949 tour of Japan, O’Doul sought a meeting with Yonamine. “Somebody must’ve told him I was a pretty good ballplayer” Yonamine would remember, as he was invited to try out for the Seals. Yonamine played well enough at spring training to join the Seals’ affiliated team in Salt Lake City, where he played for a year. He performed well enough there to be called up to the Seals for the next season, but O’Doul instead suggested that Yonamine play professionally in Japan. Yonamine was a talented hitter and fast runner but his bad shoulder made him a weak thrower. Despite excelling in Salt Lake City, he was seen as a fringe prospect who was unlikely to excel at the highest levels even if he managed to catch on with a team. O’Doul was always eager to help the Japanese game,
and thought Yonamine’s baseball style to be a better fit for the Japanese league.\textsuperscript{13} When Yonamine agreed, O’Doul and Harada started to make the arrangements.

There were other foreigners, or “\textit{gaijin}”, already in the NPB, but these people were primarily Chinese or Koreans who spoke Japanese and could pass for being Japanese.\textsuperscript{14} There were also Japanese-Americans who moved back to Japan after being prominent players in the professional league before and during the early part of World War II. The Giants even featured a pitcher named Victor Starffin, the son of Russian refugees who were given amnesty in Japan after the Bolshevik Revolution.\textsuperscript{15} Starffin was forced to adopt a Japanese name and was interned near the end of the war. Despite being a tall, Caucasian man, he was one of the Giants’ stars during its first years as an organization. Starffin was also a player in the NPB until he retired in 1955. Either because the other foreign ballplayers had spoken Japanese or assimilated themselves into Japanese society, or because Yonamine was the first player in Japan who had prior experience playing in America, Yonamine was widely considered to be the league’s first foreigner when he joined the Giants before the occupation was over in 1951.\textsuperscript{16}

The significance of an American joining the Japanese league was not lost on SCAP, who had vetted Yonamine before he could play his first game.\textsuperscript{17} SCAP officials wanted to make sure that the first American would be a good ambassador for the United States. They wanted to ensure that he would be suited to face the unique pressures and challenges they assumed would be a part of being the first foreign player. By this point in the occupation, however, MacArthur had been replaced by General Matthew B. Ridgway, and baseball was a much lower priority.\textsuperscript{18} With the Korean War occupying
most of SCAP’s attention, Yonamine was stuck in limbo in Tokyo awaiting permission to play. Marquat met with Japanese baseball officials to discuss Yonamine months after he arrived in Japan, but Marquat agreed that as an ethnically Japanese, young, talented and humble man, Yonamine was the ideal candidate for the role.\(^{19}\) Yonamine’s career with the Giants began on June 19, 1951.\(^{20}\)

Marquat may not have been right to think that a Japanese-American person was better suited to be the first American player in the NPB after the war. Yonamine faced discrimination not just because he was an American, but also because he was a Japanese-American, meaning that in the eyes of many Japanese people his family had betrayed their home country. Yonamine essentially represented a group of traitors. As a result he was the target of insults and trash hurled at him during his first games.\(^{21}\)

At least initially, O’Doul was also wrong about Yonamine’s playing style being a good fit in Japan. In fact, Yonamine’s aggressiveness on the field shocked many Japanese.\(^{22}\) He would slide into second basemen to breakup double plays, and crash into catchers in close calls at home plate in the hope they would drop the ball. Not only was he thought to be too aggressive, he was also thought to be tricky. He was the first to use the “drag-bunt” in Japan, which differs from the “sacrifice-bunt” in that it is more deceptive and is intended to get a hit instead of advancing a runner already on base. Yonamine even argued with umpires, which was still taboo in the NPB, although Japanese fans had seen this bad behavior before when Major Leaguers toured. Crowds were initially appalled by his tactics, but those same tactics were soon adopted by other players.\(^{23}\)
Off the field, Yonamine’s soft spoken manner contrasted greatly with his play on the field. As word of this spread, people’s perceptions of Yonamine began to improve. He quickly became an attraction for Giants fans and turned out to be one of their best players. He further ingratiated himself with fans, as Yonamine was happy to sign autographs whenever possible, unlike most all of the other popular players on the Giants. Japanese baseball’s eventual home run king Sadaharu Oh often waited outside Giants practices as a child in the hope of getting an autograph but was constantly ignored until Yonamine happily obliged Oh’s request. Oh never forgot that moment, and he regularly made time to sign autographs himself during his long and storied career.

Although Yonamine constantly lead his team, and sometimes even the league, in several batting statistics, the fans did not vote him to the All-Star game for the first few years of his career. He was instead repeatedly selected to be on the team as a substitute by the Manager. He eventually won over the fans completely in 1954 when he and other Japanese-Americans were voted to play in the All-Star game for the first time. In 1956, Yonamine led all players in votes. In 1957, Japanese sportswriters finally recognized Yonamine’s talents by naming him the league’s most valuable player. Based on his statistics, had Yonamine been fully racially Japanese, most observers agree he would have been named MVP numerous times by then.

Despite never fully grasping the language, at some point during Yonamine’s career he started to be seen as just another Giant. He was no longer constantly in the headlines; his presence in the locker room had been largely accepted by his teammates by the end of his first year. His assimilation into Japanese culture was most apparent when
he was the only American who did not count towards the three-foreigner limit the NPB imposed on its teams ahead of the 1955 season. His curious exemption was apparently justified because he was the first foreigner to play in the NPB. Yonamine had come a long way from being counted as the first foreigner in the league to not being counted as a foreigner at all. Perhaps his story says more about the construct of race than it does about baseball, but there is little denying he holds an important place in the larger story of how baseball both reflects and plays a transformative role in many historical shifts in US-Japanese relations.

Many other American players joined the NPB teams after Yonamine’s first season. Most of the first Americans to play professionally in Japan were Japanese-Americans, but there were players from other races as well, including numerous African-Americans who were popular and well received by the Japanese public.

Inevitably, Yonamine’s story of breaking the race barrier in Japan draws comparisons with that of Jackie Robinson in the American Major Leagues. Yonamine always played down the comparisons to Robinson that were often made in the American press. Yonamine was aware that he did not face the nearly same degree of hatred or discrimination. Still, he understood the parallels, particularly that like Robinson, he knew that playing poorly could keep the league closed to people like him. Each of the over 700 Americans to play in the NPB since 1950, owe their careers in Japanese baseball in part to Yonamine for breaking down racial barriers and prejudices over sixty years ago.
Breaking Racial Barriers 2: Masanori Murakami

There is, naturally, a counterpoint to Yonamine’s experience in Japan. In 1964, Masanori Murakami became the first Japanese to play in the American Major League. Unlike Yonamine who opened the NPB to other American ballplayers, however, Murakami’s experience made playing in the Major Leagues more difficult for Japanese players. Instead of becoming a symbol of peace, friendship, or of heralding a new era in baseball, Murakami inadvertently caused friction and animosity between the two leagues that still occasionally resurfaces today.

In 1964, the Nankai Hawks arranged for Murakami and another Hawks prospect to join the San Francisco Giants’ minor league affiliate in Fresno for one season. As a part of the agreement, the Giants had the right to purchase either contract for $10,000 if the players made the Giants’ roster. The two Hawks prospects were not considered talented enough to make the Hawks’ roster, so team officials gave little thought to the option clause.

