



TANGO

EXTRA

Dancing with Words

Senri & Osaka International Schools of Kwansei Gakuin

TANGO: TWO SCHOOLS TOGETHER

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After the Quake...

by Xi Ming Pan

At 7:57 a.m. on June 18 an earthquake centered near Takatsuki and measuring 5.5 in magnitude on the movement magnitude scale and 6 on the Japanese shindo scale struck Osaka. Five people lost their lives in the quake, and many were temporarily made homeless. Tango, along with the whole SOIS community, extend out sympathies to those who have suffered tragedy and hardship at this time.

The SOIS community has been blessed not to have directly suffered such tragedy, injury or loss. So what was it like for SOIS students that day? OIS student and Tango reporter Xi Ming Pan describes her experiences below.

For many new foreign students and teachers at SOIS, this was the first earthquake that they have experienced in Japan. Most of us were on our way to school when this occurred.

7:57

I was lucky, in the sense that I was safely tucked on the school bus with a driver that was oddly unruffled by the shaking world around him. My first thought was that the bus was breaking down, but the driver quickly realized that it was an earthquake. The deafening alarm sounded one second later. However, the teetering world was not the biggest of my worries at that time. I was busy trying to figure out who had grabbed onto my face in the midst of it.

Looking back now, the girl that grabbed onto me was not necessarily scared or traumatized. Instead, she was trying to look for a way to lighten the mood and in an odd way, calm us down through humor.

We didn't think much of the earthquake until we saw water gushing down the streets as students pushed their bikes through it. A section of water pipes seemed to have broken and muddy water was pumping out from beneath the ground. I say muddy water in the most hopeful way because it could have easily been another substance that those school girls certainly would not have been happy about wading through.

Upon arriving at school, we were all ushered to the field. It was just like a drill, except for the waves of uncertainty and worry rolling off of the teachers. Parents that had driven their children to school approached teachers and asked to take them back home.

I thought they were being over-protective but little did I know, those students were the lucky ones that got a safe and speedy ride back home while the rest of us were stranded at school.

The SOIS teachers acted quickly, calling maintenance to check on the structural stability of the building, as well as taking the attendance of students. Both schools came up with the decision that students who had parental permission to go home would be allowed to do so—as long as they had a safe way back home. Everyone bolted at that chance to go home. As did I.

Mother had already made up her mind though. "The school is a lot safer than trying to come home right now. Also, there is no way that you can get up here. Think of all those flights of stairs you have to climb." As calm and logical as those sentences sound on paper, imagine that as a stressed, loud, outdoor voice blaring through the phone.

She was not wrong though. The open field is the best place to be when earthquakes hit.



Naturally, it started to rain. Of course. Just our luck. The SIS students quickly migrated into the gym, leaving the remaining OIS students out in the rain. This was when the damage the earthquake had on our school finally hit me. Not literally, though. We had to have teacher supervision to go to bathrooms, which really showed me how unsure of the school's state they were. Given that the forecast warned of an impending drizzle, we too moved into the gym.



5 minutes later, we were ushered out into the sun. The hours following that were the most fun I've had in school for a long while. Only ten of us were left and the numbers were still decreasing.

While the SIS students somberly sat in their homerooms (jokes, they looked happy enough), we were outside playing as if nothing had happened. And that was really how it felt in a place so sheltered from the dangers of the outside world.

Being able to finally go home and see Mother sent a wave of relief crashing into me. Or maybe that was my mom's bear hug. Either way, at the end of the day, being back with family makes everything feel okay, despite the chaos all around you.

All humor aside, it is important to remember that although it is okay to deal with this through laughter, this earthquake, as well as others before this, has brought about a great deal of damage to our community. Look around, appreciate what you have, and engage in the restoration of our community.



Photos by Xi Ming Pan

Editorial *by Freya Kirwan*

We shall not cease from exploration

And the end of all our exploring

Will be to arrive where we started

And know the place for the first time

T.S. Eliot

Upon finishing my IB exams, my first reflex, now that the pressure was off, was to reflect on the 'flaws' of the IB – particularly how much pressure it puts students under. However, as I sat on stage at my graduation and looked around at my classmates – some of whom I had known for only a couple of years, some for close on a decade, but all of whom I have come to know well – I realised that maybe I had been too quick to judge the IB. The same system that had caused me so much suffering in the past two years, was also the curriculum that had fostered in all of us this very tendency to critically reflect on everything.

Make no mistake, the IB is definitely not without faults. I am not yet old and cynical enough to have any parting words of wisdom but as a survivor of the IB, I have a message of warning to any students who still have time left in OIS: do not do anything out of fear. Do not do anything out of fear of failing, fear of your parents, fear of your peers.

Cultivate your interests, even if they seem trivial. In this day and age, it seems that you can make a career out of anything.

I remember when I came to this school, a shy and awkward 2nd grader who refused to speak for an entire year. Now as I'm graduating, a shy and awkward 12th grader, I feel that I have at least found a voice, as well as things to say. Cliché as it may be, I truly believe in the youth of our generation, and our ability to lead lives driven by a compassion that will manifest itself in all sorts of ways.

It is with bittersweet feelings that I leave OIS, and all the teachers and friends that have taught me to be better than I thought I could be. In particular I must mention that I have been part of *Tango* for the last five years and will be eternally grateful for the creative outlet it has given me. (Whether you, dear reader, got anything out of it is another question.)

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"We have to learn from this..."

Mr. Kralovec gives his view on the recent earthquake and what it means for SOIS.

Tango caught up with Mr. Kralovec, the OIS Head of School, in the days following the earthquake. We wanted to know his thoughts on the quake and its aftermath, and what SOIS needs to take from it.

"The earthquake has been an historic event for SOIS", Mr Kralovec said, when asked if it was appropriate for *Tango* to address the earthquake and what issues it raises for the two schools, "It is only appropriate that the paper of record— *Tango*—should document this event."

Mr. Kralovec said that one of the first things we as a school community should do in responding to the earthquake is to be aware of how fortunate we have been. Though we may have experienced a frightening experience and had to endure some inconveniences and frustrations, nobody in the school community has been badly injured or directly affected by tragedy through the quake.

"But we have to learn from this, as two schools together. Some of our procedures need to be reflected on. Some of our communication wasn't as good as it could be, and the two schools together will be working together to improve that for next time."

Mr. Kralovec said that in addition to reflecting on areas the two schools would improve in, we should acknowledge how members of the school and wider community came together to help each other and work on restoring things to normal. "It was great to see how parents, students, teachers and staff worked with each other that day. Parents were offering their homes for other students to stay in who couldn't get to back to their own houses. And you know, the maintenance staff worked so hard to check the building."

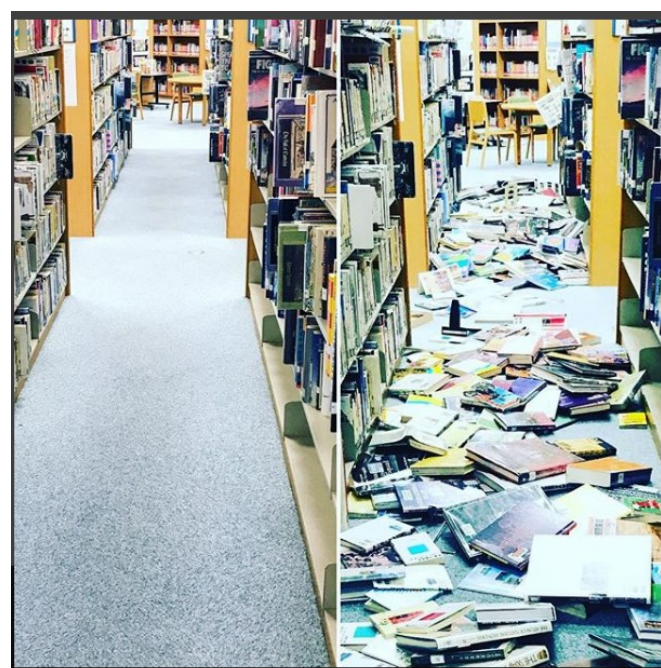


Photo from the *Tango* Archives

Mr. Kralovec described how great it was to see SIS and OIS faculty working together the day after the earthquake, cleaning and tidying the school.

In many ways, by the end of the week, the school had been restored to normal. But Mr. Kralovec acknowledged that the quake had taken a psychological toll on many members of the community. "When I hear a loud noise, or feel a truck or something drive by, I jump."

Mr. Kralovec said that it is perfectly normal for people to feel anxious or upset after the quake, even as time passes. He said that talking about it with other people, and hearing their experiences and concerns is one kind of therapy that might work really well to help people stay calm and gradually get over their anxiety. He also recommends laughter and having fun with friends and family as a good way to recover. "Eat well, get plenty of sleep and lots of exercise."



This photo shows the library after SOIS teachers had worked together tidying it up. That's on the left. The right is the "before picture!"

Photos by Steve Lewis

Hiroshima Cycle Trip by Sana Konishi-Attwood

150km in 2 days. Yes, it was tiring. Yes, our leg muscles gave up after this. But yes; it was one incredible cycling trip that I will never forget.

One of the options for the spring camp was a cycling trip from Hiroshima to Ehime and back with Mr Bertman and Mrs Cheney. There were 12 of us all together, and this was one of the best things about this journey; because there were so few of us, we were able to have fun as one group. When there are too many people, they tend to form several groups and do not get the chance to interact with everyone. We were able to get around this, and we became closer to each other by the end of this camp.

Getting across to Imabari city in Ehime prefecture required us cycling through 6 islands in total from Onomichi in Hiroshima prefecture. The course took us across 5 big, beautiful bridges with the magnificent panorama of the sea and islands around us. Cycling along the shore was another landscape that was astonishing. there was not a single spot that had nothing interesting or fascinating to see.

However, not all of this trip was relaxing and comfortable; the number and the length of the hills were certainly not. For every bridge, we first had to cycle up a hill that went up like a spiral. It was long and steep, making us exhausted before we even set foot on the bridge. Moreover, this wasn't the only hill that we had to surmount; there were more hills on the islands, gradual but long. This challenged a lot of us, as cycling such hills requires stamina, muscle endurance, and also a strong mind-set.

