

Remarks

Presented by NAITO Yasushi, Consul-General of Japan in Perth
On the occasion of the KMSB Japanese-Themed VIP Event at the Gryphon Cup
Sunday November 24, 2024

I wish to start by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation, and pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.

The Hon Hannah Beazley BA MLA, Minister for Local Government and Youth,

Distinguished leaders of Hockey WA,

Managing Directors of Kimberley Marine Support Base(KMSB),

Mr Yoshi Sashiki, the Founder of Gryphon Cup,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is NAITO Yasushi, Consul-General of Japan in Perth, and I am delighted to join you all in welcoming the Japanese teams of U16 boys and girls to Perth for the KMSB Youth International Gryphon Cup. Western Australia is such a major hub for field hockey and it is my honour to welcome the teams to such a beautiful city with a shared passion for this sport.

I would first like to express my thanks to the KMSB Gryphon Cup organisers, Hockey WA and supporters, your commitment to nurturing youth development at a grassroots level is helping to foster the next generation of athletes.

To KMSB, I should add that Kimberley is special place for us. The Japanese community in WA started in Broome with Pearl Divers in 1890's. They had remarkable lives and resilience but they loved the beauty and people of the land and became part of the development of Western Australia, bridging two nations and inspiring many Japanese residents later to come to Australia. After the war, a rare success of partnership unfolded between Western Australia and Japan on resources in Kimberley that led to remarkable economic success of both Japan and Australia. I had my fourth visit to Broome last week

with my wife and enjoyed its beauty and the vibrancy of the community, and paid my respect to our ancestors

Earlier this year, we welcomed the Japan women's national field hockey team Sakura Japan to WA for the Perth International Festival of Hockey, and it was so inspiring to see the national teams from Australia, Japan and China compete at such a high level and with such respect and sportsmanship ahead of the 2024 Paris Olympics.

I am sure that many of these budding athletes have what it takes to reach the heights of the national team, possible even the Olympics, with the Brisbane Olympics in eight years, and I hope this opportunity to compete against your international counterparts will be one of many invaluable experiences as you progress in your sporting careers.

Today, I was speaking with Yoshi, the founder of Gryphon Cup and impressed know how the event has grown since 2007 with many of Japanese ex-participants of the Gryphon Cup have actually joined the national teams.

I understand the junior Japanese national teams have built quite a reputation at this tournament, demonstrating a high level of skill, leadership, and sportsmanship, even taking home a championship trophy last year. I hope you will continue to exude such sportsmanship and professionalism, that you will give it your all and most importantly, have fun and enjoy the experience.

All the best to the teams and athletes!

Thank you for your attention.

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