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# **Education and football: a history of the cultural accommodation of British association football into Japanese society**

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## **Abstract**

Japanese educational institutions remain the country's prominent football culture exponents since its emergence in higher education extra-curricular activities during the late nineteenth century. In Britain, whilst professional football culture evolved rapidly following the sport's re-organisation in English public schools; Japan maintained a prolonged period of amateurism, which endured until establishing the professional J. League in 1992. After its acceptance as a physical education activity, football slowly circulated from extra-curricular activities at higher educational schools to secondary and elementary schools. From the introductory period to establishing the Japanese professional football league, football cemented its relationship with education, with university clubs dominating nationwide competitions and their prominent involvement in the Japanese national team. Also, despite the establishment of professionalism, educational institutions continue to significantly influence football culture throughout the country in terms of both the recruitment of players and the game's ethics. In particular, the efficacy of extra-curricular activities as a medium for Japanese youths' moral education and the cultural significance such institutions continue to retain are contributing factors.

## **Keywords**

Japan; football; education; extra-curricular; identity

## **Introduction**

Like many other modern sports in contemporary Japan, football remains implicitly education-centric compared to almost every other prominent football nation globally. Even with the relatively recent advent of professionalism, culminating in the J. League in 1992, amateur organisations are the dominant participants, their histories and contribution to the sport's development transcending their professional counterparts. Historically, Japanese educational institutions played an integral role in the diffusion of football and other western sports into the country, with their continued relevance in the face of the money-centric microcosm of modern football remaining a curious anomaly. How did football become so intertwined with education since its inception in Japan? Why do such organisations remain relevant despite the ever-expanding popularity of the

professional game? This paper will focus on clarifying football's integration into the Japanese educational system from three primary perspectives. Firstly, the sport became initially associated with Japanese education by forming extra-curricular clubs in secondary and higher educational institutions. Secondly, extra-curricular clubs fortified Japanese football culture within education through their historical involvement in predominant domestic and international competitions. Finally, extra-curricular football clubs remain significant due to their efficacy as Japanese moral education environments, a critical factor in their athletic identity development. These three perspectives combine to provide a narrative of football's integration into Japanese education and explain why Japanese football, in the face of professional football's growth, continues to remain education-centric.

### **The diffusion of Japanese football during the earlier period**

Japan's introduction to football contributed significantly to its alignment within the educational system. Modern sports culture in Japan has its roots in the 'opening' of the country in the 1850s to major Western powers,<sup>1</sup> and the subsequent Meiji Revolution, which instigated significant changes and contributed to its development into a modern nation-state. The initiation of the 1872 *Gakusei* (Education Ordinance) promulgated the country's first systematic educational regulation, aligning with the structure, teaching methods, and principles of its western allies.<sup>2</sup> The country sought numerous foreign professionals and academics to accomplish this, with Japanese ministries and state schools employing 928 British teachers to teach at their institutions between 1868 and 1889.<sup>3</sup> They brought with them not only their academic knowledge and technical expertise but also an enthusiasm for sports.<sup>4</sup> According to the Japan Football Association (JFA) official history, the Japanese first participated in organised football in 1873 at the Tsukiji Naval Academy, Tokyo, where British Royal Navy officer Lieutenant-Commander Archibald L. Douglas<sup>5</sup> taught the game to cadets during leisure time.<sup>6</sup> There is evidence

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<sup>1</sup> Marius B Jansen, 'The Opening of Japan', *Japan Review* 2 (1991): 191–202.

<sup>2</sup> Kaori Okano and Motonori Tsuchiya, *Education in Contemporary Japan: Inequality and Diversity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 15–6.

<sup>3</sup> Keiko Ikeda and J A Mangan, 'Towards the Construction of a New Regionalism? The End of East Asian Colonialism: Japanese Responses and Reactions to the Games of Asia', in *Japanese Imperialism: Politics and Sport in East Asia: Rejection, Resentment, Revanchism*, ed. J A Mangan and others (Singapore: Springer, 2018), 340.

<sup>4</sup> Allen Guttman and Lee Thompson, *Japanese Sports: A History*. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 91.