Yet, unlike many other group activities where the people must stick together, in this cycling trip, we were able to constantly go at our own pace. Of course, you couldn't keep stopping and fall behind too much, but this meant that you did not have to rush and push yourself too hard to keep up with others who do not cycle at your pace. Thus, we were able to take our time and take on each challenge at the speed you wanted to, which made this trip the "best - fit" for everyone.

One part of the trip that I found scary at that time but hilarious later happened about

4 hours into the first cycling day. Some other people before me and I were cycling down a steep and long hill, and at the bottom of it was an old lady, waiting there patiently and letting the people in front of me pass. Naturally, I thought that this kind lady would let me through too. I made eye contact with her, and signalled to her that I was going to keep going. Then what happens? She smiles and starts walking out into the road. I gripped the bakes so hard, that although I missed the old lady, I nearly fell off my unbalanced and shaky bike. Miraculously I was fine, and the bike seemed to be fine too. The old woman looked at me, and she said: "You've got to be careful. There are a lot of accidents around here." Although at that time I was absolutely petrified, now that I look back at it I find it very amusing that she said that.

Unquestionably, there was something for everyone in this cycling trip. Not only was this a good training for us, it also provided us with some time to think through things we usually cannot as we simply don't have the opportunity to. I am already planning to go again next year on this amazing camp. Yes, it is tiring. Yes, your leg muscles will give up after this. But yes, I strongly recommend this cycling trip to everyone.



Photo by Kevin Bertman



Photo by Tara Cheney



Photo by Tara Cheney



Photo by Tara Cheney



Photo by Kevin Bertman

Murata Seminar Collaborates with SIS

by Tasuku Azuma

On 7th April, students of the Murata Seminar at Kwansei Gakuin University visited SOIS, to have a discussion session with SIS students who had taken part in this program. To explain Murata seminar, the seminar is led by Professor Murata, who has abundant experience in working in various positions and countries at the United Nations. The session is a day-lasting discussion session with university students in 3rd grade. Each year, we study one case study, and try to find the best solution for the problem. This year, the case study was about pollution of a river called Manzana in a fictional country. "The case study was definitely more challenging than last year", according to Yuya Morimoto, one of the participants from SIS. Yuya, who also participated in last year's program, said; "Last year, the case study clearly highlighted the problems of children's right to be educated, and the SIS team consisted of members who had background knowledge about problem solving, thanks to our school's SGH program". In contrast, this year's case study had less information and the team had only 4 senior members in ratio to 13 members. Despite such disadvantages, however, we were able to manage to find a solution. Below are some of the obstacles that we encountered.

Prior to the session in April, the SIS team held several meetings from mid-March and throughout the spring break. We first identified the relationship between people and institutions, and later focused on what specific actions the important people can do to tackle the problem. The former process was laborious, since everyone had slightly different interpretations of the case study, whereas we needed to have a common understanding. Also, when we were trying to find a solution, all of us were confused by the water system, so we had to study the basics of water systems from scratch. The most difficult part was deducing the motives and purpose of key individuals that can determine the feasibility of solutions.

On the day of the event, Murata seminar students made their presentation, before the SIS team did theirs. Although we did not know each other's plan until this day, we both had reached the same solution, which was to establish a ministry specifically designed to handle environmental problems such as water safety. But, each team had different viewpoints about other problems. The SIS team pointed out the fact that water purification plants that rely solely on foreign aids are a problem, because they lack in sustainability. To overcome this problem, we came up with a plan aimed to make existing water systems financially independent and thereby ensure the sustainability and safety of the facility.



Photo supplied by Emi Tsudaka

Murata seminar students, however, had a different point of view; they considered a cholera outbreak caused by polluted river as the highest priority, and proposed a plan of building public restrooms. Since Cholera virus can only be transmitted through intake of water polluted by feces, building restrooms would be an effective approach toward eradicating hygiene problems. After the presentation, we discussed in small teams that have equal number of university students and SIS students, to further analyze and develop the solutions. By the end of the day, all of us were at ease, and seemed to have forgotten the nervousness and anxiousness that had surrounded the room in the morning.

Through this program, students of both sides were able to deepen their point of view and experience of handling problems like this. Also, this was a valuable opportunity to strengthen the relationship between us, as well as communities of SIS and KG.

"A Secret Garden"

by Natsuki Hiura

Many people tend to walk past the aquaponics, which is located on the second floor. That makes sense, because it is also known as "the secret garden". However, it plays an important role for the elementary students, and also myself. It provides freshness and relaxation

The reason why I started organizing the aquaponics is because I wanted to contribute to the community more often. I actually came to OIS from 6th grade. When I walked passed the hallway that leads to the Learning Lab, I could see the aquaponics (which is located on the second floor) from the third floor, and I always thought the aquaponics area was very disorganized, and the fish tank always seemed unwashed. However, when I was in eighth grade, I did not have enough service and action, so Mr. Van Plantinga suggested that I could cleaning and organizing the aquaponics. I wasn't very interested in the beginning. However, as I was helping Ms. Henbest and getting advice from Mr. VP, it all became really exciting. I also felt very refreshed when cleaning the aquaponics. Ms. Henbest also gave me an opportunity to teach the elementary students how to clean the fish tank. I even started coming in during summer break, although it was very hot and humid.

As I was cleaning the aquaponics area, I was considering turning this into my personal project, and eventually actually decided to to so. The product is to organize the aquaponics, and not just organize but rebuild the shelf, for items such as the pruning shears or other gardening tools in order to make them easier to utilize. I would also like to make storage area for the unused seeds or other unused materials as well. I am looking forward to my future project.



Grade 3 students working on cleaning the goldfish pond in the aquaponics area.

Photo by Dave Algje

Interview with a Past OIS Graduate by Freya Kirwan

Interview with past OIS graduate - Liam Kirwan

Liam graduated from New York University Abu Dhabi in May of 2018 with a BSc in Biology with a minor in Philosophy. He will start a 4-year MD program in Poland at Jagiellonian University Medical College at the end of this August.

Do you think OIS and the IB prepared you for life in university?

Yes. Because I went to a Liberal Arts university, the variety of learning which you get from IB did help in that aspect. However, I would say that the level of difficulty in university was much higher than the IB.

What did you enjoy most about university life, in comparison to high school?

I would say living with my friends and travelling during the breaks. Also, travelling to Milan for a Basketball tournament was cool.

Did you travel much during your time at university?

Yes, I went to the Czech republic, Austria, Italy, Jordan, Palestine/Israel, China, the Netherlands, USA, Canada, Poland, and Singapore.

What was the biggest shock you experienced when you entered university?

I would say the weather, but at the same time I was indoors most of the time anyway, so it didn't really bother me too much.

Do you have any advice for those still in the DP programme?

Study hard and try to devise a study plan. Most likely, the amount of studying and the difficulty of the content will increase once you attend university, so in preparation for this, you should devise a method for tackling studying, including time management and making priorities.

Do you have any regrets about your time in university: things you would do differently?

Stay healthy. Try out more activities. The university had so much going on, it was impossible to try everything.

What do you wish you would have known before you went to university?

I wish I had known that it was pretty common to pass/fail certain courses. And that swapping and dropping courses is also possible. And that looking to take an easy course in order to improve your grade in other required courses is okay.

What do you have to say about the pressure of committing to a major?

I think there are different types of people. Some people know what they want to do, some think they know what they want to do, and others don't know at the time but later discover their interests. So, don't feel too stressed about it but also don't choose something just because it is easy. You have to learn the difference between something that is hard and something that you don't like.

Where do you see yourself 5 years from now?

Hopefully being a doctor somewhere.



A Time for Goodbyes....

One of the sad things about life at SOIS is that we have two sets of goodbyes each year. In March we said farewell to several dedicated SIS teachers and staff. Now, as we come to the end of the Spring Trimester, it's OIS's turn.

Ms. Zuvich has been looking after Grade 3 this past trimester. She stepped in to help out at a crucial time and her contributions have been deeply appreciated.

Mr. Dieterly has been teaching Art for four years, and his talent and passion for art have made him a real asset to both schools.

Ohata sensei has been teaching Japanese classes in OIS and her students and colleagues have really benefited from her knowledge and enthusiasm.

Mr. Routh has been a popular P.E teacher here. He has a vast knowledge of all sports, especially NFL.. Check out the hard-hitting interview with Mr. Routh on pages 17 and 18.

Mrs. Lamug has been the OIS counselor since 2013. Check out an article on her contribution on page 16.

However, it is not only teachers who are leaving. Several students are leaving as well. Rena Kawasaki writes about this in Middle School Samba on page 11. Make sure you read her thoughts.

We wish all departing teachers and students all the very best for their future. We hope to meet you again someday!

First Ever Extended-Essay Café!

As one of their requirements for the IB Diploma, OIS and SIS students taking the IB have to write a 4000 word essay. This can be a daunting task. One of the most challenging aspects of the process is planning the writing of the essay. It can be tricky getting your thoughts straight, and preparing your line of argument. A great way to help clarify things through this phase of the process is to talk over your ideas with different people. For this reason, Ms. Cheney, the Extended Essay Coordinator organized SOIS's first ever "Extended Essay Café". After school on June 22, all the SOIS juniors taking the IB Diploma met in the Conference room, along with teachers, parents and friends. Over coffee and snacks, the juniors discussed their plans and progress.

The afternoon was a great success. Several students and teachers stated that they had enjoyed the process. Parents who attended seemed to be having a good time, too.

Thanks to Ms. Cheney, for organizing the event, and good luck, juniors, as you start writing your essays in earnest!



Behind the Scenes at the World Scholars Cup

by Nanami Hasegawa



Most people have probably heard enough about the World Scholars' Cup in Tango, from the Kansai Rounds SOIS hosted, the trophies our scholars received and the numerous trips around the globe. However, not much is known about what happens behind all of the fun and competition so this article will give a glimpse of behind the scenes of WSC.



It was also a good opportunity to show some leadership. On the first day, the scholars who were not part of the Doshisha delegation had no idea where they were going so we became human GPSes. With a map in one hand, we lead scholars to their different rooms and helped people with technological issues. Although it was tiring to attend to people's needs across campus, it was satisfying to see problems get solved and be part of the solution.