Much to the Hawks’ surprise, however, Murakami excelled during his year in Fresno and the Giants promoted to Murakami to their roster late in the season. The Giants signed Murakami to a Major League contract, sent the Hawks the agreed amount of $10,000, and considered the matter to be over. As far as the San Francisco team was concerned, Murakami was now a Giant. Murakami’s parents, the Japanese press, and the Hawks all begged to differ. During the offseason they urged Murakami to stay in Japan to uphold his duty to his family, team, and country. Murakami was torn between his
relationships at home and his ambitions as an athlete to play in the Major Leagues. Eventually, he signed a contract with the Hawks.39

The Hawks’ new contract with Murakami violated the Major League’s hallowed reserve clause, and Major League officials were enraged.40 The language in the agreement between the Hawks and Giants was clear, as was Murakami’s contract with the Giants, so the Hawks’ disregard for both agreements confused and offended Giants officials.41 To the Hawks, being forced to abide by a clause that they never imagined would apply went against the spirit of the overall agreement.42 In the Hawks’ defense, it is worth noting that, generally speaking, Japanese businesses rely less on written contracts than American businesses. Verbal agreements on transactions that involved millions of dollars were regularly made in Japan during the 1960s.43 Therefore, from the Japanese perspective, the written word on a contract was less important than the two sides understanding of the agreement. Just as the Giants were perplexed by the Hawks disregard for the written agreement, the Hawks were confused by the Giants’ insistence upon it.44

Ford Frick, the commissioner of the Major Leagues at the time, demanded that the Hawks send Murakami to San Francisco or he would prevent the Pittsburgh Pirates from touring Japan as planned the following fall.45 The Hawks now clearly entered the realm of disingenuity. They argued that Murakami’s signatures were forgeries, or, inconsistently, that they thought the $10,000 they received from the Giants was a gift of gratitude for loaning them Murakami.46 Frick quickly rejected these excuses. Eventually
NPB officials came up with a compromise that sent Murakami to San Francisco but only for the 1965 season.\textsuperscript{47} Murakami played well for San Francisco and enjoyed being a Major Leaguer. He would have liked to stay, but out of loyalty to his family and team, Murakami made little objection when he had to go back to Japan for the 1966 season.\textsuperscript{48} Among other things, being back in Japan meant being used more regularly by the manager, and having to exert himself much more strenuously during practice. The Hawks pitching coach tinkered with Murakami’s throwing form despite Murakami’s success in the Major Leagues.\textsuperscript{49} The new form and overuse prevented Murakami from ever regaining the same successes he achieved in the United States. In the end, Murakami was only an average pitcher in Japan.

All parties involved were frustrated by this experience. Murakami regretted not standing stronger against familial and social pressures to pursue his professional goal of playing in the Major League.\textsuperscript{50} After the ordeal, the NPB strengthened its reserve clause so teams had more rights over players and rosters. They also came to an agreement with the Major Leagues in 1967 that made signing with a Major League team more difficult for Japanese players. Defecting to the Major Leagues became a social and professional taboo that wouldn’t be challenged for almost three decades after Murakami’s time in the Major Leagues.

**American Baseball Players in Postwar Japan**

The commissioner of the NPB instituted a new rule in 1955 that limited each team to a maximum of three foreign players per roster.\textsuperscript{51} The rule was a response to a growing
concern that the number of foreigners playing in the NPB could do damage to its domestic pool of talent by cutting down on the opportunity for Japanese players to break into the top league. Japanese baseball officials were also worried that a league filled with foreign players and few local heroes would weaken the public’s interest. The limit on foreigners has been expanded to six, but the rule still stands to this day.

Despite the rule, Americans have continued to create transpacific friendships by playing in the NPB. For better or for worse, as some of the most recognizable foreigners in Japan, American baseball players in the NPB play a large role in shaping people’s perceptions of the United States. Also for better or for worse, American players have proven through the years that baseball talent alone is not enough to make one a successful baseball player in Japan. Indeed, to be successful in Japanese baseball, players need to be able to adapt to Japanese society as well. The many American players who have clashed with Japanese society or have offended yakyu sensibilities have served to affirm negative perceptions and stereotypes that Japanese people often hold of Americans, namely that they are arrogant, lazy, and poor losers.

Playing in the NPB as an American tests the player’s ability to adapt to a new culture. Most Americans who played in Japan were Major Leaguers looking for a few more paychecks before their playing careers were over, or younger Minor League players who could not quite make a Major League roster. As the NPB is not as competitive a league as the Major Leagues, all Americans who signed to play in the NPB theoretically have more than enough talent to excel in it. Yet only about half the Americans who have played in the NPB have been considered successful. In recent years, Japanese teams
have been getting savvier about what kind of attributes to look for when recruiting foreigners to play in the NPB. The changes in recruiting is reflected in the increasing number of Latino baseball players in the NPB, who now make up over 40% of the foreigners in the league. Teams have also learned from many decades of experience how to avoid the many cultural clashes that Robert Whiting detailed in his book *You Gotta Have Wa*.

Despite the better selection that Japanese teams seem to be able to make in recent times, American players hold most of the NPB’s records for bad behavior such as game ejections or the number of times a player has destroyed his equipment. Sports journals take every opportunity to feature a player misbehaving on its front pages, and coverage of American players has often been especially critical. American players were so regularly reprimanded by their team that the Giants issued a set of rules that became known in the press as the “Gaijin Ten Commandments” (*gaijin* is a Japanese term for “foreigner”). They were: 1. Obey all orders issued by the manager. 2. Do not criticize the strategy of the manager. 3. Take good care of your uniform. 4. Do not scream and yell in the dugout or destroy objects in the clubhouse. 5. Do not reveal team secrets to other foreign players. 6. Do not severely tease your teammates. 7. In the event of injury, follow the treatment prescribed by the team. 8. Be on time. 9. Do not return home during the season. 10. Do not disturb the harmony of the team.

In addition to the NPB, Major League tours continued in Japan after the occupation was over. For example, the great Mickey Mantle and the legendary New York Yankees toured Japan in 1955, where they achieved a record of 15-0-1. That one tie
was one of the most memorable games in the history of Japanese sports. Pitching for Japan was one of its most legendary pitchers, Masaichi Kaneda. Kaneda won over 400 games as a pitcher and had a lengthy career as a manager after his playing days were over. Just as Eiji Sawamura became a legend to Japanese fans by striking out four American All-Stars in succession, Kaneda cemented his legacy by striking out Mickey Mantle four times in that game. Kaneda also matched Yankee legend Whitey Ford as the two starting pitchers only allowed one run apiece. What the fans at the game did not know was that Mantle and his teammates were getting heavily inebriated almost every night of their tour. Mantle’s teammates remember that on the morning of Kaneda’s famous game, Mantle was still in the bar at sunrise and went directly to the stadium. Needless to say, Mantle was not in prime condition to play that day. Although that impacted the actual game, it has had little effect on how that game is remembered.

By the 1980s, Japan’s economy emerged as one of the world’s largest. Trade issues began to mar Japan’s relationship with the United States. President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone may have been close friends, but they were the exception during a time many elected officials and bureaucrats were known to dislike each other. One notorious incident that evidences this enmity involved nine US Congressmen, who in 1987 smashed Toshiba radios with sledgehammers at a press conference on Capitol Hill. They were protesting Toshiba’s sale of equipment used to build submarine motors to the Soviet Union. On the other hand, no Congressman destroyed Norwegian goods when a Norwegian company committed a similar offense. The disparity in these responses to similar situations further raised suspicions in Japan.
that the nine Congressmen were anti-Japanese. Although the scene was not widely shown in American news, it was repeatedly broadcast on Japan’s airwaves as a symbol of heightening tensions.64

Just as US-Japanese relations were trending downwards, both the experiences of American ballplayers in the NPB and the Japanese fans’ perceptions of them were at their lowest point in 1984.65 That year three Americans left their teams mid-season, prompting the sports press to admonish them in racially charged articles. Nikkan Sports was especially critical: “All of these men are Anglo-Saxons, a class of people that has too much pride… the history of mankind shows us that human beings with the sense of being chosen people will eventually act in a willful and egotistical manner.”66

Of course, there were numerous Americans who were extremely popular as well. Yet even the good will generated by popular players could quickly disappear. One example of this was Charlie Manuel. Between his time as a player and his time as a manager in the Major Leagues, Manuel starred in the NPB from 1976 to 1981. At the peak of his popularity, Manuel was one of the greatest ambassadors for the United States. He was seen as an American with Japanese values. Yet, less than one year later, he personified American laziness and arrogance. His story is very telling of Japanese perceptions at the time.

Foreigners had an especially hard time winning the MVP award when Manuel was in the league. Though the NPB annually crowns one player each from the Central League and the Pacific League as the year’s MVPs, by the time Manuel joined the league, Yonamine and Joe Stanka were the only Americans to have ever won the award.
In 1978, Manuel’s statistics warranted that he should have received strong consideration for the award until he was traded from one league to the other. Manuel and his American compatriots were suspicious of the trade as it conveniently nullified his eligibility for MVP. As a result of the trade, he joined the Kintetsu Buffaloes, a team that continued Japanese baseball’s connection with railroad companies into the modern era. Manuel began the 1979 season by hitting 24 home runs in the first eight weeks. Then, during one game against the Lotte Orions, veteran pitcher Soroku Yagisawa threw a fastball that broke Manuel’s jaw in six places.