<sup>5</sup> Admiral Sir Archibald Lucius Douglas (1842–1913) was born in Quebec. In 1856, he became the first Canadian-born cadet to enter the Royal Navy. From 1873–5, he was appointed Director of a British naval mission to Japan, tasked with supporting the development of the Imperial Japanese Navy based on British traditions. For his significant contribution to Japanese naval practices, he was awarded the Order of the Rising Sun by the Emperor Meiji. Elizabeth Kellock, "'A certain liveliness in Sulu" 1876', *Asian Affairs* 22, no. 1 (1991): 46.

<sup>6</sup> Japan Football Association, *Nihon Sakkā no Ayumi* [The Progress of Soccer in Japan]. (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1974), 11–2.

that a year later, the Imperial College of Engineering, Tokyo incorporated football as a regular activity in mandatory 'gymnasium' classes,<sup>7</sup> under the stewardship of a 'Rymer Jones', an Englishman employed to teach preliminary surveying at the institution:<sup>8</sup>

In 1874, Mr Rymer Jones taught football as the only exercise in the Yamato residence, and after moving to Toranomon, Mr Barr and Mr Marshall continued to teach it. It was the most popular form of exercise around 1882, the rules being straightforward, with players divided into groups with kicking as the principal activity.<sup>9</sup>

The phrase 'kicking as the principal activity' is particularly noteworthy, indicating that the type of football being practised was a kicking and dribbling form, probably association football. Despite this, football failed to gain much of a foothold within the country's educational institutions. Physical exercise provision was considered a relatively low-priority for the Meiji government during this time, with foreign teachers being the primary proponents of instituting exercise in their establishments.<sup>10</sup> Given the relative infancy of football in Britain during the Education Ordinance, most teachers would have had limited interaction with the sport, save those who had previously played it. Initially, football was enjoyed primarily as recreation. The scarcity of teams meant there was no opportunity to organise inter-school fixtures, and the interest that students maintained in the sport was, at best, transitory.<sup>11</sup> Rules were anything but uniform, with the few existing publications' interpretations both inconsistent and over-simplified.<sup>12</sup> However, the lack of uniformity regarding the game's rules in Britain during this time was a probable contributing factor.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Imperial College of Engineering, *Imperial College of Engineering, Tokei* [Calendar of the Imperial College of Engineering 1873–74]. (Tokyo: Imperial College of Engineering, 1873), 7.

<sup>8</sup> Olive Checkland, *Britain's Encounter with Meiji Japan, 1868–1912*. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989), 81.

<sup>9</sup> Historical Materials Compilation Committee of the Imperial College of Engineering, *Kyū Kōbudaigakkō Shiryō* [Historical Materials of the Former Imperial College of Engineering]. (Tokyo: Seisisha, 1978), 184–5.

<sup>10</sup> Donald Roden, 'Baseball and the Quest for National Dignity in Meiji Japan', *The American Historical Review* 85, no. 3 (1980): 514–5.

<sup>11</sup> Yuko Kusaka, 'The emergence and development of Japanese school sport', in *Japan, Sport and Society: Tradition and Change in a Globalizing World*, ed. Joseph Maguire and Masayoshi Nakayama (London: Routledge, 2006), 19–22.

<sup>12</sup> Both in Frederick Strange's 1883 'Outdoor Games' and its 1885 Japanese adaptation 'Seiyō Kogai Yūgihō [Western Outdoor Games]' by Yasuhiro Shimomura the following rule is noted: '4. When the ball is in touch, the first player who touches it shall kick it into the course again from where it went out, and at right angles with the touch line'. This distinction detaches it from the Football Association rules, although it is not dissimilar to one of the rules employed at Harrow school. Tsuboi and Tanaka's 'Kogai Yūgihō [Outdoor Games]' published a few months later, contained a more accurate translation of the Association rules (see note 25). Frederick W Strange, *Outdoor Games*. (Tokyo: ZP Maruya, 1883), 21–5; Yasuhiro Shimomura, *Seiyō Kogai Yūgihō [Western Outdoor Games]*. (Tokyo: Taiseikan, 1885), 16–9.