The most memorable part of this experience was the awards ceremony. We were able to hand out some of the medals and it was nice to see many SOIS scholars come up to me and receive their medals for their hard work. This experience made me realize that it is possible get joy out of seeing other people being happy and that I do not have to be always jealous of other's accomplishments.

Shoutout to all of the scholars and people who were involved in the Kansai Round! You all made this a positive experience and good luck at the global round! In addition I would also like to thank everyone that came onto the stage during our school's "talent" of dancing to *Starships* by Nicki Minaj to save Noah and I from embarrassment during the talent show.

As a participant that went to all three rounds, I thought I knew a lot about WSC, however my time of being part of the WSC Kansai Committee proved that there was more to WSC than my days as a scholar. Firstly, problem solving was key to make Kansai Round successful. We only had the day before Kansai Round to go into Doshisha International Junior and Senior High School, which hosted Kansai Round for the first time this year. Therefore, when we faced the problem of papers not arriving on time, we had to go to a printing store to get necessary documents printed out for scholars to compete the following day.

The two days of Kansai Round were completely different from the ones I spent as a scholar. I distinctly remember cramming at the last minute and constantly worrying about the upcoming debates. However, this year I was able to step back from the stress and enjoy the opening ceremony while setting up the debate rooms. The classrooms of Doshisha were spacious and clean, which made setting up the debate rooms a smooth process. At the same time, it was a new place for some of the SOIS volunteers so some of us got lost multiple times during the regional round.



"Ask for Help!" Words of Advice From a Recent Graduate

by Meg Hoffmann

"Be strong enough to stand alone, smart enough to know when you need help, and brave enough to ask for it."

All throughout middle school and high school, I thought that being independent was "cool". I didn't believe that I needed others to rely on, and this was mainly because people often assume that growing older means learning to become independent. Although this is true to a certain extent, it is also important to know that there is nothing wrong with asking for help when you absolutely need it. I worked hard during my middle and high school years, but perhaps I worked a bit too hard, because I slowly began to burn out as the years went by. It was during my most personally difficult times that I was also a part of student council. Working with other student council members was when I began to realize that, in fact, it is quite desolate and stressful to try and do everything on your own. Due to my position as president, I was frequently told that it would be important for me to take on full responsibility if there was an issue or if something went wrong. For this reason, I began to pressure myself even more and tried to take control of everything so as not to mess up. However I quickly learned that perhaps one of the most important qualities of being a member of student council or any team is that you must learn the importance of teamwork and working collaboratively. As president or captain, you must learn to assign members to take on certain tasks instead of trying to do everything on your own. As obvious as this sounds, it can be quite difficult for people to do this. Over time I learned to let others take on tasks, and relied on others when things started to become too overwhelming. I also learned that, people ARE in fact willing to help, and all you have to do is ask.

Outside of student council, I learned to talk to teachers when I felt stressed or stuck. Opening up about my personal issues helped teachers understand my situation and in return they were incredibly supportive. I also relied on my friends, perhaps even a bit too much, but I honestly don't think I would have been able to get through high school if it were not for the numerous times I ran into my friends arms and burst into tears. By allowing myself to rely on others for help and support, I was able to accept the fact that no human is capable of being completely independent no matter how much they try.

Considering that this is my last *Tango* article, I thought I would leave a piece of advice: when life gets a bit unbearable, it is more than okay to ask for help. It is okay to barge into a teachers room and start sobbing uncontrollably (yes, I have done this). It is okay to miss a class in order to talk to a counselor. It is okay to not be okay. Once you find the strength to ask for help, you will slowly feel yourself become more relaxed and in control of your life.

I would like to end this article by thanking the numerous teachers and students at SOIS who have helped me get through some rough times. You have given me the strength to push through any future obstacles I may encounter in life, and I hope that one day I am able to support and help others the way so many of you have done so for me.

Congratulations on your Graduation OIS, Seniors!



Watch the Plate

by Takayoshi Tokai

Baseball is, to the casual spectator, a deceptively simple game. It is a sport where eight men stare at another man throw a small ball at a someone equipped with a long wooden stick, while another man dressed in black bel-lows either “ball” or “strike.”

Baseball is, of course, much more than this. Unique among most popular sports, much of a baseball game involve its players staying put, as they do nothing except stare at the player with the ball chucking said ball really fast at the person with the stick. There is none of the fluid back-and-forth that earned association football the nickname “the beautiful game,” nor are there the exciting, gravity-defying plays that have come to define basketball (the slogan of its premier basketball league, the NBA, is “where amazing happens”).

Yet a baseball game, in its own way, is enthralling. It features a battle of wits :

between the pitcher and the batter, between the catcher against the batter, between the opposing manager and the batter, and so forth. It is a game of turns, where each team is awarded a fair shake in scoring opportunities.

One of the greatest joys for a baseball fan is watching a dominant pitcher stalk the mound, glaring at the next batter, having already retired the two before him, and promptly striking this next batter out. Indeed, a formidable pitcher is as much of baseball's allure as watching strong, steroid-free men wallop balls out past center field, where fans begin to jostle over the home run ball.

In 2015, during the NBA professional draft, a 7-footer named Kristaps Porzingis was drafted by the moribund New York Knicks franchise. The Latvian power forward was promptly showered with boos from the New York faithful, who had hoped that their forever-mismanaged basketball team would have drafted a better-known prospect. They would come to regret their boos, for Mr. Porzingis would soon display his star potential during his rookie season.

Porzingis is a physical marvel. He is 7-feet tall, but has the agility and grace of somebody much smaller. He is a fearsome defender, already famous by his first season for his vicious blocks. Despite these qualities, the Latvian is especially valuable for another reason: he can shoot.

The NBA is currently going (or has gone through already) a three-pointer revolution. Whereas “big men” like Mr. Porzingis would have once stayed primarily within the three point line in order to score from close range (and perhaps mid range), the recent emphasis on shooting three point shots over shooting inefficient mid-range shots (after all, 3 is greater than 2) has made players like Mr. Porzingis, “big men” who can stretch the defense by challenging the opposing defense from beyond the three point line a sought after commodity. Due to the rare nature of his talents (and physical attributes), the Latvian star has been labeled a “unicorn” by players and fans alike.

This year, Major League Baseball gained its own “unicorn,” a Japanese phenom named Shohei Ohtani. A “two-way player,” Mr. Ohtani can both pitch and hit, something that has been unheard of since the legendary Babe Ruth hung up his cleats and called it a career. Mr. Ohtani is supremely valuable, because most starting pitchers play only once a week, and he is able to play as a batter when he is not pitching. This essentially gives his team, the Los Angeles Angels, two players for the price of one roster spot, which would have made the Japanese Angel useful even if he were only average as a pitcher or batter.

However, what makes him truly special is his elite potential in both batting and pitching. As a batter, Mr. Ohtani has exhibited power belying his slim frame. Ohtani the pitcher has been no pushover, either. In just his second outing in Major League Baseball, the Japanese right-hander took a perfect game (allowing no runners on base) into the seventh inning.



Of course, his skills were well known, even before he set foot on American soil. In 2016, during the deciding game of the Pacific League Climax Series, which determined whether or not Ohtani's now-former team, the Fighters, would advance to the Japan Series, he stepped onto the mound in the decisive ninth inning, having played the previous eight as the Designated Hitter. This particular inning was notable, for Mr. Ohtani made history by hurling a 165 kilometer per hour fastball, a Japanese record for the fastest pitch ever thrown, breaking the record previously set by none other than Shohei Ohtani, who coincidentally had also broken Shohei Ohtani's record (163 km/h) with his 164 km/h pitch. The Fighters would advance to the Japan Series; Ohtani having so utterly demoralized the opposition that they could not muster even a hit against him.

In the Japan Series, Ohtani would make his presence known again, this time as a batter, by with his “sayonara hit,” driving home the game-winning point in extra innings. The Fighters, who had been down 2-0 in the series, were then buoyed by this win to complete a famous comeback by winning the next three games and the overall series. The Fighters' victory in 2016 was their first since 2006, when another current-Major League pitcher by the name of Yu Darvish led them to a victory over the Chunichi Dragons. The Fighters would, after 2006, reach the Japan Series again in 2007, 2009, and 2012, only to fall to their opponents each time. The 2016 Series victory would validate a gamble the Fighters had taken in 2012.

In 2012, a promising Japanese high school pitcher, who was said to be able to throw 160 km/h, requested that he not be drafted in the Japanese baseball draft, as he wished to go directly to America. The Fighters, who had lost their star pitcher, Yu Darvish, to the Texas Rangers in America two years before, paid the teenager no mind.

The Fighters, having one of the smallest budgets in Japanese baseball, are known for their unconventional and forward thinking ways, but even then, their drafting of the teenage Shohei Ohtani seemed to be an incredible risk. The Fighters had, after all, wasted their first round pick the year before on an unprofessional pitcher who refused to play for any team other than the Yomiuri Giants. With the selection of Ohtani, the Fighters had run the risk of wasting yet another valuable first round pick.

During negotiations with Ohtani, the Fighters made numerous promises, one of which was the promise that Yu Darvish's number, 11, would be worn by Ohtani should he sign, but only one would ultimately be the deciding factor in the prospect's decision to sign. The Fighters promised to let Ohtani hit.

If Ohtani had gone directly to America, he would have been forced to choose between pitching and batting. Instead, in 2014, Ohtani became the first, and only, player in Japanese history with at least 10 wins as a pitcher and 10 home runs as a batter in a season. And when Ohtani declared his intention to play for a Major League team just last year, he was courted as someone who could play as both a batter and a pitcher. MLB teams lined up to give Ohtani their sales pitches, every one of which

included a guarantee that he would do both. The tables had turned. It was Ohtani who now was the master of his fate.