Manuel was convinced that the pitch was purposely aimed at his head. Yagisawa was a veteran pitcher known for having pinpoint control. Manuel, meanwhile, was a tall player who stood away from the plate. Manuel believed that because throwing at the batter occurs more often in the United States, Japanese pitchers thought it was okay to aim at American batters in Japan. On the other hand, most of the Japanese press took little interest in the event and passed it off as an unfortunate accident. Far more notable than the common professional hazard of getting hit by a pitch was Manuel’s incredibly fast return to the game. Manuel ignored his doctors’ warnings that getting hit in the face another time could prevent him from ever eating normally again. Armed with a new face-guard, Manuel was soon back in uniform after his six-week stay in the hospital.

Manuel’s quick return to the field showed tremendous “guts” and fighting spirit, the main qualities that the ideal Japanese baseball player embodies. Manuel had no feeling in his mouth, causing him to drool unknowingly and have trouble eating. Manuel further showed his devotion to the team and disregard for his face when he started to play
without the face-guard because it obscured his vision. By the end of the season, Manuel had amassed 37 home runs and led his team to the pennant. That year, having won over the hearts of Japanese fans and sportswriters alike, Manuel became the third American player to win an MVP award.74

The public’s love affair with Manuel would only last until the following June, however, when in the middle of the season, Manuel took one week off to attend his son’s high school graduation.75 The fact that Manuel had specifically negotiated the week off in his contract barely mattered to his team’s officials, the press, or the fans, who were all upset because Manuel prioritized his personal concerns over that of his team. Team officials were surprised that Manuel did not honor the spirit of the contract, which to them meant that Manuel would stay if the Buffaloes were in contention for the league championship.76 Manuel’s behavior was a clear departure from Yonamine’s, who played in games while his wife was giving birth. Manuel hit 11 more home runs in 1980 than in his MVP season, and he led the Buffaloes to the pennant again. In the Japanese public’s eye, however, and in the minds of those who voted for the MVP, all of the fighting spirit Manuel displayed the previous season had vanished. In the end, the 1980 MVP was awarded to another player.77 After the season, the Buffaloes refused to give Manuel the raise he thought he deserved. When the Buffaloes unceremoniously released Manuel, he returned to his original NPB team for one last year before retiring to pursue a career as a manager in the Major Leagues. Neither sportswriters nor Buffaloes fans ever really forgave Manuel for his week off.78
Manuel’s experience in Japan suggests how foreign players at the time were only popular to the extent that they displayed Japanese qualities to the fans. For foreigners, excelling at the sport was not enough to win fans over. They also had to prove they were full of guts and fighting spirit. Fans adored the players that managed to do so as much as they vilified the ones that did not.

No matter how popular a foreign player became to the public or in the clubhouse, however, Japanese players and coaches were especially upset when *gaijin* broke statistical records held by Japanese players. That is a reality that Japanese fans have had to reconcile numerous times over the course of the NPB’s history, as *gaijin* players now hold such records as highest batting average in a season, in a career, and most home runs in a season. Today, the Japanese public’s distaste of foreigners holding NPB records has dissipated greatly. One can point to different explanations for this. The change in attitude may simply be because the Japanese have become accustomed to foreigners outperforming Japanese players. A more likely explanation that deserves some attention is that the change in attitudes is mainly due to the way Japanese players in the Major Leagues are treated by American fans.

**Randy Bass, Japanese Records, and Social Values**

As a tall, blond, bearded man, Randy Bass looked the part of American ballplayer. Before dominating the NPB in the 1980s, he was excellent minor league player who could not replicate his success at the major league level. Instead, he mostly warmed the bench for numerous teams. Though he was just a fringe player in the United States, Bass, at the age of 28, became a star in Japan.
In the 1983 and 1984 seasons, his first two as a Hanshin Tiger, Bass averaged a very respectable total of 31 home runs per year.\textsuperscript{80} In the 1985 season, he hit his 30th home run before the All-Star break, putting him well ahead of pace to break the beloved Sadaharu Oh’s record of 55 in a single season. Bass reached 54 home runs with two games left to play. The final series of the season came against the Giants, who happened to be managed by Oh. Bass had opportunities to tie Oh in the second to last game of the season, but did not manage to hit the ball out the park. In the last game, Giants pitchers never gave Bass a chance to tie the record by refusing to throw anything near the plate. One time the pitcher threw a curveball just a little too close to Bass. Bass somehow managed to get a bloop single off a wild swing. He walked every other time he went to bat that game.

One of Bass’s own teammates even said that he had hoped Bass would not break the record.\textsuperscript{81} While Bass was angry during the last game, he knew how many Japanese people would have reacted if he broke the record, so he ultimately took the experience in stride. Bass joked that his visa may have been revoked had he surpassed Oh’s total.\textsuperscript{82} This was neither the first or last time Japanese pitchers were accused of keeping a gaijin from breaking one of their countrymen’s records. Bass’s contemporary Tony Solaita experienced the same treatment from Japanese pitchers when he was vying for the most home runs in the 1982 season.\textsuperscript{83}

The enormity of Bass’s popularity was fleeting just as it had been for Manuel and other gaijin. Before the 1986 season, Bass signed a three-year contract that was worth approximately $500,000 per year. It also included a stipulation to allow Bass to arrive at
spring training two weeks after other players. The money and special treatment written into the contract became the subjects of constant criticism from the press, who suddenly found other things about Bass’s game that was not to their liking as well. For example, Bass owned an Apple computer. Supposedly no serious baseball player would fiddle with such a thing because it would distract them from the game. Bass was also critical of his coach in a controversial interview, which further intensified the ire of the press.

As upset as the press was over Bass’s behavior off the field, they were even more concerned about his superlative performance on the field. Despite a slow start to the 1986 season, Bass’s batting average soared above .400 from June until September. Japan’s all time record for highest average in a season was .383. Baseball publications were littered with articles on how to stop Bass, or on what a shame it would be if Bass finished the season above .400. Upset by how his season was being portrayed, Bass decided late that summer that he would stop playing if his average dipped to .384. If it ever reached .382, Bass knew he would never see a hittable pitch for the rest of the season to keep him from raising it back above the record level. He ended the season at .389, and won his second consecutive the Triple-Crown (for having the most home runs, most RBIs and highest batting average in a season), but hardly anyone noticed. The press barely wrote about it. Robert Whiting called it the least covered record-breaking achievement in the history of the NPB. One can only imagine how differently the country and press would have reacted had Bass been Japanese.

Bass’s relationship with Japan remained testy during the following seasons. During the spring of the following year, another leading player on the Tigers named
Masayuki Kakefu was charged with drinking and driving. The press and fans were incensed, and controversy surrounded the Tigers star. Soon after, Bass was suspiciously arrested by the police for a mild speeding infraction and paraded in front of the press who had somehow managed to gather at the police station before Bass was taken there. Bass had little doubt that he was set up to take some of the heat off of Kakefu.

Unfortunately for Bass, his portrayal by the press became the least of his worries in the 1988 season, when his son was diagnosed with a brain tumor. The Tigers gave Bass permission to accompany his son back to the United States for treatment. The Tigers then allowed Bass to extend his leave from one month to two. Many wrote Bass letters of encouragement and were greatly sympathetic for what his family was going through. On the other hand, Tigers fans pressured the organization to do something about the team’s poor standings while their best player was gone. Incredibly, the Tigers released Bass and signed another *gaijin*, even though they could have signed another *gaijin* and kept Bass on the inactive list instead.