<sup>13</sup> Graham Curry and Eric Dunning, *Association Football: A Study in Figurational Sociology*. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), 120–35.

In 1879, as a response to concerns over students' poor health and lack of physical development, the *Taisō Denshūjo* (National Institute for Gymnastics) was established.<sup>14</sup> The institute was the first central teaching establishment, tasked with developing a physical education curriculum and training teachers to deliver it to elementary schools nationwide.<sup>15</sup> Categories of exercise included: *kogai undō* (outdoor activities) incorporating many sports, including football;<sup>16</sup> free-standing callisthenics; and dumbbell exercises.<sup>17</sup> By March 1885, graduating teachers had been assigned to 37 prefectures within Japan, ensuring that physical education had become adopted nationwide.<sup>18</sup> The following year, numerous extra-curricular sports clubs began to appear in schools around the country, although it was over a decade before football joined them.<sup>19</sup> Whilst Japan had recognised football as a suitable form of exercise for schoolchildren, it had not yet embraced it as a sport. With participation so far limited to those in educational institutions, Japanese football culture's development would come principally from these establishments.

### ***Undōbu* (school athletic club activities): extra-curricular football participation in Japan**

These conditions ensured that the emergence of early football clubs in Japan had a strong affiliation to educational institutions rather than any grassroots footballing movement. The arrival of Jigorō Kanō as headmaster of the Tokyo Higher Normal School (now the University of Tsukuba) in 1893 provided the catalyst for nationwide sports club formation. Kanō was a prominent figurehead in the development of sports in Japan, responsible for the creation of judo in 1882, and in 1908 was appointed as the first Asian member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), subsequently establishing the Japanese Olympic Committee (JOC) three years later.<sup>20</sup> His prominent role in the Japanese Olympic movement combined with his ideals as an educator probably contributed to Japanese students' prominent role in the games and sports development

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<sup>14</sup> Richard L Light, 'Japan', in *Routledge Companion to Sports History*, ed. S W Pope and John Nauright (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), 476.

<sup>15</sup> Yoshio Imamura, *Nihon Taiikushi* [A History of Japanese Physical Education]. (Tokyo: Fumaido, 1970), 341–3.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 343–5.

<sup>17</sup> Benjamin Duke, *The History of Modern Japanese Education: Constructing the National School System, 1872–1890*. (London: Rutgers University Press, 2009): 251.

<sup>18</sup> Japan Football Association, *Nihon Sakkā no Ayumi* [The Progress of Soccer in Japan]. (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1974), 33.

<sup>19</sup> Yuko Kusaka, 'The Emergence and Development of Japanese School Sport', in *Japan, Sport and Society: Tradition and Change in a Globalizing World*, ed. Joseph Maguire and Masayoshi Nakayama (London: Routledge, 2006), 22–23.

<sup>20</sup> Yoshinobu Hamaguchi, 'Innovation in Martial Arts', in *Japan, Sport and Society: Tradition and Change in a Globalizing World*, ed. Joseph Maguire and Masayoshi Nakayama (London: Routledge, 2006), 10.

across the country.<sup>21</sup> In March 1896, he established the school's first football *undōbu*, requiring students to join a club and exercise for at least thirty minutes per day.<sup>22</sup> The term *undōbu* refers to extra-curricular sporting activities in Japan that are both ideologically and financially supported by the school, prominent in both secondary and higher education establishments nationwide. Shortly after its establishment, the club appointed Gendō Tsuboi to direct its activities.<sup>23</sup> Tsuboi, an ardent advocate of introducing physical education into the curriculum, was a former teacher at the National Institute for Gymnastics, later transitioning to a professor at Tokyo Higher Normal School following its absorption of the institute in 1886.<sup>24</sup> He played a significant role in the development of football in Japan with his 1885 book *Kogai Yūgihō* (Outdoor Games Method), which contained the first Japanese translation of the Football Association's (FA) laws of the game.<sup>25</sup> Despite this, the book, intended as a reference to sports and games for elementary schoolboys, re-phrased certain aspects of the game,<sup>26</sup> doubtless to make it more appealing to its intended audience. Further simplifications were made in the revised edition, published three years later, removing complicated laws relating to both 'off side' and 'fair catch'.<sup>27</sup>