Though his very existence as a “unicorn” in baseball is revolutionary, there is something extremely traditional about his approach to the game. Ohtani is the latest in a long line of Japanese craftsmen. Though he is a superstar on the pitcher’s mound and in the batter’s box, he remains an enigma off the field. It is said that he sends home much of his salary to his parents. Money certainly seems to be no concern to him; he left millions of dollars on the table by refusing to play one more season in Japan, after which he would have qualified as a “free agent” in America. Instead, he took the league minimum, sacrificing an estimated \$200 million in order to “challenge” himself in the majors a year earlier.

His diligence, his hard work, his attitude, and his approach to baseball have clearly paid dividends for him. He is the latest Japanese baseball superstar, and one who will almost certainly be inducted into the Japanese Baseball Hall of Fame, based on his exploits before he even reached 22 years of age. His versatility is an asset that may inspire a revolution in the way people approach the sport itself.

Ohtani came to prominence during a period of time wherein Japan finds itself at a crossroads. With a decreasing workforce and a rapidly growing elderly population, Japan finds itself struggling to maintain its current position as one of the preeminent economic powers of the world. Japan must become more efficient, more adaptable, more dynamic, and more skilled in order to take on its demographical issues. Japanese workers must become more productive, more capable, and more efficient than ever. Barring a significant change in immigration policy, the Japanese workforce will shrink.

Employers will have to do more with less. Efficiency maximization will be the only way for Japan to compete with the other, more resource-rich economies of the world. While firms may have to overhaul and rethink the way they approach the workforce, the workforce must also equip itself with skills that make restructuring worth prospective employers’ time. Shohei Ohtani is an invaluable asset to the Los Angeles Angels organization precisely because he is an elite pitcher and batter rolled into one player. One player only takes up one roster spot. This leaves a roster spot open for the Angels to get even better. He is multifaceted, dynamic.

He is a talent that reflects the demands of a new millennium. It is no longer sufficient to be proficient at one thing. It cannot be. The breakneck speed at which information technology developed has inevitably disrupted the status quo. What once was novel is now normal. While Shohei Ohtani may be a novelty today, it is a fact of life that somewhere in Japan, Puerto Rico, or some other baseball-mad place that the “next big thing” is honing his (or her) skills. Innovation drives future innovation. Perhaps some day Shohei Ohtani’s will be a dime a dozen. What’s clear is this: baseball, like all other things, will inevitably continue its frontwards march, as an example of tradition adjusting to match the needs of modernity.

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Photo from the Boston Globe

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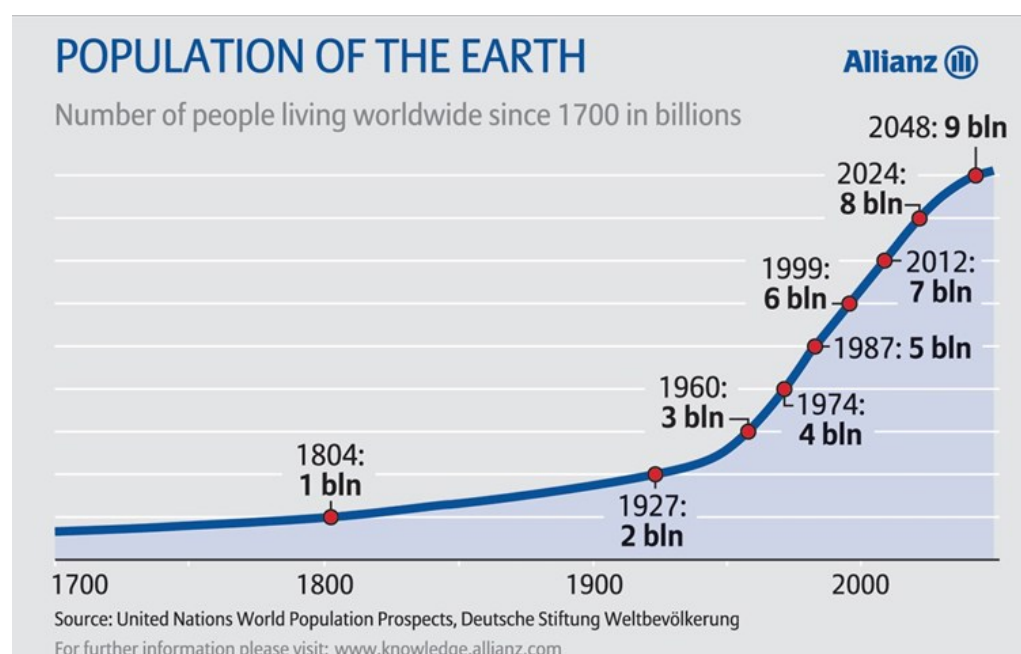


Photo from theatlantic.com

World Population Explosion by Sho Sakura

100 million people - this may be a figure that you are familiar with. It is the forecast of Japan's population in 2050, according to the Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism.¹ As of 2018, Japan's population is 127 million.² This means the population of Japan will decrease by approximately 20% over the course of the next 32 years. The population decline is expected to lead to other problems. Naturally, for many of us, this is one of the biggest sources of anxiety about the future of the country and therefore the government is under pressure to take action. In fact, this is a common issue for quite a lot of countries around the world, like Russia and South Africa.³ We do know that a declining population will most likely create economic problems, and that governments will become increasingly urged to deal with the issue. However, from an environmental perspective, declining populations might be exactly what the Earth needs; besides, don't you think that the is already the world overpopulated in the first place?

We all know that the planet is not expanding. However, the human population is increasing at a frightening rate. Below is a graph that illustrates what this looks like.⁴



Currently, the world's population is over 7.3 billion.⁵ According to United Nations predictions, the world's population could reach 9.7 billion people by 2050, and over 11 billion by 2100.⁶ Hearing this makes you wonder, "Can the planet really support 11 billion people?" The answer to that is, of course, a simple "we don't know". However, what we do know is that such a large population would have problems like we currently do, but perhaps more of them and worse ones. Although we do not know for sure at this point whether the planet can potentially support that many people, perhaps we should be concerned.

According to an article published by the BBC, the key issue is not the population growth itself, but the increasing number of consumers and the scale and nature of their consumption.⁵ These issues include food shortage for a large proportion of the population especially in developing countries—worse than the current level—, the depletion of natural resources due to increased production of goods and services, and so many more. That being said, why should the human population keep increasing? Is it ethically correct to prioritize our own economic troubles over the environment of the planet, which gives us all life? Should we, and realistically, could we embrace the fact that population decrease is perhaps a good thing? Surely it all comes down to perspective, but we should look at this issue from different lenses rather than simply accepting the public opinion.

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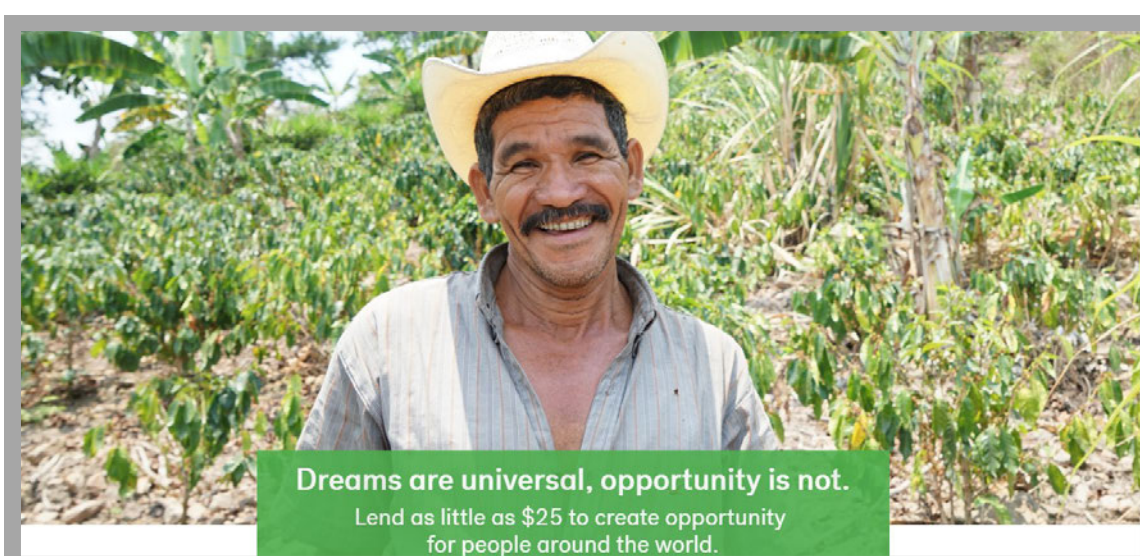
Kiva: A Way to Help Alleviate Poverty

by Yumiko Tajiri

"Kiva is an international nonprofit, founded in 2005 and based in San Francisco, with a mission to connect people through lending to alleviate poverty. We celebrate and support people looking to create a better future for themselves, their families and their communities."

This is a direct quote from the Kiva website, a place where people can connect to low-income households, entrepreneurs, and students, and lend money. People can select a person or a group of people from a range of categories, which show the name of the group, country, the amount of money that they need to borrow, and the ways that they will use the money. The people on the website who have applied for a loan are usually not able to borrow money from banks, and so they are struggling to start a new business, go to school, or feed their children. When a loan is made, 100% of the money is taken to the borrower, and the borrower will pay back the money after they have made profits from a new business, etc. There is no interest involved in the lending and paying back, and Kiva does not make a profit from this. People can start lending from \$25.

This is a great way to be able to connect with people around the world and support them with your money. So, if you would like to be involved in supporting low-income households and fighting poverty, pick a person on Kiva and lend your money.



MIDDLE SCHOOL SAMBA



The Plants of Hope Club

by Rena Kawasaki

Imagine a luminous green oasis right in the middle of the school. That's what goal is for the Garden of the Plants of Hope Club, which consists of middle school students who want to help the beautification of the school and relieve stress. This club grows tomatoes, cucumbers, basil, corn and many more different types of vegetables and flowers and its main goal is to create a delicious pasta plate made by the vegetables we grew. The founders of the club wanted to encourage middle school students who are living in the digital age to look up from their devices once in a while to reduce stress and think about what they can do for the school. The members worked hard every day to water the plants, collecting rainwater for the water process and finding what the plants need in order to thrive. So the next time you're in the courtyard and you look up to see the garden, imagine the members' hard work paying off and a forest helping with the beautification of the school.