Pressure from the fans was not the only reason why Bass was released. His agreement with the Tigers included medical expenses for his family, but the Tigers had never bothered to buy insurance. Bass’s son’s radiation treatments were becoming too expensive for Hanshin’s business executives to bear.88

Bass filed a civil suit to recuperate the money he was still owed. The Tiger’s Managing Director, Shingo Furuya, was in charge of negotiating with Bass to settle the suit. Bass was not willing to negotiate, however, and the difference between Japanese and American perspectives on contracts again came to the forefront. For Bass, the Tigers
were morally obligated to pay him the full amount of the contract they agreed to. That seems perfectly reasonable to a Westerner, but Hanshin officials put enormous pressure on Furuya to convince Bass to take less. After all, Bass could have easily found a team to hire him for the 1989 season, so a settlement for less than the full amount was seen as perfectly reasonable by Hanshin officials. Furuya’s inability convince Bass to accept a settlement was such an insurmountable failure to Hanshin that it most likely contributed to Furuya’s decision to take his own life. Bass was again depicted as the villain. Some in the press surmised if only Bass had been more understanding of Japanese culture, he would have accepted the settlement (or stayed with his team to begin with), and Furuya would still be alive.89

Despite Bass’s turbulent years as a Hanshin Tiger and his poor relationship with fans, many fans, particularly younger fans, empathetically remember him fondly. Bass’s supporters especially respected his decision to risk his job in order to stick by his family. Surveys showed that Japanese youth liked their possessions more than their own fathers, making many wonder if Japanese families should learn from Bass’s example and reexamine their priorities. Bass’s greatest legacy in Japan may not be his play on the field but his reminder to Japanese people that there are more important things in life than one’s profession.

**Nomo, Ichiro, and Changing Japanese Perceptions**

In 1990, a Japanese All-Star team defeated a Major League All-Star team four games in a row to open that year’s tour. The Americans claimed they lost because were taking it easy while on vacation. That may have been a reasonable excuse had it not been
for the impressive pitching of the Japanese team led by Hideo Nomo. During that series, Nomo was pulled aside by one of the best pitchers in Major League history, Randy Johnson, who told Nomo that he should be pitching in the United States. Nomo agreed, he had been dreaming of playing in America for years. Having won the MVP award, the Sawamura award (for best pitcher of the year), and the Rookie of the Year award that year, Nomo had little left to prove in Japan by the end of his first season.

Despite having an abundance of talent, Nomo feared he would never play in the Major Leagues. As a member of the Buffaloes, he could not become a free agent until he was a 10 year veteran. In addition, in the 1994 season, he was being used so often by his manager that he was seriously concerned of recurring injuries. Nomo’s previous manager had allowed Nomo to base his schedule on a book written by Major League Hall of Famer Nolan Ryan, which prescribed lifting weights rather than throwing pitches between starts. Nomo’s new manager thought this behavior was appalling. He tried to inject more Japanese fighting spirit into Nomo by forcing him to complete games in which Nomo struggled. This led to multiple games in which Nomo threw over 180 pitches. Ryan kept his limit to about 120.

Nomo’s American teammates were not surprised when he required surgery in the 1994 offseason after his fourth year with the Buffaloes. This elevated Nomo’s fear that no Major League team would sign him as an old, battered player. Even if he managed to stay healthy, Major League teams would have concerns about the incredibly high number of pitches Nomo would have thrown over ten years in the NPB. Nomo thought that if he was ever going to realize his dream of being a Major Leaguer, he needed to find a way to
play in the United States before he became a free agent. He believed there was no way he would be healthy enough to do so if he remained in the NPB.

Fear of injury and overuse were not the only reasons why he wanted to leave Japan. He disliked the culture of Japanese baseball as well. Nomo despised the long practices, frequent and repetitive meetings, and the overall business of Japanese baseball. For example, in one of Nomo’s All-Star appearances, he wore Nike brand shoes instead of Mizuno, who sponsored the league and the Buffaloes. This led to fines and arguments with officials. Nomo was increasingly frustrated. As an adult, he believed he should be allowed to pick his own shoes. The shoe incident also underscored Nomo’s inclination to emphasize his individuality, which is a rarity in Japan. The younger generation of Buffaloes fans were particularly big fans of his rebellious, yet reserved personality.

At some point near the time Nomo had surgery done to his shoulder, he met with a Japanese-American sports agent named Don Nomura. Nomura had been discretely inquiring about potentially gaining as a client a Japanese player who might want to test himself in the Major Leagues. Similarly, Nomo had asked a few people for advice on how to go the United States. Nomura and another American sports agent named Arn Tellem discovered a loophole in the NPB’s rules regarding voluntary retirement. In the Major Leagues, a retired player who wishes to be reinstated must play for the team from which he retired. In Japan, on the other hand, the same was only true if the player remained in Japan.
Knowing that Buffaloes officials would never agree to it, Nomo demanded a three-year contract worth three million dollars per year. When team officials predictably cited Nomo’s remaining five-year commitment to the Buffaloes and declined, Nomo offered to retire. Furious and incredulous, the Buffaloes team President dared Nomo to sign a letter of resignation during a negotiation. Nomo readily complied. By the beginning of the 1995 season, the voluntary retirement loophole was closed but not before Nomo became a Los Angeles Dodger.

At first, Nomo seemed to have angered everyone, even his own father.\textsuperscript{101} Japanese culture can be highly insular in some ways, one including an aversion to living abroad. For a Japanese person who can make a good living in Japan, living abroad is something akin to rejection of Japanese society.\textsuperscript{102} The press lambasted him for abandoning his family, team, and country. Buffaloes officials pled with Nomo to think of his career. Nomo replied his career was precisely the reason why he was leaving.\textsuperscript{103}

Nomo was able to rest his arm regularly with the Dodgers. He was also kept to a reasonable pitch count. Having recovered fully from his shoulder injury, Nomo’s pitches regained their famous speed, movement, and deception. Nomo dominated opponents so thoroughly that he set new records that were previously held by the great Sandy Koufax, and others.\textsuperscript{104} Despite the occasional hints of xenophobia in letters he received or by chants of “U-S-A!”, he instantly became a sensation in the Major Leagues. “Nomomania” had taken over Los Angeles. Fans adoringly sang his name in each of his home games. Early in his first season, attendance at the Dodgers home games regularly reached at least 50,000 when he was slated to pitch.\textsuperscript{105} On average, the Dodgers sold 4% more tickets to
Nomo’s games than they did for the rest of the rest of their schedule. Nomo was given the privilege of starting the All-Star game, a rarity for rookies. By the end of his first season, he led the league in strike-outs and his performance for the year was recognized when he won the Rookie of the Year award.\textsuperscript{106}

Back at home, the Japanese fans and press quickly reversed their view of Nomo. Nomo was notoriously finicky with the press, but members of the Japanese media showed up in throngs at spring training.\textsuperscript{107} Some Japanese television channels switched back and forth between scheduled programming and live broadcasts of Dodgers games depending on whether Nomo was on the pitcher’s mound.\textsuperscript{108} Neither the game itself nor Nomo’s teammates were of concern; only Nomo’s performance interested the Japanese television audience. He was an even bigger star in Japan than he was in the United States.

News reports of Nomo’s successes in the Major Leagues were welcome distractions from what had otherwise been a trying year in Japan.\textsuperscript{109} In January 1995, a massive earthquake wreaked havoc on Kobe. Two months later a religious cult attacked Tokyo’s subway system with sarin gas. Trade issues with the United States lingered, and Japan’s economy was still reeling from the 1992 crisis.

In Japan, Nomo was the symbolic successor of other Japanese successes in the face of foreign competition. He rose to prominence at a time when some of Japan’s vaunted industries were struggling. Similar to the automobile or electronics industries, Nomo broke through what once seemed an unsurpassable barrier by succeeding in the United States. Just as Ichiko’s players had done over a century prior to Nomo’s debut as a Dodger, Nomo made his country proud and confident in themselves.
By having a long and successful career in the Major Leagues, Nomo elevated the NPB’s reputation in both Japan and America. Major League scouts no longer saw the NPB as little more than a second-class league, and teams began to search for the next Nomo.110 Hideki Irabu and American Alfonso Soriano managed to find their ways from NPB clubs to Major League rosters before the NPB set up a “posting” system, which coordinated monetary bids from Major League teams for the right to negotiate a contract with players who were deemed eligible by their respective NPB team.111 That is the system through which other Major League stars began to arrive in the United States in the late 1990s and 2000s.

Japanese fans were especially proud of their countryman when he won the Major League’s MVP award.