There is noticeable pressure for present-day Japanese students to engage in an extra-curricular club during secondary education.<sup>28</sup> Japanese normal schools, specifically Tokyo Higher Normal School and Tokyo Prefectural Normal School (now Tokyo Gakugei University), played a vital role in instituting this cultural phenomenon during this period by mandating compulsory extra-curricular club participation.<sup>29</sup> Tasked with developing

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<sup>21</sup> Hisashi Sanada, 'Dai 12-kai Orinpikku Kyōgi Taikai (1940-nen) no Tōkyō Shōchi ni Kakawaru Kanō Jigorō no Rinen to Katsudō [The Philosophy and Activities of Jigoro Kano in the Bid to Host the 12th Olympic Games in Tokyo]', *Journal of Mass Communication Studies* 86, (2015); 69–70.

<sup>22</sup> Japan Football Association, *Nihon Sakkā no Ayumi* [The Progress of Soccer in Japan]. (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1974), 35.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 33–4.

<sup>24</sup> Hiroshi Kagawa, '121-Nen Mae, Nihon ni Sakkā o Hajimete Shōkai Shi Tōkyō Takashi - Tsukubadai ni Netsuka Seta Daikōrō-sha Tsuboi Gendō [Gendo Tsuboi, the man who first introduced soccer to Japan 121 years ago and helped it take root at Tokyo Higher Normal School and the University of Tsukuba]', *Gekkan Guran* [GRUN Monthly], November 2006.

<sup>25</sup> Gendō Tsuboi and Seigyō Tanaka, *Kogai Yūgihō* [Outdoor Games]. (Tokyo: Kinkodo, 1885).

<sup>26</sup> Eisaku Yamamoto and Mitsumasa Goto, 'Tsuboi Gendō ni Yoru Asoshiēshon- futtobōru no Nipponteki Kaishaku: "Kogai Yūgihō" Oyobi "Kaisei Kogai Yūgihō" ni Okeru Kijutsu no Hikaku Kentō Kara [Japanese Interpretation of Association Football by Gendō Tsuboi: Comparative Study on the descriptions in Kogai Yūgihō and Kaisei Kogai Yūgihō]', *The Japan Journal of Sport History* 16 (2003): 23–4.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 25–7.

<sup>28</sup> Tomohiro Osaki, 'Overworked teachers call for change as extracurricular supervision takes toll', *The Japan Times*, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/03/07/reference/overworked-teachers-call-change-extracurricular-supervision-takes-toll/> (accessed January 2, 2021).

<sup>29</sup> Yuko Kusaka, 'The emergence and development of Japanese school sport', in *Japan, Sport and Society: Tradition and Change in a Globalizing World*, ed. Joseph Maguire and Masayoshi Nakayama (London: Routledge, 2006), 23.

Japan's future educators, it is probable that these institutes' graduates mandated a similar adherence to extra-curricular activities in their future workplaces, precipitating future Japanese enthusiasm for such a culture. Normal school graduates instigated football transmission throughout the Japanese education system through their employment in requisite elementary and middle schools. These teachers, influenced by their football participation in their respective training institutions, would engage and instruct their young students in the sport. These schools' student alumni subsequently transferred their enthusiasm for the game as they progressed through the educational pathway, forming *undōbu* in secondary schools and universities. Football was slowly entrenching itself within all levels of the Japanese education system.