Alpacas!

by Rena Kawasaki

On June 17th 2018, 41 SOIS scholars departed from KIX airport to the familiar sounding competition of WSC. While the earthquake struck Japan, the scholars were presented with their alpacas which are the mascots of these competitions. Many of those who did not participate in WSC may be wondering, what are these alpacas? Mind you, these are not just some random fluffy alpacas. These alpacas are the stress-relieving part of the whole program. The founders of the competition wanted the program to be a fun competition with some challenging parts to it. As mentioned in the Hanoi round video, the alpaca is not just a symbol or a mascot but captures the spirit and heart of the program and the time when you receive your alpaca is one of the most joyous moments of the whole competition. Before the alpacas were distributed my team was stressing out because we couldn't get questions that we knew correct. However, after the alpacas were given to us, we were able to relax and got a lot of the questions correct. Besides, it's always funny looking at the airport security staffs' surprised or confused expressions when they have to scan 41 alpacas.



Saying Farewell by Rena Kawasaki

It's the time of year again when we have to say farewell to friends and teachers that you have known since 4th grade or who came in just this year. Farewells are certainly the hardest part of a human relationship.

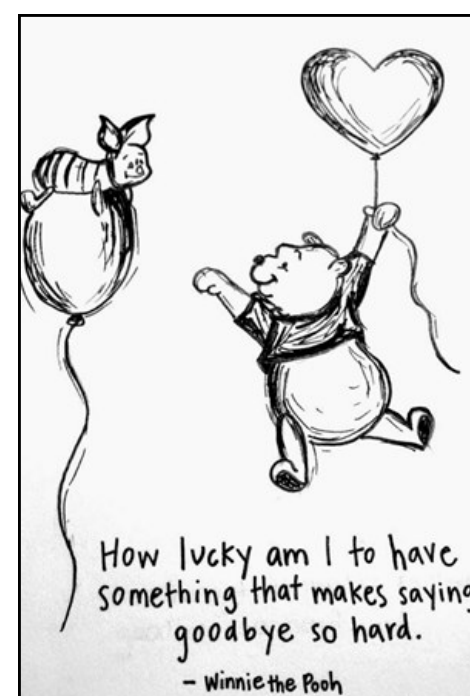
"If you're brave enough to say good bye, life will reward you with a new hello." –Paulo Coelho

The farewell is making room for new relationships but there is a part of you which does not want to part with your friend and you now that you will not feel this way any more once you don't meet them again making the whole process so difficult emotionally.

"How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard." –Winnie the Pooh

This is not always noticeable to a person who is sad to lose a friend. When you think positively, this quote is exactly right. If there was no relationship between you and that person. If you weren't close friends. If you didn't share a computer that faithful rainy day in inside recess or had fights that made your bond stronger.

Or if they weren't nice enough to lend their phone to you to play games on. Goodbyes are hard but it's the relationship you had with that person that makes it harder. Remember the importance of that relationship will always shimmer in the hardness of the goodbye.



Mr. E’s Mysteries: Episode 3:

The Death of Mr. E

Mr. E was found dead in his home in writing this letter to you. He was slumped over on his desk with a knife sticking out his back. We know who the killer is, however, we don’t have any incriminating evidence to take him in. It’s the most notorious serial killer of all time, Ted Muse. Ted has confessed to all his crimes including the kidnapping of Paul McCartney, murder of Tupac, and even slaughtering the entire species of unicorns. Unfortunately, he leaves no incriminating evidence, so we can never arrest him. He has now murdered Mr. E, who was the best detective in the world. He was actively researching Ted Muse for any evidence that he committed any of the crimes. It’s now up to you to avenge Mr. E and try to take down Ted Muse. You must be fast, for once he finds out you’re trying to take him down, Ted Muse *will come for you*. Good luck, detective.

-- The Government

Due to Mr. E’s untimely death, you now have full access to all of Mr. E’s files on Ted Muse. You can also view the police reports on each crime. No one has ever seen these files before. You need to find at least four pieces of hard evidence proving that the death was Ted Muse’s fault to bring him in.

Paul McCartney - Police file: Most of the public know that Paul McCartney is alive and still living a normal life. However, this life was interrupted in 1966 when he was kidnapped and his entire life was taken over by Ted Muse. Ted Muse locked him in a storage container and for 13 years, pretended to be Paul McCartney. Everything people saw Paul do, Ted Muse actually did. Paul has admitted to having been kidnapped for around 13 years, but there is no proof that it was Ted Muse, besides his own confession. Around 1981 Paul returned to his normal life and was freed from the storage container. There was nothing left inside but a chair, rope, and a broken contraption that seemed to have brung him food 2 times a day. We’re still not sure how it happened as Paul himself doesn’t remember anything.

Paul McCartney - Mr. E’s file: Upon further research I have found out that Ted Muse actually carries multiple PhDs, one of them in mechanical engineering. However, he has never made any contraptions and we have no gauge on his mechanical abilities. I have found out that Ted Muse lives somewhere in Texas. If I can find out where, we can get a search warrant on him.

Tupac - Police file: The public knows that Tupac was killed September 7, 1996, in a drive by shooting. What they don’t know is who shot him - *Ted Muse*. *Ted Muse was in the car and shot Tupac. According to his confession, he was against Ted Muse’s beliefs. At this time, the Black Panther political party was gaining a lot of ground, and Ted Muse presumably wanted to take out one of their most popular followers*

to trip them up. We know that Tupac was shot with .40 caliber rounds from a glock, and that he was driving a hot dog Chevy. Other than this, no information is known on the murder.

Tupac - Mr. E’s file: I know that Ted Muse didn’t just kill Tupac to have the Black Panther party lose ground. Tupac was intrigued by Ted Muse and was preparing to create an awareness program about Ted. This means that Ted Muse could be lying, or at least holding back facts. There were also no fingerprints on the gun, which means either Ted Muse was wearing gloves or it was a mechanical hand that fired the trigger. On other news I’ve narrowed the houses to a couple and I’m going to get a search warrant. I need to be careful here as he will kill me if he finds out I’ve warranted his house.

Unicorns - Police file: Unicorns were a real creature though they were extremely rare and nearly extinct. Ted Muse supposedly created a device that was able to track unicorns based on seemingly magical occurrences around the world. The supposed motive was to use the unicorn’s magic to slow his own aging to a crawl. As unicorns have gone extinct they are slowly disappearing from literature and being forgotten. By percentages there were many more stories with unicorns in the last century than this one. We are unsure when this slaughter began, but we believe that it ended in early 1967, shortly after Ted Muse took up the role of Paul McCartney. This would explain when an innocent named Bernie Sandals supposedly witnessed Paul McCartney kill a unicorn. We lack a transcript for this as he has gone mute after this occurrence, and can only communicate with yes and no questions.

Unicorns - Mr. E’s file: I’ve gotten it! I’ve gotten a search warrant on Ted Muse’s house! And it’s pretty interesting. I must hide, as I know he is coming. I hope I have enough time to send my apprentice detective on one last mission before he gets wrapped into this, it could help him. Inside the house there was a single unicorn horn on his desk, and I took it back with me, making sure not to get any fingerprints on it. I also found many various contraptions around the house, proving that he does create inventions. Finally, we were able to find a glock and .40 caliber rounds! I think we finally have enough information to bring him down!

Mr. E’s Murder - Police file: Mr. E was found dead on his desk two days ago, with a knife sticking out of his chest. There wasn’t much else left in the crime scene. However, we found a unicorn horn with Ted Muse’s fingerprints on it in the room, with no correlation to the murder. However, if Ted Muse got this horn off it means that the unicorn died. We still lack the information to take Ted Muse down, however.

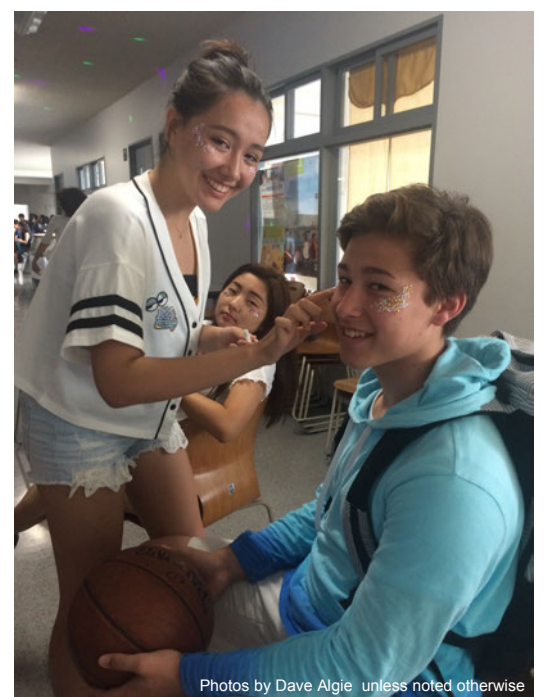
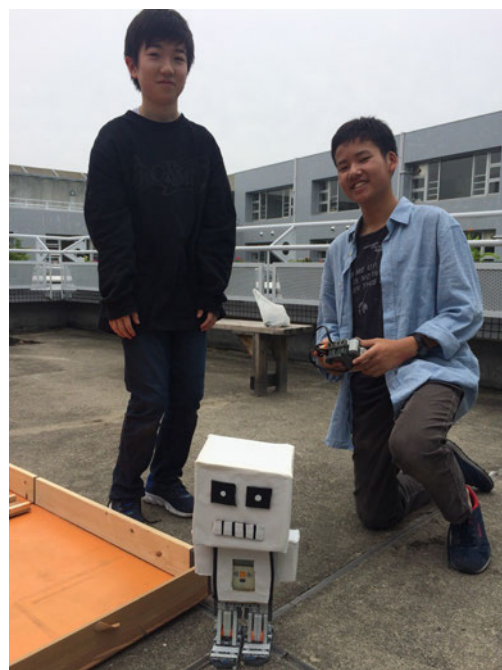
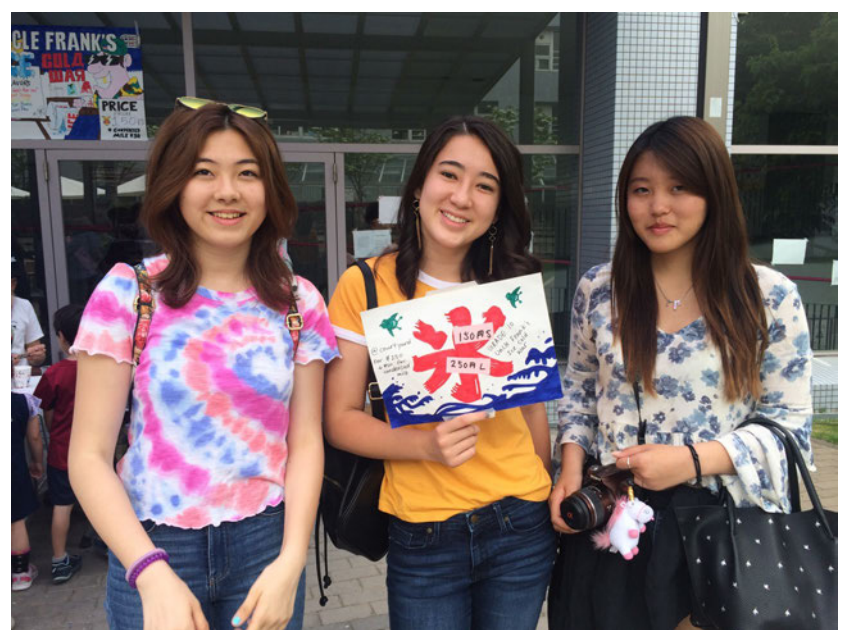
There are no hints for this mystery. Good luck!

