

Nippon Sport Science University and Olympics

Nippon Sport Science University

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President

〈 1 〉

The history of Nippon Sport Science University (NSSU) started in August 1891. That is, Tokichiro Hidaka (1856-1932) founded *Taiikukai* (the Association of Physical Culture), parent organization of NSSU. “*Taiikukai*” is literal translation of German “Turnverein”, on which it modeled. In the following year, *Taiikukai* was named *Nippon Taiikukai*. Through several reforms, (it became to the educational foundation consisting of several institutions such as a university, a college, four high schools, two junior high schools, and a kindergarten.) Then, it was finally renamed to Educational Foundation of Nippon Sport Science University in 2012. Now it has 124-year-old history up to the present.

NSSU, the university it established, is known as university which paved the way from Japan to the Olympics, developed many Olympic athletes, and produced the greatest number of coaches in physical education and sport.

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International Olympic Committee was founded in 1894. Considering that *Nippon Taiikukai Taisou Renshujo* (the Gymnastic Practice School, the precursor of NSSU) was established around the same time, namely in 1891, it is not too much saying that we have walked along with the history of Olympics.

The relationship between NSSU and IOC dates back as far as to around the same time as IOC was established. We have the articles on Athens Olympic Games (1896) in our school organ magazines, and the letter requesting to dispatch a member to *Bankoku Taiiku Kaigi* (the International Sports Congress) in 1900 was sent to us. At that time, Yamane Masatsugu, the auditor of our parent organization and the medical director of Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department, was on official business trip to Paris Exposition, ordered by the Metropolitan Police Department, and he attended to the International Sports Congress following the letter above. Paris Olympic Games were held as parts of the 1900 Exposition. Therefore, it is presumed that he was the first Japanese who witness Paris Olympic Games.

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After the International Sports Congress, Yamane received the letter of request to participate in Athens Olympic Games from Constantinos, the Prince of Greece. It informed that the Olympic Games would be held in Athens again in 1906 as the 10th anniversary of the Olympics. According to this letter, it seems that Yamane was regarded as the first Japanese member of IOC, though not officially; he was called

“*Bankoku jousetsu taiiku iin/ Keishicho dai san bucho/ Nippon Taiikukai kanji*” (the Permanent Member of International Sports Congress/ the Director of the Third Department of the Metropolitan Police/ the Auditor of *Nippon Taiikukai*) in the letter.

To respond to the request from the Prince of Greece, our parent organization *Nippon Taiikukai* needed to be reorganized, but abandoned it because of financial problems. We say, however, the letter was worthy enough to be the first page of the history of Olympics in Japan.

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Japan took part in 5th Olympic Games for the first time in Stockholm in 1912. Kano Jigoro (1860-1938) is famous for the first Japanese person who was officially assumed as a member of IOC. Baron de Coubertin offered the position to him through Auguste Gérard, French ambassador to Japan, in 1909. He accepted the offer promptly.

Kano was the president of the Tokyo Normal School and a councilor of *Nippon Taiikukai*. When IOC required him to select Japanese athletes for Stockholm Olympic Games, he asked *Nippon Taiikukai* to dispatch athletes, however, it was declined. Consequently, he founded *Nippon Taiiku Kyokai* (Japan Amateur Sports Association) to hold qualifying games for Olympics in Haneda, selected two athletes, and realized the very first participation in Olympic Games for Japan. At any rate, these our activities should be etched on the history of Olympics in Japan.

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We have poured our efforts into producing Olympic athletes. From 5th to 8th Olympic Games, the relationship between NSSU and Olympics got weak. In 9th Olympic Games, however, Nakazawa Yonetaro, who had graduated from NSSU, won the 6th prize in pole vault. Since then, the athletes from NSSU have been seen in every Olympics which Japan competed for.

Unfortunately, due to outbreak of China-Japan War, Tokyo Olympic Games in 1940 was called off, and Japan had to face to challenging time for sport culture. The war forced out the final aim of Olympics “Peace” as well as development of sport culture and athletes.

Japan returned to Helsinki Olympic Games in 1952, and they have gradually promoted their competition abilities since Tokyo Olympic in 1964. Meanwhile, NSSU has been continuing to develop Olympic athletes as before by providing places to practice for Olympics. The number of medals obtained shows our graduates’ efforts in postwar period, namely, 108 Olympic medals; a quarter of all medals of Japan have been earned by our graduates. We have produced 309 Olympic athletes as of London Olympic Games in 2012.

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NSSU has been playing an important role as an educational institution for developing coaches. Japanese sport culture has been developed with athletic clubs in schools, and we have produced the biggest number of PE teachers. We started our educational program of PE teachers 122 years ago, and the number of graduates amounts to 80 thousands. It is assumed that there is no Japanese Olympic athlete who has

never received training by them. Since many of our graduates bear the responsibility for improvement and progress of athletes, the change of our educational system and method for developing coaches in NSSU will make a great change in the educational interface.

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For Tokyo Olympic Games in 2020, NSSU is expected to lead new movement for developing coaches. Therefore, we aim at further development not only for 2020 but also for after 2020 by acquiring superior methods used worldwide through NSSU Coach Developer Academy. We will execute a mission to establishing field of Sport Coaching Science in course of Health and Sport Science in our graduate school.

Moreover, the final aim of Olympics is peace of the international society. We hereby declare that we sustain our efforts to fulfill the mission to promote the Olympic movement and be help for world peace.

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