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi was one of the many Japanese people who followed Ichiro’s career in the United States. He said Suzuki made him proud to be Japanese.112 Suzuki validated Japan’s national ego even more than Nomo did. Howard French, the former New York Times bureau chief in Tokyo, wrote that Japan celebrated Ichiro’s success “as a measure of their game’s, and even their nation’s, maturity.”113
American fans impressed Japanese fans by cheering Nomo when he won the Rookie of the Year award or broke records such as most strikeouts in five consecutive games. Yet Nomo never won the MVP award, as Suzuki did in his rookie season. Nomo never struck out the most batters in a season, while Suzuki broke the decades old record for most hits in a season. Instead of being upset that a Japanese man was breaking American records, American fans adored Suzuki and welcomed his achievements with open arms. Some wondered if he could ever hit .400 like the great Ted Williams. Little Leaguers imitated Suzuki’s batting stance. The Mariners began selling “ichi-rolls” of sushi at their games. Broadcasters heaped praise on the man who had taken the Major Leagues by storm.

The influx of NPB players into the Major Leagues has helped the league become extremely popular in Japan. As a result, Japanese people have become more aware of the differences between yakyu and American baseball. More importantly, they have also witnessed how baseball fans treat foreigners in the United States. Some were struck by how welcoming American fans were of foreign players beating their records, and reflected on their own treatment of Solaita, Bass, and others. The more Japanese players succeeded in the Major Leagues, the more perceptions of gaijin players softened in Japan.

In the years following Nomo and Suzuki’s departures from the NPB, the more welcoming attitude toward gaijin players became increasingly apparent each time a gaijin neared Sadaharu Oh’s record for most home runs. The change in Japanese perspectives on gaijins breaking Japanese records was not a linear or smooth process, however, and a
few players experienced the same treatment from pitchers that Bass or Solaita had years earlier.

Ultimately, two *gaijin* players tied Oh’s record. In 2001 Karl “Tuffy” Rhodes, and in 2002 Alex Cabrera both hit 55 home runs. Although they also were denied hittable pitches as they neared the end of the season, there was noticeably less anxiety among the press in their pursuits of the record.\(^{116}\) That was partly due to the fact there was little coverage of either’s season, but also because Japanese fans were in the midst of changing their attitude towards *gaijin* players.\(^ {117}\) French writes that the “longtime observers of baseball here say the contrast between Japanese appreciation for Suzuki’s achievements and Rhodes's record-setting run is an unsightly reminder that for all the talk of internationalization of the game, exclusionary provincialism still runs deep in Japanese baseball.”\(^ {118}\) Attitudes were yet to fully change, but Japanese people were becoming more aware of the contrast between the way they treat *gaijin* and the way Japanese stars were treated in the United States. Some veterans of Japanese baseball noted that, despite general ambivalence towards *gaijin* tying Oh’s record, Japanese fans seemed much calmer about the possibility than they had been in years past.\(^ {119}\)

The way Suzuki was treated by fans and portrayed in the press during the 2004 season was particularly striking to Japanese fans. The record for most hits in a single season until that year had been set at 257 by George Sisler in 1920, making it one of the Major League’s most unbreakable records. Before Suzuki, Wade Boggs and Darin Erstad were the only two players to reach as many as 240 hits in a season since 1930.\(^ {120}\) Suzuki comfortably broke Sisler’s record with 262 in 2004. Unlike Rhodes or Cabrera, Suzuki
was celebrated by fans and media alike. Many Japanese fans were perplexed by this, as they had expected the history of the two nations to lead to some denigration of the achievement in the US. 121

Another significant achievement by a Japanese player in the Major League was Hideki Matsui’s 2009 World Series MVP award. Japanese fans were as delighted by Matsui’s performance as they were for the recognition he received. 122 As a member of the legendary New York Yankees, his performance in the World Series felt even more historic. Many Yankees have won the World Series but only the most iconic Yankees have won the World Series MVP award. Matsui thus became a member of a distinguished group of ballplayers that included other Yankee greats like Whitey Ford and Derek Jeter. Jeter’s references to Matsui as one of his favorite teammates pleased many Japanese fans. 123 Jeter’s comments were in stark contrast with what many Japanese players had to say about their gaijin teammates.

The 2013 NPB season was notable and controversial for two reasons. First, the league approved a change in the construction of the baseball it used in official games. In part, this contributed to a significant rise in the overall number of home runs hit league-wide. 124 Second, a foreign player, Wladimir Balentien, hit 60 home runs, finally breaking the great Oh’s long-standing record in this category. Naturally, as Balentien neared the record, there were arguments about whether this was due to the new ball. That said, Balentien hit 19 more home runs than the batter who finished second that year. 125 Moreover, attitudes had softened since Rhodes and Cabrera tied Oh’s mark over a decade earlier. Unlike Rhodes and Cabrera’s experiences, Balentien was celebrated by his team
and the record was covered positively by the press. Apparently, now that Japanese players were winning MVP awards in the Major Leagues, Japanese fans were finally becoming less protective of their own league’s records. The success of Japanese players in the Major Leagues helped make the Japanese proud of their national identity, but it also played a significant role in reducing Japanese xenophobia.

Japanese society in general has been gradually opening itself more to foreigners. One poll taken every five years by the Institute of Statistical Mathematics asks Japanese people whether they would approve or disapprove of their child marrying a foreigner. In 1988, 29% said they would approve while 36% said they would disapprove. With each poll, the percentage of those who approved increased and the percentage of those who disapproved decreased. By 2008, 51% approved while only 20% disapproved. The number who had said that it depended on other circumstances fluctuated between 26% and 31%. Of course, the changing perception of gaijin ballplayers was not the only factor behind these numbers. It is hard to pinpoint what exactly is behind those numbers. Still, considering the popularity of baseball and the millions of Japanese people who follow it closely, it is likely that baseball contributed to why Japanese society has gradually become more open to foreigners.

**American Managers in the NPB**

Japanese baseball players have long relied on learning both the basics and the subtleties of the game from American experts. American baseball players have a long history of coaching in Japan. In addition to teaching Japan’s first baseball players the game, American players often held clinics for eager learners during their tours of Japan.
Managing teams in the NPB, however, has been another matter entirely. Some Japanese-Americans, like Wally Yonamine, had some success leading teams during the 1960s. The more recent history of American managers, on the other hand, is mediocre at best.

The first Caucasian American, and first person with Major League experience to manage in the NPB, was Joe Lutz in 1975. Lutz clashed with his team’s officials for trying to Americanize the team’s culture by reducing practices and changing the players diets. As a result, his managing career in Japan lasted less than a month.\footnote{128} Don Blasingame was the second NPB manager with Major League experience. He led the Hanshin Tigers during the 1979 and 1980 seasons.

Blasingame took over a team that had just finished in last place. In his first year, Blasingame led the Tigers to near the middle of the pack, which was considered to be a remarkable achievement.\footnote{129} The improvements the Tigers made were largely due to the performance of the young players who vastly improved under Blasingame’s tutelage. As a result of his instructions, the players on the team made fewer glaring tactical errors.\footnote{130} His first year was especially successful in terms of both attendance and the team’s popularity. Blasingame’s approval rating among fans polled at 70%.\footnote{131} For fans of the perennially losing club, the Tigers’ 19-6 record against the vaunted Yomiuri Giants was more than enough reason to celebrate.

Fans were especially excited about a rookie named Akinobu Okada, whom the Tigers drafted in the offseason between Blasingame’s two years with the team.\footnote{132} Okada was a collegiate star and an excellent third baseman, a position where the Tigers already had an established All-Star named Masayuki Kakefu.\footnote{133} Many fans had a simple solution,
namely to have Okada play second base. For Blasingame, however, that meant displacing Dave Hilton, an American player the Tigers had just signed to play second base.\textsuperscript{134} Blasingame opened the season with Kakefu at third base and Hilton at second base, which was the conventional move according to American baseball strategy. Okada would have to wait until the veterans showed they could no longer play adequately before getting his chance to play.