Quick Story

by Xi Ming Pan

“I’d like you to meet someone.”
“In a second, sweetie.”
“Hurry. He won’t be here forever.”
“We are not keeping this one. The last one almost tore you to pieces.”
“Ugh, it’ll be fine. What could possibly go wrong?”
I could hear her eyes roll.
“I’d like you to meet my best friend forever,”
“Aren’t you a bit too young to be calling them that?”
“No! We promised. Forever and ever.”
“Right. So where is this mystery friend of yours?”
“He’s a bit shy. You have to wait a bit and let him come to you,”
“Okay?”
“Ooh, I feel him,”
“What?”
“Open up. He won’t judge! He’s seen me bawling my eyes out in the woods and he’s still here,”
“The woods?”
“Ooh! You can smell him. Kinda like a temple incense,”
“A Buddhist one?”
“Well? What do you think of him?”
“Of who?”
“Him! Right here!”
“What?”
“Isn’t he great? He’s not that bad looking if you ask me,”
“Where?”
“He seems a bit twiggy but he’s really strong,”
“Oh, honey...”
“And he’s got the most amazing smile. Lookit! He’s doing it now,”
“I don’t know how to say you this,”
“And his personality! He’s funny, caring, smart, and a little weird!”
“Maybe we should sit down before you get too excited again. We can talk about this when you’ve calmed down,”
“Don’t you just love him? Shake his hands, Mommy,”
“I’m sorry but you will have to shake it for me,”
“Okay! It’s cause of his dirty hands isn’t it. See, I told you! You should’ve cleaned it. I wanted her to like you,”
“That’s not really the case, but alright honey,”
“He’s not normally like this, I swear. He’s the best friend ever! You’ll like him if you talk to him more,”
“Maybe we can talk someday, but it doesn’t seem we can today. I’ll see you inside. Dinner’s almost ready,”
“I’ll say my goodbyes. See you upstairs. Well I guess this is goodbye... Just for now though. I know you’ll always be here for me. Forever and ever, right?”

SOIS School Festival 2018



Photos by Dave Algie unless noted otherwise

What's on TV?

with Sarah Kitamura



- Multiple accounts of close friendships between men and women without any implications that there will be more

- The few relationships that do exist between the main cast are developed naturally over time

Punching homophobes in the face and this not being frowned upon what so ever. — urbanmegafauna

The main white guy constantly calling out sexism, even casual sexism. — urbanmegafauna

He called out TRANSPHOBIA. In a show that has no “reason” to do it other than that they decided “Hey, transphobia sucks, let’s find a way to toss off a line about that at some point when it’s not even the topic of the scene.” — thepageofhopes

“It has a relationship, an awesome, awesome relationship, which, when it’s sabotaged, is done so by external circumstances, not bullpoo made up by the showrunners” —tzikeh

Anyway, now that you know what the show is about and why it’s important, you might be thinking (or even most definitely thinking) that this whole cancellation situation is ridiculous, that I was overreacting. “What you said just describes a show. It’s just a show, Sarah, it’s not the end of the world.”

Well, it’s not just a show for me, and it was the end of the world for me. I couldn’t bear it, along with thousands of other beloved fans of the show. So far this show has gotten me through school, whether I was extremely stressed or just relaxing on the weekend. I basically grew up with this show and have learned so much from it. The way FOX just cancelled it out of the blue got so many of its fans to rally against the decision. The ratings were not the best, but really, many of us believe that it was FOX’s fault because of the lack of support for the show since the beginning of its existence, and changing time slots constantly didn’t make anything better for the show and us.

That day, I was sick to my stomach and I should have been resting and not stressing, but I immediately jumped on to Twitter to check tweets regarding the show. To my surprise, it was the #2 trending hashtag, right under Eurovision. Me being me, I locked myself out of my Twitter account ages ago, so I created a brand new one just to rally alongside thousands of other people. Tagging Hulu and Netflix and other huge streaming networks to pick the show up. Tweeting to FOX and using the tags #saveb99, #renewb99 at rapid speed. Doing this did make me feel better, too, because I knew that so many other people were feeling the same way I did. We were all spiraling at the time, even the really famous people.

Famous? Very.

For example, here we have Lin Manuel Miranda who is well known for his genius creation of Hamilton (the musical). He tweets:

Me too, Mr. Miranda, me, too.



Next up, we have Mark Hamill who played Luke Skywalker in the infamous Star Wars series. Yes, him, too.



Brooklyn Nine-Nine's Cancellation and the Cancellation of the Cancellation

It was a Friday morning, and I recall feeling sick like the previous night. My mother allowed me to stay home that day. Much to my dismay, upon unlocking my phone while in bed, the the four-worded text message I received from my friend just made me feel worse than I could imagine: “Brooklyn 99 has been cancelled *insert two crying emojis*.” I didn’t even know it was possible to feel worse than I already did. I felt my heart drop to the center of the earth for the longest time ever. I was upset, furious, confused, and also incredibly nauseous due to being sick that same morning (great timing, FOX).

What is *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*? Why does it matter? I’ll happily answer your questions for you.

Brooklyn Nine-Nine is an American comedy sitcom—not the same as those with fake laughing tracks, thank the Lord—based on the lives of people working in the 99th precinct of Brooklyn: Det. Jake Peralta, Det. Amy Santiago (spoiler: now Sergeant Amy Santiago), Det. Charles Boyle, Det. Rosa Diaz, Sergeant Terry Jeffords, Captain Raymond Holt, Captain Holt’s personal assistant Gina Linetti, and Det. Michael Hitchcock and Norm Scully (though they aren’t as main as the others). Phew, a lot of names there, but each and every one of them are crucial to this show. The Nine-Nine wouldn’t be the same without them.

Now, this is the time where I explain why it’s important, but this one Tumblr thread (a pretty long one, but it’s definitely worth the read) *perfectly* sums up what I love about the show, so here it is.

“Why you should watch Brooklyn Nine-Nine”

-Of the seven main characters, only two are white men

- Of these two men, one has dozens of hobbies which includes local food critic, sewing, yoga, and other traditionally non-masculine interests

- The other seems to be a stereotypical overconfident jerk—who is Jewish and is played by a Jewish actor, might I add—however most of his arcs revolve around messing up and having to acknowledge and genuinely apologize for his screwups

- One of the main characters is a middle aged gay man who isn’t a TV stereotype, who is married and lovingly committed, bringing up his husband in casual conversation throughout the show without it being the only important thing about his personality

- Every female character has a distinct personality, goals and fears and aspirations, and all have multiple episodes focusing solely on exploring their characters and development

- GINA MOTHERfLIPPINGLINETTI

• Terry Crews as a big buff doting father (he basically plays himself. “All the unapologetic, casual-yet-pointed feminism.” —castiel-for-king)

• - Humor that never relies on offensive jokes or stereotypes, that is genuinely funny with great comedic timing

Continued from page 14

There's more? You bet.

Guillermo del Toro, the man behind the creation of *Shape of Water*, fought for this show, too.



Unfortunately, Hulu and Netflix both declined on picking the show up. And all hope flew out the back door. We had a 0.010101117661% (*totally* correct, I did the math) chance of Brooklyn Nine-Nine getting renewed. Then, only 30 hours later (though those 30 hours were miserable), NBC announced that Brooklyn Nine-Nine had found a home at their network. To be frank, I did tear up...and screamed.

I couldn't contain my happiness. It didn't feel real.

I was still mad at FOX for cancelling this show on their network, but during period of madness on social media, I realized that this whole situation wasn't all *that bad*.

I've come across hundreds of different tweets from other people, of what the show means to them and how the show has helped them, and at that moment I realized that this situation was actually a good thing for all of us. The hours the show remained cancelled brought so many people together, and only now I fully realize how big the fanbase of the show is. It was an amazing feeling. Also, because of the big news this cancellation turned out to be, more people will start watching the show after season six starts because this cancellation got the attention of many people who haven't watched it before.

This was a wild ride from start to finish, but in the end, to my surprise, it turned out to be the best thing that could have happened the all of us.



Summer Sushi

Now that it's getting warmer, we're inclined to want refreshing food that will help us fight the humid and hot days to come. One way of doing that, is to add a special something to your typical sushi roll (futomaki)!