Understandably, the first inter-school matches did not commence during this early transmission period. It was not until 1904 that a Japanese team played its first competitive match, Tokyo Higher Normal School being soundly beaten 9:0 by the Yokohama Country and Athletic Club, a team composed of foreign expatriates.<sup>30</sup> Three years later, the two aforementioned normal schools competed in the first inter-school match, with Tokyo Higher Normal School winning 4:1.<sup>31</sup> The influence of Tokyo Higher Normal School is evident when examining the growth of the game in Japan during the early twentieth century, with evidence of school *undōbu* emerging both in Tokyo and in the nearby prefectures of Saitama, Ibaraki, Fukushima, Yamagata, and Aichi,<sup>32</sup> as well as a noticeable following in the Hyogo prefecture.<sup>33</sup> Regular competitive fixtures between teams could now be facilitated due to their proximity, subsequently ensuring the development of a robust footballing identity by educational institutions in those prefectures. The restriction of football's diffusion to the east side of Japan, influenced by both the relative scarcity of *undōbu* in other prefectures,<sup>34</sup> combined with an underdeveloped rail network,<sup>35</sup> severely impeded inter-prefectural games during this time.

The 1910s and 1920s saw the rapid expansion of Western sports across the country,<sup>36</sup> typified by the formation of 13 national sports organisations, including

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<sup>30</sup> Japan Football Association, *Nihon Sakkā no Ayumi* [The Progress of Soccer in Japan]. (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1974), 38–9.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>32</sup> Tokyo Higher Normal School Football Club, *Futtobōru* [Football]. (Tokyo: Dainippon Toshō, 1908), 14.

<sup>33</sup> Japan Football Association, *Nihon Sakkā no Ayumi* [The Progress of Soccer in Japan]. (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1974), 35–6.

<sup>34</sup> 100 Year History of Sendai First Middle School and High School Compilation Committee, *Sendaiichi-chū, Ichikō Hyakunenshi* [100 Year History of Sendai First Middle School and High School]. (Sendai: Miyagi Prefecture Sendai Daiichi High School 100th Anniversary Business Executive Committee, 1993), 94–5.

<sup>35</sup> Kinya Ose, Shoichi Saito, and Seiro Sato, *Yamagata Kenritsu Tsuruoka Minamikōtō Gakkō Hyakunenshi* [Yamagata Prefectural Tsuruoka Minami High School 100 Year History]. (Tsuruoka: Tsuruoka Alumni Association, 1994), 155.

<sup>36</sup> Allen Guttmann and Lee Thompson, *Japanese Sports: A History*. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 129–35.

football.<sup>37</sup> Japan's increasing involvement and success in the Summer Olympic Games during the 1920s reflect this, achieving their first medals after finishing runners-up in both the men's tennis singles and doubles events at the 1920 games in Antwerp. As the number of extra-curricular football clubs gradually grew, the appetite for nationwide competition intensified. Newspapers, particularly the *Osaka Mainichi Shimbun*, significantly influenced football's growth and interest during this time. In conjunction with an independent sports section,<sup>38</sup> increased circulation<sup>39</sup> allowed the newspaper to sponsor and coordinate a wide range of sporting events throughout the year.<sup>40</sup> In January 1918, it organised the first iteration of the *Nihon Fūtoōru Yūshō Taikai* (Japan Football Championship), the country's oldest football tournament.<sup>41</sup> Participation was initially limited to school and university teams in the areas surrounding Osaka, undoubtedly influenced by the organiser's location. However, its current iteration, *Zenkoku Kōtō Gakkō Sakkā Senshūken Taikai* (All Japan High School Soccer Tournament), has its qualifying rounds and finals broadcast nation-ally, including representatives from men's high school teams from all over Japan. The development of a football tournament composed solely of high school teams highlights the prominent part educational institutions played and their role in stimulating the game's further development across Japan.

1911 saw the consolidation of amateur sport's prominent position in Japan, with Kanō's establishment of the *Dai Nippon Taiiku Kyōkai* (Greater Japan Physical Education Association).<sup>42</sup> The organisation focused not only on selecting athletes for international competitions such as the Olympics but also to promote sports and physical education through- out the country.<sup>43</sup> Before the Japan Football Association's formation in 1921, the Greater Japan Physical Education Association served as the de facto organising committee for international footballing matters. The formation of Japanese football's governing body was stimulated in March 1919 by Kanō's receipt of a silver cup, donated by the FA to reinforce further positive relationships between the two countries during the

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<sup>37</sup> Yuko Kusaka, 'The emergence and development of Japanese school sport', in *Japan, Sport and Society: Tradition and Change in a Globalizing World*, ed. Joseph Maguire and Masayoshi Nakayama (London: Routledge, 2006), 28.