Blasingame’s logical and common sense explanations of his starting lineup made little difference to the emotional Tigers fans.\textsuperscript{135} They mercilessly booed Hilton during his at-bats, hindering Hilton’s performance on the field. The press repeatedly asked Blasingame when he was going to insert Okada into the starting lineup, but Blasingame refused to succumb to the fans’ pressure. There was no explanation he could give to satisfy the baffled Japanese.\textsuperscript{136} Many were suspicious of an American conspiracy. For example, one article claimed that Hilton paid Blasingame to secure playing time.\textsuperscript{137} Other press outlets did little to counter that notion despite the complete lack of evidence. Hilton was unable play well in the hateful atmosphere and was eventually benched.

At the end of the 1980 season, Tigers officials broke a promise they made to Blasingame by signing a new player without consulting him.\textsuperscript{138} No such agreement was written into his contract, and Tigers officials apparently interpreted the spirit of their agreement differently than Blasingame. Worried that losing the authority to make roster decisions would undermine his presence in the locker room, Blasingame resigned from the Tigers.\textsuperscript{139} Although 1980 was an especially trying year for Blasingame, later in life, he reflected on his time in Japan positively.\textsuperscript{140}
Japanese baseball fans had not forgotten Blasingame’s difficult season when the Chiba Lotte Marines hired Bobby Valentine in 1995. Valentine faced much of the same resistance to change that Blasingame and Lutz had faced during their careers. His first stint as Manager of the Marines only lasted for one year. Both Blasingame and Valentine were able to achieve success on the field by combining the best of *yakyu* and American baseball. Yet Valentine’s first year in Japan shows how different *yakyu* and baseball remained in the modern era rather than how compatible they were.

Valentine clashed with his coaches as early as spring training. His staff was flustered and confused by Valentine’s schedule, which resembled a Japanese pre-game workout more than Japanese spring training. Like most American ballplayers, Valentine thought that overexerting oneself early in the season led to injuries and poor performance later in the season. The more reasonable way for them to approach spring training was to slowly ease oneself back to mid-season form. This meant plenty of golf and rest in the afternoons.\(^{141}\) This approach was nearly incomprehensible to the Japanese, who were used to practicing for as long as the sun was out.

Valentine clashed with his coaches in other ways as well. To Valentine, baseball is ultimately a game, and games are meant to be fun. Players performed better when they were happy and looked forward to their profession.\(^{142}\) To the Japanese, the word ‘profession’ was taken much more literally. Anything less than full effort at all times was equated with being a poor employee. In addition, Valentine was an improviser, not a planner. He would only hold meetings when he felt they were necessary instead of holding them after nearly every game. This was also considered to be unprofessional.\(^{143}\)
Valentine utilized his players in un-Japanese ways as well. For example, Valentine thought a young second baseman named Koichi Hori had lots of potential but needed regular playing time to get accustomed to professional pitching. When Hori started the season poorly, coaches implored Valentine to send him back to the Minor Leagues. Valentine, however, was a loyal American coach, so he kept playing Hori regularly. Eventually Hori turned things around and became one of the team’s leading players. Hori said that Valentine’s faith in his ability was the reason he became a successful player. This also reflected the popular sentiment among the team’s players.144

Valentine was not only popular, but he was successful. The Marines improved in all facets of the game under Valentine’s leadership. The pitchers’ collective ERA went down from 4.50 to 3.27.145 Batters from the Marines roster placed second, third, and fourth in RBI production that year.146 The team led the league in winning percentage during the second half of the season, resulting in a second place finish, which was the best result in over a decade. Players not only succeeded under Valentine, they enjoyed playing for him. The fans adored Valentine as well. His outgoing personality and transformative baseball mind was unlike anything they had ever seen from a baseball manager.147

Despite the team’s on-field success and Valentine’s popularity with fans and the team’s players, the Marines’ coaches convinced management to fire Valentine. Valentine later said “I was expecting champagne and flowers and they gave me the axe instead.”148 Incredibly, team officials cited Valentine’s emphasis on winning as one of the reasons for his firing. Valentine’s offense was his neglect of the process, which apparently was more
important to the Marines than results. Fans were predictably angry and incredulous. They chanted “Bobby! Bobby! Bobby!” when the new Marines manager was introduced. In a sure sign of change, the press opined that Marines officials were jealous of the credit and praise heaped upon Valentine.

The Marines quickly plummeted back near the bottom of the NPB’s standings in 1996, and remained there until new management invited Valentine back to lead the team again. Valentine had learned from his previous stint as the Marines’ manager to make sure he oversaw major decisions relating to the roster as well as the team’s practices and tactics. He was even given reign over the team’s front office, which he organized to run like a Major League team. With Valentine back at the helm, the Marines started to win again.

By the 2005 season, the Marines were champions. Valentine won numerous awards. He became the first American to win the Shoriki Award, which is named after Yomiuri’s Matustaro Shoriki and is presented to the player or manager who made the biggest contribution to the league. Valentine’s already considerable popularity skyrocketed. A street near the Marines’ stadium was named after him; murals depicting Valentine were constructed at the Marines’ stadium. Spectators at games could enjoy Valentine branded beer, gum, or boxed lunches. He gave lectures at universities and even starred in a music video.

Valentine’s success was largely due to his ability incorporate American perspectives into the NPB while respecting the Japanese traditions. Valentine also made a genuine effort to learn how to speak Japanese, which was appreciated by fans and players.

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alike. He also spoke highly of Japanese baseball, unlike other Americans in previous decades who had been known to complain. Valentine especially ingratiated himself with the fans when he reacted to winning the Japan Series by challenging that year’s World Series winner, the Chicago White Sox, to a true “world series.”

Valentine won by combining American and Japanese baseball. His success showed Japanese fans that the best results come from being open to many ideas, as Valentine obviously was. Although the coaches on his staff in 1995 may disagree, he did not try to impose American style baseball on the Marines. Instead, he recognized the positive aspects of yakyu and tried to supplement its deficiencies. His open appreciation for Japan and its style of play were a large part of the reason why he was so popular.

Alas, nothing good lasts forever. In 2009, Valentine’s contract was over and the Marines declined to extend it. Fans were again incensed over Valentine’s departure. Their anger did not influence the Marines’ decision to release Valentine. Fans cheered and waved goodbye to their beloved manager as Valentine’s plane departed from Tokyo’s Narita airport for the United States.


Ryozo Kato, Japan’s Ambassador to the United States between 2001 and 2008, had been an avid baseball fan since his childhood. He has thrown numerous first pitches at Major League games. Even Kato admits that this was more the result of his assistant’s persistent inquiries than unsolicited invitations from teams. Kato knew the Major Leagues well. Whenever he visited a city with a Major League team, he would ask his assistants to see if there was a game being played. Kato’s belief and justification for
repeatedly seeking diplomatic opportunities at Major League games was that as a representative of Japan, being seen in fun, friendly atmospheres was an important part of being an ambassador.\textsuperscript{161}

Kato viewed his role as ambassador as being akin to that of the second batsmen in a baseball lineup. In this batting order, he would be in position to lay down a sacrifice bunt and put the leadoff hitter (the Prime Minister) in a better position to score. Kato considers having good interpersonal relationships with American officials as having been essential to his job. He has also stated that having something completely detached from the business at hand made ambassadorial goals more achievable. Kato’s love for baseball gave him at least one thing in common with many American officials, so he used it to his advantage.