Ingredients:

Part A:

- 1 umeboshi
- 1 shiso leaf

The Rest:

- Rice + vinegar (to make sushi rice)
Ingredients of your choice, I used:
spinach steamed in kelp stock
avocado
fried tofu
kimchi
thinly sliced carrots
- Nori sheet

Method:

1. Make sushi rice, so combine rice with vinegar, but be sure to let the rice cool first before you add vinegar! I usually eyeball the amount of vinegar, but I guess about 2 tea-spoons for each bowl of rice, maybe a bit more.
2. Chop up A finely, to make a paste with umeboshi and shies leaf.
3. Lay the nori sheet on a sushi-roll mat
4. Add a moderate amount of rice and spread over the nori so that the rice creates a layer approximately the thickness of one grain of rice.
5. MOST IMPORTANT STEP: Add the paste from step 2 and spread evenly over the rice. This adds a sour and refreshing touch to your sushi.
6. Add the rest of your ingredients and roll your sushi.
7. Wet your knife with a bit of water to ensure smooth cutting.
8. Enjoy!



During the busy times of IB, I tried my best (while failing at times) to make use of my time. Walking to and from school, Podcasts let me be immersed in one interesting topic or an alternate universe, which was relaxing after a day of school and let me concentrate more at home.

I personally recommend all of Vox Media's podcasts, which pic up various topics. My personal favourites include Worldly (focus on current global issues), The

Weeds (which discusses recent economic policies) and The Impact (how policy affects people). Other than those, Displaced, The Ezra Klein Show and Today Explained are all brilliant podcasts, which discuss issues in the Middle East to direct interviews with Mark Zuckerberg.

But maybe, you don't want to listen to a dense podcast about world events all the time. In that case, I recommend "Welcome to Night Vale", a podcast which is set in a radio station of an alternate universe, where every conspiracy theory is true. And now, the weather.



Talking TOK

with Dave Algie



Do you believe in the Loch Ness Monster?

Do you believe in the Yeti?

Or the Sasquatch (Bigfoot)?

What about the famed Ogopogo lake monster of British Colombia, in Canada?

How about the Kita Koen Pond Monster? This is less famous than the others, because I just made it up while my son and I walked to school through Kita Koen this morning. He has recently become fascinated by mysterious creatures like the ones mentioned above. Each week he gets several books out of the library about these fabled beasts.

I am sorry to say that I have been really dismissive of the existence of these creatures. I have plainly told my boy that I think all of this is nonsense. I may have thrown the word “mumbo-jumbo” around.

I guess this isn't being a good dad, (or a good TOK teacher). Instead of saying “That's all nonsense” , I should be asking my boy questions like, “*What evidence is there for these creatures? Do you find the evidence convincing? Why?*” If I ask questions like this more, with my own kids, and with my TOK students as well, I might encourage them to think for themselves, rather than just buy into my skepticism. I suppose it would be fine if my son believed in the Loch Ness Monster, as long as he had thought it through for himself, rather than just have him think, “Oh, the Loch Ness Monster doesn't exist. Because my dad says it's mumbo jumbo”.

Also, too much hard-headed skepticism can spoil the thrill of wondering at these kinds of mysteries. I remember back to when I was getting those mysterious creature books out of the library myself, when I was a kid. It was a spooky thrill to wonder if there was any truth in the tales I read.

So I went too far the other way, this morning, in telling my son a made-up story about “The Kita Koen Monster”, that has been seen many times and is blamed for several disappearances in the park over the years. I really freaked him out. I think he might have nightmares tonight.

In TOK class, we tend not to get into discussions about mystery creatures, or aliens, or conspiracy theories too much. TOK isn't necessarily about controversial, strange topics, per se. We are just as likely to find questions about knowledge in our everyday lives, or in the subjects we study in school.

Still, its always intriguing to think that there could be something out there, lurking in the shadowy forests, or in the depths of the murky loch.

Believe, or don't believe. But always ask yourself, “*What evidence is there for this? Do you find the evidence convincing? Why?*”



Goodbye to Mrs. Lamug

As we come to the end of the trimester, we say farewell to Mrs. Lamug. Mrs. Lamug has been the OIS school counselor for the past five years.

Through those years she has helped students through tough times, given them advice and comfort, and helped them make difficult decisions in planning their futures. She has also arranged countless college visits to keep students informed in regard to their college choices.



It's a huge task, made even more demanding by Mrs. Lamug being responsible for all OIS students from KA all the way through to Grade 12.

Mrs. Lamug has been constantly busy with all this, but has always kept her smile and her warm, positive attitude. Students have appreciated her kindness and her generosity with her time.

Teachers have been known to need some counseling and advice, too, and Mrs. Lamug has been an invaluable support to them. They speak of how lucky and happy they have been to have worked with her.

Mrs. Lamug would be the first to say that she is a member of a team -an excellent team - of counselors who work together to help students from both schools. Last year we said goodbye to Mrs. Truscott. In March this year, the SIS counselor, Takagi sensei, left. Both worked closely with Mrs. Lamug and she developed deep friendships with each of them. She is equally close to the new counselors, Kawahara sensei and Suzuki sensei. It is obvious that the counseling center is another place the two schools come together with happy results. Mrs. Lamug speaks warmly of the team she works with there. “There is just so much love.”

Mrs. Lamug will be moving to Singapore, where she will be doing some more counseling, and, she says, spending lots of time pursuing her great love of reading. Singapore is conveniently close to her home country of the Philippines, so she will be able to spend even more time visiting her three daughters who are studying there. We wish her all the best and look forward to catching up with her again in the future.



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AISA Girls' Soccer Champions! *By Lilian Tsubaki*

The High School Varsity Girls' soccer team brought home the gold this AISA tournament with zero losses! Not only did we become a stronger team in terms of actually playing on the field, but bonds between girls were strengthened on this trip as well. Starting off the tournament with a 2-3 hour bullet train ride bound for Yokohama, us girls were prepared to dominate the tournament, as well as have an amazing time!

That evening, we went to a nearby park, overlooking the Yokohama Bay Bridge and the bright lights below. We had a mini rock-out session, blasting music and dancing. My favorite part was when someone started playing the High School Musical playlist; we jammed out to that for a long time.

The next day, we had a couple of games, winning both. The two wins were all the more sweet, as it meant that we would have our games in the afternoon the next day, meaning we could sleep in. That night, we adventured into China Town, eating a delicious meal; I even tried jelly fish! We all clinked our glasses, congratulating each other on the wins of the first day.

Since we stayed in the dance room of Yokohama International School, there were gymnastics mats and other equipment to play with, so we were always entertained. The best part was that there was a piece of equipment that looked like half of a yoga ball, which some of us girls used to bounce on top of a stack of gymnastics mats. We stayed up late, but eventually crashed from exhaustion.

The next day, we won all of our games, once again. We celebrated with a banquet where we feasted on different types of curry. That was topped off with a trip to Starbucks; we all enjoyed some nice Frappes! We then went to a grocery store to buy breakfast for the next day, where Yui Takeuchi and I bought those whistle candies, which came with a small plastic dinosaur toy and a little plastic bow.

The next morning, we reluctantly packed our things and took taxis to the train station, and took trains until we got to the bullet train station. When we arrived at Osaka Station, everyone was sad to say goodbye to the seniors and to the season as a whole. This was the strongest that our team had ever been; we won both WJAA and AISA. Some tears were shed, and everyone said their goodbyes.

I, myself am extremely sad to say goodbye. I will miss our team's unique style of play: weaving through defenders, passing through-balls, and constantly switching positions. More importantly, I will miss all of the friends I've made through all of the soccer seasons I've been a part of. The bonds that I've created with some of the girls are amazing, and I'm so thankful that I had the opportunity to not only play with them, but get to know them better!



Sabers “Sports Shorts”

Coach Heimer, AD

Sabers Athletics Facebook page: ✓ **Check it out.**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/SabersAthletics/>



SHOUT OUTS

To the one, the only, the legendary Coach Routh: “Once a Saber, *always* a Saber.” Good bye, good luck, go Sabers!

To new SSCers Rina, Konatsu, Tsubasa, Kei, Taichi: welcome aboard.

To Sabers TV MCs (Akari, Maki, Airi, Arina, Hinako) and to the SSC on your Sabers awards celebration work: thank you, thank you, thank you – prepared, poised, polished, professional, perfect. MIP? *Most impressive performance.*

To members of the “SaberStrong” strength club: *Be strong. Sabers Strong!*

SABERSTRONG

Sabers athletic awards 2017-18

<http://sabers.senri.ed.jp/awards.html>

Congratulations to these deserving Sabers student athletes:

Haruna Tomiguchi, SIS graduate: Dr. Fukuda Scholar Athlete of the Year (female co-recipient)

Hana Ikeda, SIS graduate: Dr. Fukuda Scholar Athlete of the Year (female co-recipient)

Neo Yokoyama, SIS 11: Dr. Fukuda Scholar Athlete of the Year (male)

Yulia Ikumi, SIS 12: Sabers Outstanding Athlete of the Year (female)

Keita Sasaki, SIS 11: Sabers Outstanding Athlete of the Year (male)

“Rattling Sabers” commentary

Peter Heimer, SIS English teacher, Sabers AD and coach

Citius, Altius, Fortius. With the 2020 Tokyo Olympics on the horizon and the Sabers Fitness Floor open for business, I’m sure the Olympic motto is on everyone’s mind. I mean, what athlete – what *person* – doesn’t want to be able to run faster, jump higher, be stronger? Sabers athletes I’ve talked to recently have told me that they know that if they were faster and stronger they would achieve greater success on the court, on the field, around the track, in the pool. And those athletes seem to understand that dedicated strength and speed training can help them run faster and jump higher, and spike and throw and kick and defend and box out more powerfully. Yet, very few Sabers athletes lift weights or run sprints during the off-season. I wonder why.

Is it a time issue (too much homework)? Is it a “fear of the unknown” issue (afraid to try something new)? Is it embarrassment (too shy to work out in front of others)? A female athlete told me that girls might be intimidated by boys, or that some girls think that their muscles will get too big. Another athlete told me that not many coaches promote strength and speed training.

I am guilty of this scenario: I want something (i.e., an AISA championship or a “beach bod”), I know what I need to do to get it (i.e., strength training, speed work, plyometrics, proper nutrition), then I don’t do what I need to do, and finally I wonder why I didn’t get what I wanted.