<sup>38</sup> Hideo Ono, *Ōsaka Mainichishinbunshashi* [History of the Osaka Mainichi Shimbun]. (Osaka: Osaka Mainichi Shimbun, 1925), 160.

<sup>39</sup> Tomizo Kawakami, *Mainichishinbun Hanbaishi Senzen: Ōsaka-hen* [Mainichi Shimbun Pre-war Sales History: Osaka Edition]. (Osaka: Mainichi Shimbun, 1979), 604.

<sup>40</sup> Hideo Ono, *Ōsaka Mainichishinbunsha-shi* [History of the Osaka Mainichi Shimbun]. (Osaka: Osaka Mainichi Shimbun, 1925), 149–50.

<sup>41</sup> National Federation of High School Sports Associations, *Kōkō Sakkā 90 Nen Shi* [The History of Japanese High School Soccer 90 Years]. (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2012), 26.

<sup>42</sup> Yoshio Imamura, *Nihon Taiiku Shi* [A History of Japanese Physical Education]. (Tokyo: Fumaido, 1970), 500–3.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 520.



Anglo-Japanese alliance (1902-23).<sup>44</sup> Kanō encouraged the speedy ratification of both the organisation and regulations for a football governing body, and two years later, in 1921, the JFA was formed.

In comparison, Britain had already established three divisions of the Football League and the Football Association Challenge Cup (FA Cup), with their national teams comprising largely professional players. With the formation of a national association, the country could finally engage in international competition. Despite being deeply rooted in the spirit of school amateurism, Japanese football had no intention of abstaining. *Undōbu* strongly influenced the transmission of football culture throughout the country. Although some grassroots clubs had started to emerge locally, schools had become the primary outlet to participate in the sport. Schools had, in essence, become the de facto representation of amateur football clubs in Japanese football.

### **Involvement of *undōbu* members in major national and international competitions**

The consolidation of a football culture within schools' extra-curricular activities would not have occurred without these clubs and their members succeeding in broader footballing contexts. Whilst the number of professional football players gradually multiplied in most countries, the Japanese game's delay in embracing professionalism allowed its amateur *undōbu* members to thrive in its emerging domestic competitions. To a greater extent, this also impacted the players selected to represent Japan in international competitions, with educational institutions monopolising squad composition during the country's initial foray into international football. In practice, Asia's first international sporting event, the Far Eastern Championship Games, was established in 1913, with the majority of Japanese athletes selected from school *undōbu*.

#### ***Far Eastern Championship Games***

The Far Eastern Championship Games was a biennial, multi-sport event based in Asia before the Second World War. Stefan Huebner identified the Far Eastern Championship Games as a manifested example of Asian imperial hegemonies and geopolitics among three primary political units: Japan, China, and the United States (Philippines),<sup>45</sup> whilst Keiko Ikeda and Mangan illustrated Japanese athletes at the Far Eastern Asian Games sought to replicate the British Games ethic, enshrined in the spirit of amateurism, throughout their participation.<sup>46</sup> Despite the gradual emergence of amateur football clubs

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<sup>44</sup> Takeshi Suzuki, *Tennōhai Rokujūgo Nenshi: Zen'nihon Sakkā Senshūken Zen Kiroku* [65 Year History of the Emperor's Cup: All Records of the All-Japan Soccer Championship]. (Tokyo: Japan Football Association, 1987), 41–2.

<sup>45</sup> Stefan Huebner, *Pan-Asian Sports and the Emergence of Modern Asia, 1913–1974*. (Singapore: NUS Press, 2016), 99–101.