Kato described this in an interview:

When I was Ambassador, I was lucky in that the [US-Japanese] relationship was so good. Therefore I was one of the top two or three Ambassadors in Washington D.C. in terms of chances or access to the President. I would bring him baseball questions, because baseball talk would make President George Bush happy. He was so fed up with Iraq, with Afghanistan, this, that, bad news. Therefore whenever I met him, he and I would start with baseball. It was on purpose, well it was natural, somewhere between tactical and natural. He was a baseball nut too. (Laughs) You have to be able to be concise and precise when it’s time to be serious, but it’s good to have a moment of laugher and relaxation, and that’s how baseball can be utilized.\textsuperscript{162}

There was a long line of people at President Reagan’s funeral, and the Secretary [of State, Colin Powell] is saying ‘thank you, thank you very much’ to ambassadors from all countries, and they take advantage. ‘Excuse me Secretary, about Kosovo,’ that sort of thing. But I knew that, so when my turn came, I said, ‘Secretary! Thank you very much! I threw the ceremonial first pitch at Yankee Stadium!’ ‘Oh? Did you throw a strike?’ ‘Yeah!’ For me, that sort of thing, it makes it easier to make more serious appointments in the future.\textsuperscript{163}
Baseball was a way for Kato to create bonds with elected officials and bureaucratic elites at the US State Department. He believes this made his job not just more enjoyable but manageable as well. He indirectly used the game as a vehicle through which he advanced Japan’s agenda. Clearly, Kato describes himself as a “baseball maniac,” who benefited from conversations pertaining to baseball to enhance his diplomatic relations.164

Kato firmly believes baseball played a key role in restoring US-Japanese relations after the war. He also believes that present day interactions between the Major Leagues and the NPB helps to maintain those good relations.165 He suggests that the reason why the Seals’ 1949 tour ultimately had a more positive impact on US-Japan relations than Ruth’s 1934 tour was because sports diplomacy cannot be relied on to prevent conflict. Rather, in Kato’s view, baseball is more effective at fostering peace.166 In 1934, Japan and the United States were trending towards conflict, while in 1949, the two countries were headed in the opposite direction. Hence, the Seals tour happened during a time that was much more conducive to sports diplomacy having a real impact.

Today, a visit by a Major League team to Japan no longer garners the same kind of attention from the Japanese public that such visits once did. One can argue that this reflects how normal and positive both baseball tours and US-Japanese relations have become. When Kato retired from his diplomatic career to become the NPB’s commissioner in 2008, he knew the history of cooperation between the Major Leagues and the NPB well. With that history and baseball’s impact on US-Japan relations in mind,
Kato worked to increase cooperation between the Major Leagues and the NPB during his tenure as commissioner.\textsuperscript{167}
CONCLUSION

Baseball is more than just a game.
It has eternal value.
Through it, one learns the beautiful and noble spirit of Japan.

-Suishu Tobita, Manager of Waseda University

There is a growing concern in Japan today that the departures of Japan’s best baseball players to the Major Leagues will lessen the quality of play in the NPB, and interest in baseball in general. In addition, with increasing interest in other American professional sports, European soccer, and the formation of a Japanese professional soccer league, the NPB has more competition for fans today than in the past. Yet despite the popularity of other sports, baseball is firmly established as a Japanese tradition. The Koshien tournament remains one of the most popular annual sporting events. As was the case nearly a century ago, broadcasters can often be heard showering glowing praise on Koshien’s participants for their guts and fighting spirit, as well as embodying the purity of amateur baseball. Similarly, change in the NPB has come slowly; its product remains more yakyu than baseball.

When asked why baseball has been so popular in Japan, Ambassador Ryozo Kato was quick to reply, “because we can be really good at it.” The Babe Ruth model of dramatic, sudden strike, muscle baseball, i.e., hitting lots of home runs, is not the only way to win the game. Neither is it the only way to win fans of the game. If a team can excel at the more subtle aspects of baseball including clever pitching, anticipatory fielding, getting on base, and advancing runners, then a team can be formidable without hitting lots of home runs. There may be fewer beefed-up home run hitters in Japan but
there are many, many talented players. This has allowed Japanese teams to be increasingly competitive with American teams. In fact, Japan has won two of the three World Baseball Classics (WBC), which is a tournament that ostensibly crowns the world’s best baseball nation.

Although the WBC is primarily organized by the Major Leagues, American players have been noticeably less enthusiastic about participating in the tournament than the Japanese or players from other countries. While the Japanese rosters for each WBC were filled with the nation’s best, some of America’s most talented players have employed a range of excuses to not participate. As a result, the tournament has not achieved the kind of appreciation or popularity it seeks in the United States. In fact, Americans generally do not believe that the winning team is the best in the world.³ On the other hand, in Japan, the WBC is extremely popular and Japanese fans are proud of their team’s accomplishments in it.

Ever since Ichiko defeated YAC, yakyu has had a long history of providing the Japanese with a sense of national pride. Sawamura’s success against Babe Ruth and other Hall of Famers, Kaneda’s dominance over Mickey Mantle and the New York Yankees, Nomo’s accomplishments in the Major Leaguers, and the WBC victories all represented Japan’s ability to equal and surpass the United States.⁴ In addition, baseball’s coverage and popularity makes the game one of the most prominent symbols of Japanese capability.

Though governments have utilized baseball for various purposes, baseball has improved both Japanese perceptions of the United States and American perceptions of
Japan, often outside the realm of politics. The way Randy Bass made Japanese people reflect on their social priorities, for example, was not prompted by a government. Neither were the warm congratulations Wladimir Balentien received when he broke Sadaharu Oh’s home run record. These examples show that baseball can be a positive influence between nations at a person-to-person level. They also suggest that important insights may be gleaned by looking at a broader scope of cross cultural popular engagement when trying to understand the forces at work in establishing or maintaining healthy international relations.

Of course, other athletes, sports leagues, and sporting events have had similar impacts on Japan and US-Japanese relations. The point of this thesis was to focus on the impact that one sport can have on one international relationship. Many important international sporting events and figures such as the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games, the Japanese national soccer team, and wrestler Mitsuhiro Momota (better known as Rikidozan) are beyond the scope of this examination of sports diplomacy. Their absence from these pages should not be taken as a reflection of any lack of impact on various aspects of Japanese life and Japanese foreign affairs.

The focus on baseball and US-Japanese relations, on the other hand, is a reflection of how great an impact one sport can have on individual states and international relations. Though it has been used at times to fan the flames of nationalism or promote blind obedience to a militant regime, overall, baseball’s impact on Japan and the people’s perception of foreigners has been immensely positive. Through baseball, transpacific friendships have been forged, negative perceptions of foreigners in Japan decreased, and
the morale of a nation was restored. In addition, political elites have used baseball to improve friendships and advance their agendas. The immense impact that baseball has had on US-Japanese relations suggests that sports diplomacy can play a key role improving relationships even between countries that were once at war. Baseball will never replace statecraft in negotiating treaties or other international agreements, but it can pave the way for better relations between countries, even when the cultural differences are vast, and the political agendas not always perfectly aligned.

US-Japanese relations are so strong today that it can be easy to forget that the two nations were embroiled in total-war seven decades ago. In the course of history, that is not a very long time. Japan’s relationships with China and South Korea still face hurdles pertaining to the same war. The point here is not to suggest that if Japan had richer baseball connections with South Korea and China, their relationships would be much better, but rather to suggest that the US-Japanese relationship has greatly benefitted from the long history of baseball interaction between the two countries. If the history of Japanese baseball is any indication, then Japan’s relationships with its neighbors would greatly improve over time if more efforts were made to align each country’s mutual interest in sports like baseball or soccer.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 1: SPORTS AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS


15. At least one notable baseball fan agrees with that the historical narratives of Japanese baseball and US-Japanese relations mirror each other. Ryozo Kato, the Japanese Ambassador to the United States from 2001 to 2008 and the Commissioner of NPB from 2008 to 2013, called it an “astute observation” in a personal interview on January 8th, 2014, in Washington D.C.


18. Ibid.

19. A common joke perhaps best grasps the authority of an umpire and the judgments they make: Three umpires are sitting around over a beer and talking about their craft. The first umpire says, “there’s balls and there’s strikes, and I call’em the way they are.” The second replies, “there’s balls and there’s strikes, and I call’em the way I see’em.” The third umpire says, “there’s balls and there’s strikes, and they ain’t nuthin’ until I call’em.”


22. Ibid.

23. Cha, Beyond the Final Score, 31.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid., 32.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid., 23.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid., 25.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2: MEIJI RESTORATION TO WORLD WAR II


3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., 512.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., 513.


9. Ibid., 34-35.

10. Ibid.


12. Ibid., 16-19.

13. Ibid., 14.


17. Ibid., 29.

18. Ibid., 30.


22. Ibid., 30-31.

23. Ibid., 31-32.


26. Ibid.


28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Whiting, *You Gotta Have Wa*, 34.


32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., 21.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., 22.
39. Ibid., 26
40. Ibid., 28.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid., 80-81.
43. Ibid., 82.
44. Ibid., 29.
45. Ibid., 22.
46. Ibid., 36.
47. Fitts, *Banzai Babe Ruth*, 168.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid., 87.
51. Ibid., 91.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid., 87.
54. Ibid., 109.
56. Ibid., 23.
57. Not to be confused with the stadium of the same name, where the tournament takes place.
59. Ibid., 110.
60. Ibid., 112.
61. Ibid., 76.