All SOIS students – and teachers! – please don’t be afraid to try something new to get what you want: to be faster, stronger, more powerful, more explosive, more flexible, more agile, more athletic. Visit the Sabers Fitness Floor: <https://sabers.senri.ed.jp/strength.html>. (And while there, we can debate this TOKish statement: “Physical strength is the most important thing in life. This is true whether we want it to be or not.”)

“Can I Have a Word?” interview

by Peter Heimer



Mr. Michael Routh came to SOIS in August 2012 and since then has served admirably as middle school and high school PE teacher, high school boys basketball coach, and middle school boys volleyball coach, playing a major role in the academic and extracurricular life at SOIS. For this inaugural edition of “Can I have a word?” I recently sat down with Coach Routh and asked him: Can I have a word?

(This transcript has been lightly edited for brevity, clarity, and translation of Aussie slang into standard English.)

Coach Heimer: Coach Routh, can I have a word?

Coach Routh: Yeah, but make it quick. I have a game of “horse” to play.

Heimer: Coach, you came to Osaka after previously teaching PE and coaching basketball in Singapore and Egypt, right?

Routh: Right.

H: What brought you to Japan?

R: I think it was a Boeing 747. Also, I was excited to live in a new country and experience Japanese culture.

H: Can you tell us about some favorite memories of teaching and coaching at SOIS?

R: Three enjoyable years with the current grade 8s in homeroom, endlessly enthusiastic grade 6 PE classes, MS/HS high jump records shattered, chaotic circus classes, and enjoyable SIS seniors. Winning 2 basketball and 5 volleyball Sabers championships. And every single win vs CA.

H: Who was your favorite student?

R: Too many to name.

H: Which student did you dislike the most?

R: No comment.

H: Teachers who annoyed you?

R: I can’t say.

H: Come on.

R: I’ll tell you later.

H: What challenges have you faced as a teacher and coach here?

R: Obviously the shared program and the differing levels of English have been a challenge for both me and the students. But it also makes the shared program lessons enjoyable as you never know what you are going to get and there is always a laugh to be had at a “lost in translation” moment on a daily basis.

H: What makes SOIS different from other international schools?

R: Two schools in one is very unique. I have never seen a school where sooooo many students actually *want* to stay at school after hours so much. It’s great that the students enjoy the school and many see it as a second home. Very positive atmosphere and a lot of laughing and smiles around campus.

H: If there is one thing you could change at SOIS, what would it be?

R: Have Aussie meat pies and vegemite sandwiches on the cafeteria menu.

H: What about working in the most densely populated PE office in all of East Asia? The SOIS PE office is so small that there isn't room even for a chair for you. You have to stand up all the time.

R: Wouldn't change a thing: the cramped size, the lack of a window/outside view, germs flying around in winter, the constant thudding of basketballs from the gym floor above, stepping over Mr. E's outstretched legs to get out of my desk area 20 times a day, the waft of sweaty, stinky boy smell coming from the changing rooms, the constant signing of make-up sheets.....what more could you ask for?

H: How many kinds of sportsmanship are there?

R: Everybody knows this – 3: poor sportsmanship, good sportsmanship, and, say it with me, *Sabers sportsmanship*.

H: What will you miss most about Japan?

R: The food, cultural festivals, feeling of complete safety, and the umpteen quirky 'only in Japan' moments.

H: Can you use chopsticks?

R: Better than I can speak Japanese....just.

H: Can you eat *natto*?

R: Notto *natto*.

H: Will the Socceroos advance out of their World Cup group?

R: Fair dinkum, they've got a crackin' chance. And they better advance as I've got a few lobsters riding on it.

H: World Cup rugby next year in Japan: All Blacks or Wallabies?

R: Anyone....absolutely anyone... other than those All Blacks! (Sorry, Ms Udy and Mr. Algie.)

H: Michael Jordan or LeBron James?

R: Oh, please! Jordan is and always will be the GREATEST. I could take LeBron 1 v 1.

H: Where are you going now from Japan?

R: A brand new school in Hangzhou, China. It is owned by a prestigious school in London that has been around for 150 years. They are branching out into international education and have targeted China as a place for growth. All the teachers, students, and sporting facilities will be brand new when the school opens in early August.

H: Any last words of wisdom for your students and players?

R: Work hard, play harder, and follow your dreams. Before you know it you will be my age! But as they say: 'time flies when you're having fun'. Thank you to all those students with whom I've been able to make positive educational and personal connections over the last six years. I look forward to my return visits. Once a Saber, *always* a Saber!

H: Thank you for your many years of service to SOIS, Coach Routh, and best wishes in the future.

R: Can I go now? I have to go beat Eojin, Achyuta, Harry, Mao, Shimon, and Ryo in a basketball game of "horse"...*again*.



"It's A Fun Club!" – SOIS Table Tennis by Xi Ming Pan

Table Tennis aka "Ping Pong" for all you Chinese people out there:

I have one of those mothers that believes that every child needs a talent. Unlucky for her though cause she got one without one. So she decided to put me into ballet class. Which I quit in a week. And then into piano class. Which I also quit. In a year or so. There was also art class, flute class, and Chinese. Those went in 5 months, 2 months and a day. Of course there were others, but I wasn't the type to sit still. She thought it was just a phase—something in my head. "You are perfectly fine with sitting in a corner with a book," she said. But that is a rant for another day. My love for books also resulted in my horrible eyesight. To which Mother's friend suggested ping pong. Fun.

Sticking me into that class with all the other near-sighted geeks was the best decision Mother had made that year. And to that, I am forever grateful, even though I was a whiney, ungrateful child about it. Although tiring, they honed skills that I am now finding very useful.

I stopped playing shortly before coming to Japan. Okay maybe not shortly, but it sure feels like it. I had completely forgotten about my racket and only dug it out-

when I found out about a table tennis club here. I joined to see just how much I remembered and I fell back in love with the game. Fine, not really. It was a slow process but I eventually ended amazing company amongst many Japanese people. At one point, I realized that I was playing for the conversations I had with people in between games—although the games were a nice bonus.

Of course, things got more serious during the games that we played at the end. Although I felt slightly scared to have been the only girl that was picked to go to the "tournament" at another school, I'm glad I went. Not much of a tournament considering how bad we were compared to them, but that was expected. Their school practiced year round—a huge dedication if you, ask me.

Nevertheless, I still enjoyed the tournament—mostly because of the doubles. I felt honored that the other person preferred to have me as a partner over this other guy. I had played with other members of the club at school but each time I'd just bump into them and we'd miss the ball. Or I guess we made each other lose the ball. However, this time around, something clicked and as weird as it may sound, Gotty (this guy in OIS) and I were pretty much waltzing around our side of the table.

We won one set, which does not sound like much of an accomplishment, but our school as a whole only won a whopping three sets out of maybe like 50 sets. It really was something quite memorable.

All in all, it is a fun club. It doesn't matter if you don't know how to play because the other members there will help you figure it out. It's not as intense as other sports like basketball or volleyball, but it's not boring either. The people there, although quiet at the start, have a great sense of humor hidden under those glasses.

Try it out once, and maybe you won't be able to put that racket down. Or not. As Mother says each and every time with increasing frustration, "it's fine if you don't like it; at least you tried".





Sabers Sports



A First Season of High School Baseball

by Owen Kralovec

Baseball, may seem like a very vapid and monotonous game. To the layman it is just a game where players in baggy pants try to hit a ball with a stick. However, to me it is so much more than that. It may sound clichéd but I truly believe it. The snap of the leather after a hard thrown pitch. The metal 'cling' of the bat. The sound of dirt crunching under the cleats of players. It is truly a euphoria of sounds. I also, like many Americans, feel as if there are only four major sports: baseball, football, basketball, and hockey. Baseball is without a doubt one of my favorite sports, and I think that it is by far the best sport. I am not saying that I don't love the others, because I do. Baseball is the only sport in which the team that is winning must continue to play the game. Every other sport allows the team that is winning to basically "ice" the game. In football, a team can take a knee. In basketball, a team can dribble out the clock. In hockey, a team can just skate around with the puck. Baseball forces the winning team to continue to pitch and play defense, which means no game is over until the final out is made. Which brings me to my next point. Any team can make a comeback at any time. With the other sports, it is not necessarily the case. In football, you don't see many teams score five-straight times to tie a game. Sure, it happens, but not very often.

Now that I have made my case for why baseball is one of the best sports. I would like to reflect on my experience this year in high school Sabers baseball and why you the reader (if you are a male and in 9th grade or above) should join. For our practices we switched between the school field and the Suntory baseball field. We practiced the fundamentals, such as turning double plays (A defensive play in which a runner is on first base, the ball is hit and the defensive team tags both 2nd and 1st base before any runner can reach the base), throws to first, as well as batting practice. It was arduous work, but it was necessary in order to become the best. Our first game was against Marist, and we handily defeated them 12-0 with bewildering, and mind boggling pitches thrown by our aces (baseball lingo for best pitchers) Keita Sasaki and Shuto Arayama. It was fun seeing how fast each pitcher could finish an inning.

After a couple of practice games, we then had our tournament at Nagoya. We were the favorites to win the tournament. So pressure was on for the Sabers to win the title again. On our first day we met at Shin Osaka Shinkansen Station. We then made our way on the bullet train for an hour and arrived in the humid and hot Nagoya. Our first game was against the JV team of Marist. The Sabers took care of business and moved on to play KIUA varsity team. We won again and all we had to accomplish the next day was to beat Nagoya the next day and we would be in the finals. During the evening we went to the onsen to relax and met a famous Japanese youtuber I didn't know. The next day, bright and early at 10 o'clock, we played Nagoya. It was the closest game. Keita Sasaki was slightly off his game, and gave up one run. Our other ace, Shuto Arayama, came and pitched a shutout game to advance us to the finals. To our amazement, the team which we would be facing had only 8 players instead of 9. They were the infamous Sons of the Light, crushing MS basketball boys hopes and dreams since 2014. It was a stagnant game for the first couple of innings, however once Tye Gazzard, 1st base captain, got a hit, the flood gates opened and we went on to win the game 7-0.

Overall, as I look back on my first experience of High School baseball, I can say it was something I will remember for a long time.