<sup>46</sup> Keiko Ikeda and J A Mangan, 'Towards the Construction of a New Regionalism? The End of East Asian Colonialism: Japanese Responses and Reactions to the Games of Asia', in *Japanese Imperialism: Politics and Sport in East Asia: Rejection, Resentment, Revanchism*, ed. J A Mangan and others (Singapore: Springer, 2018), 340–2.

external of educational institutions, the sport became strongly associated with the *undōbu* of schools and universities. These conditions greatly influenced the selection of representative members of the Japanese team during the games' lifecycle, being dominated by both the current students and alumni of prominent footballing institutes of higher education (Table 1). Whilst they disregarded sending a football team to the initial two iterations of the tournament, 1917 represented Japan's first opportunity to test themselves against their neighbours in an international competition. The *Dai Nippon Taiiku Kyōkai* were responsible for selecting the initial team, although a scheduled player selection fixture between Tokyo Higher Normal School and Toshima Normal School went unfulfilled. As a result, players solely from Tokyo Higher Normal School comprised the first Japanese representative side.<sup>47</sup> In Britain, by comparison, the Football League had been established for over three decades by this point, and the FA could select players from a wide range of professional and amateur teams for its international squads. Fifteen separate clubs represented Great Britain's 19-man football squad at the 1920 Summer Olympics. Most of their exclusively amateur contingent was drawn from established amateur clubs,<sup>48</sup> three selected from university teams, and two from professional clubs.

**Table 1.** Number of players from *undōbu* selected to represent Japan during the Far Eastern Championship Games

Iteration	Year	Undōbu represented (Number of players selected)
1	1913	Did not compete in the football tournament
2	1915	Did not compete in the football tournament
3	1917	Tokyo Higher Normal School (16)
4	1919	Did not compete in the football tournament
5	1921	Tokyo Higher Normal School (6) Tokyo Imperial University (1)
6	1923	No representatives from undōbu
7	1925	Kwansei Gakuin University (5) Kansai University (1) Kyoto Imperial University (1) Tokyo Imperial University (1)
8	1927	Waseda University (14) Mito High School (2) Tokyo Imperial University (1) Hosei University (1)

<sup>47</sup> Takeo Gotō, *Nihon Sakkā-shi: Nihondaihyō no 90-nen* [History of Japanese Soccer: 90 Years of the Japanese National Team]. (Tokyo: Futabasha, 2007), 14-9.

<sup>48</sup> Peter J Beck, *Scoring for Britain: International Football and International Politics, 1900-1939*. (Abingdon: Routledge, 1999), 86.

9	1930	Tokyo Imperial University (9) Waseda University (3) Kwansei Gakuin University (2) Keio University (1)
10	1934	Waseda University (7) Kwansei Gakuin University (3) Keio University (2) Kobe University of Commerce (1) Kyoto Imperial University (1)
11	1938	Cancelled due to the Second World War

Heavy defeats suffered in the tournament probably influenced the decision not to send a team to compete in the following iteration. In the 1921 games, the Japanese team comprised players from educational institutions throughout Tokyo and the surrounding region,<sup>49</sup> now selected by the newly-formed JFA. Although the 1923 games saw no active students participate, Japanese universities maintained an underlying influence, with most representatives drawn from the Osaka Football Club and Rijo Club, formed by Kwansei Gakuin University and Hiroshima-based establishments' alumni respectively.<sup>50</sup> The commencement of the Tokyo College League (now the Kanto University Soccer League) in 1924 was Japan's first competitive league system incorporating solely Japanese higher education institution teams.<sup>51</sup> Restricting the opportunity to engage in regular football fixtures to universities in the Tokyo area enabled them to develop further and define themselves compared to their amateur club counterparts, with regular game time influencing players' selection from these institutions. The league slowly expanded during the 1920s and 1930s, and by 1935 it comprised 37 institutions from Tokyo, Saitama, Chiba, and Kanagawa, subsequently being renamed as the 'Kanto Student Football League'.<sup>52</sup> Japanese university teams quickly surpassed their high school counterparts, and Japanese football was becoming consolidated within the Japanese education system.<sup>53</sup>

These developments did not make themselves apparent at the 1925 games, with the Osaka Football Club again prominent, supplying the remaining eight members not selected from university sides.<sup>54</sup> The dominance of players from clubs affiliated to the Tokyo College League for the final three tournaments underlined universities' standing in

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<sup>49</sup> Japan Football Association, *Nihon Sakkā no Ayumi* [The Progress of Soccer in Japan]. (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1974), 48-9.