64. Ibid., 113.

65. Ibid., 114.


67. Ibid.


69. Ibid.

70. Ibid.

71. Ibid.

72. Ibid.


74. For examples, see: 
*Sporting News*, “Sport Falls as Dictators Rise,” August 28, 1941.


76. Axelson, “Enlightening the world with baseball.”


79. Ibid.

80. Ibid.


82. Fitts, *Banzai Babe Ruth*, 87.

83. Ibid., 5-11.

country-good-and-ill-japans.

86. Fitts, *Banzai Babe Ruth*, 14-16.

87. Ibid., 22.

88. Ibid., 14.

89. “Japan’s Citizen Kane,” *Economist*.


91. Ibid., 20.

92. Ibid., 21.

93. Ibid., 25.


96. Ibid.

97. Ibid., 53.

98. Ibid., 85.

99. Ibid., 97.

100. Ibid., 190-192.

101. Ibid., 245-254.

102. Ibid., 43.

103. Ibid.

104. Ibid., 253.

105. Ibid.

106. Ibid.

107. Ibid., 251.

108. Ibid.

109. Ibid., 141.

110. Ibid.

111. Ibid., 237.
112. Ibid.
113. Ibid.
114. Ibid., 238.
115. Ibid.
116. Ibid.
117. Ibid., 26.
118. Ibid., 101.
119. Ibid.
120. Ibid., 177-178.
121. Ibid., 175.
122. Ibid., 180.
123. Ibid., 241.
124. Ibid., 23.
125. Ibid.
126. Ibid.
128. Ibid., 160.
129. Ibid.
130. Ibid., 162.
131. Ibid.
132. Ibid., 161.
133. Ibid., 163.
134. Ibid.
136. Ibid.
137. Ibid., 55-64.
138. Ibid., 243.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 3: WORLD WAR II TO THE OCCUPATION OF JAPAN


5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., 176.

7. Ibid., 177.


11. Fitts, Banzai Babe Ruth, 100.


13. Ibid., 176.


15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., 172.

18. Fitts, Banzai Babe Ruth, 263-265.

19. Ibid., 263.

20. Ibid., 263.

21. The events that occurred in Nanking have been a source of controversy and tension between Japan and China that have yet to dissipate. Estimates of the numbers of people killed in Nanking range between 40,000 and 250,000, although lower and higher numbers have also been suggested. Regardless of the numbers, however, the gruesome manner in which people were killed and females raped also strongly factor in the way it is remembered.

22. Ibid., 260.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., 263
25. Ibid., 265.
26. Ibid., 266.

28. Ibid., 155.
29. Ibid., 129-130.
30. Ibid., 128.
31. Ibid., 132.
32. Ibid., 131.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid., 154.
35. Ibid., 138.
36. Ibid., 135.
37. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
46. Ibid., 117.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid., 118.
49. Ibid., 116.
50. Ibid., 186.
51. Ibid., 122.
52. Elias, The Empire Strikes Out, 156.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid., 157.
57. Ibid., 158.
59. Ibid., 302-305.
60. Ibid.
61. Guthrie Shimizu, Transpacific Field of Dreams, 208.
62. Ibid., 209.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid.
66. Ibid., 221.
67. Ibid., 222.
68. Ibid.
69. Ibid.
70. Ibid., 223.
71. Ibid.
72. Ibid.
73. Ibid., 203.
74. Ibid.
75. Ibid., 269.
76. Ibid., 224.
77. Ibid.
78. Ibid., 268.
79. Ibid., 269.
80. Reaves, Taking in a Game, 80.
81. Ibid., 80-81.
85. Morris, Supreme Commander, 246.
86. Guthrie-Shimizu, Transpacific Field of Dreams, 216.
88. Leutziner, Lefty O’Doul, 65.
89. Guthrie-Shimizu, Transpacific Field of Dreams, 221.
90. Leutzinger, Lefty O’Doul, 65.
92. Morris, Supreme Commander, 246.
94. Guthrie-Shimizu, Transpacific Field of Dreams, 220.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid., 213.
97. Leutzinger, Lefty O’Doul, 65.
98. Fitts, Banzai Babe Ruth, 271.
100. Guthrie-Shimizu, Transpacific Field of Dreams, 235.
101. Leutzinger, Lefty O’Doul, 66.
102. Ibid.
103. Guthrie-Shimizu, Transpacific Field of Dreams, 216.


106. Economist, “Japan’s Citizen Cane.”


108. Ibid., 218.

109. Ibid.

110. Ibid.

111. Elias, The Empire Strikes Out, 176.

112. Ibid.

113. Ibid.

114. Ibid.

115. Dower, Embracing Defeat, 561.

116. Ibid.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4: SINCE THE OCCUPATION OF JAPAN


3. Ibid., 8-9.

4. Ibid.


6. Ibid., 19-33.

7. Ibid., 28.

8. Ibid., 57-60.

9. Ibid., 53.

10. Ibid., 61-62.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid., 73.
13. Ibid.
15. Ibid., 196-197.
16. Ibid., 80-81.
17. Ibid., 79-81.
18. Ibid., 79.
19. Ibid., 82.
20. Ibid., 83.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., 199.
28. Ibid., 166.
29. Ibid., 222.
30. Ibid., 189.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., 188-189.
33. Ibid., 118-119.
36. Ibid., 87.
37. Ibid., 89.
41. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid., 77-78.
46. Ibid., 77.
47. Ibid., 80.
49. Ibid., 91-92.
50. Ibid., 92.
52. Ibid.
54. Ibid., 148-152.
57. Whiting, *You Gotta Have Wa*, 80.
58. Ibid., 84.
59. Ibid., 316.
60. Ibid.
61. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid.


67. Whiting, *You Gotta Have Wa*, 278.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid.

70. Ibid., 279.

71. Ibid.

72. Ibid., 281.

73. Ibid.

74. Ibid., 282.

75. Ibid.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid., 283.

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid., 291.

80. Ibid., 292.


82. Whiting, *You Gotta Have Wa*, 295.

83. Ibid., 285.

84. Ibid., 298.

85. Ibid., 299.

86. Ibid., 300.

87. Ibid., 300-303.

88. Ibid., 303.

89. Ibid., 306.


91. Ibid.

92. Ibid., 99.
93. Ibid., 102.
94. Ibid., 101.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid., 102.
97. Ibid.
98. Ibid., 100.
99. Ibid., 102.
100. Ibid., 103.


105. Ibid.


108. Ibid., 109.


111. Ibid., 247-251.

112. Ibid., 45.

113. French, “Japanese are Playing Favorites.”


117. *Asahi Shimbun*, “New home-run king Balentien ushers in new era for NPB.”

118. French, “Japanese are Playing Favorites.”

119. Ibid.


121. *Asahi Shimbun*, “New home-run king Balentien ushers in new era for NPB.”


125. *Asahi Shimbun*, “New home-run king Balentien ushers in new era for NPB.”

126. Ibid.


128. Whiting, *You Gotta Have Wa*, 144.


134. Whiting, *You Gotta Have Wa*, 150.


137. Ibid., 150.

138. Ibid., 150-151.

139. Ibid., 153.

140. Ibid., 157.

120
141. Ibid.


144. Whiting, *You Gotta Have Wa*, 336.

145. Ibid., 336-337.


147. Ibid., 193.

148. Ibid.


151. Ibid.

150. Ibid.


152. Whiting, *You Gotta Have wa*, 338.

153. Ibid., 337.

154. Ibid., 339.

155. Ibid., 340.

156. Ibid.


158. Ibid.


160. Ibid.

161. Ibid.

162. Ibid.

163. Ibid.

164. Ibid.

165. Ibid.

166. Ibid.
NOTES TO CONCLUSION


4. The WBC also allows for competition between Japan and its neighboring countries; games between Japan and South Korea have been especially competitive. As noted in the introduction, Cha writes that these games provided spectators with peaceful (though perhaps unfriendly) outlets for the historical animosity that continues to hamper Japanese-South Korean relations.
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