<sup>50</sup> Greater Japan Football Association, *Shūkyū* [Football], October 1933, 5-6.

<sup>51</sup> Yujiro Goshima, *Daigaku Sakkā no Dansō: Kantō Kansai no Daigaku Sakkā Bunka o Chūshin ni* [University Football in the Kanto and Kansai Regions]. (Kyoto: Toyo Shobo, 2009), 95.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> Japan Football Association, *Nihon Sakkā no Ayumi* [The Progress of Soccer in Japan]. (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1974), 107.

<sup>54</sup> Greater Japan Football Association, *Shūkyū* [Football], December 1933, 2-5.

Japanese football during this period.<sup>55</sup> Extending beyond a preference for players engaged in regular extra-curricular football activities, non-student players selected were primarily alumni of these institutions. The dominant role that Japanese universities played in developing the sport throughout the country is comparable to intercollegiate American Football in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>56</sup> Despite differences between American football in the United States and association football in Japan, both football cultures were underpinned and sustained by school-based players.

Japan's gradual engagement in football competitions during the second half of the 20th century showed their intention to expand their footballing activities beyond the simple pleasure of playing games. Japanese football had international representation, regional league and cup competitions for their educational institutions but still possessed no nationwide competition open to all their football teams. The catalyst for the formation of the Japanese Football Association, the donated silver cup, would soon have a purpose. Its associated competition, the *Ashikishūkyū Zenkoku Yūshō Kyōgikai* (National Association Football Championship), later renamed the 'Emperor's Cup', would give *undōbu* their first opportunity to establish themselves as the significant footballing power in Japanese football. While individual players' performances typify international teams' success, domestic clubs' standing is defined primarily by the competitions they win and the honours they achieve. In this respect, the Emperor's Cup represents a clear reflection of *undōbu*'s standing within the broader Japanese domestic game.

### ***Emperor's Cup, Tennōhai***

Alongside dominating the early national team selections, Japanese universities continue to retain significant influence on Japan's premier domestic cup competition. The *Tennōhai* (Emperor's Cup) is best described as the Japanese equivalent of the FA Cup.<sup>57</sup> It is the country's oldest senior men's football competition, with only the High School Soccer Tournament pre-dating its establishment. It shares this distinction with its English counterpart, providing a platform for amateur teams to potentially upset their professional counterparts and achieve historic 'giant-killings'. However, one key difference is that its participation criteria have enabled the strongest university and high school teams to remain prominently involved throughout its history.<sup>58</sup> Although qualification for the competition has fluctuated dramatically during its history, it is notable that every iteration of the tournament has had at least one participating team representing an academic institution in the finals.

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<sup>55</sup> Greater Japan Football Association, *Shūkyū* [Football], February 1934, 10-13; Greater Japan Football Association, *Shūkyū* [Football], April 1934, 32-7.

<sup>56</sup> Michael Oriard, *King Football: Sport and Spectacle in the Golden Age of Radio and Newsreels, Movies and Magazines, the Weekly & the Daily Press*. (London: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 3-5.

<sup>57</sup> John Horne and Derek Bleakley, 'The Development of Football in Japan', in *Japan, Korea and the 2002 World Cup*, ed. John Horne and Wolfram Manzenreiter (London: Routledge, 2002), 89.

<sup>58</sup> Japan Football Association, 'Competition Information', Japan Football Association, [https://www.jfa.jp/match/emperorscup\\_2020/about.html](https://www.jfa.jp/match/emperorscup_2020/about.html) (accessed January 3, 2021).

Despite the relatively low percentage of entrants from educational institutions during early iterations, it is necessary to examine the tournament's qualifying rounds more closely. For example, in the first iteration, fifteen of the twenty participants in the Eastern qualifying section were university or secondary schools. The eventual winner of both the qualifying section and ultimately the tournament was the *Tōkyō Shūkyū Dan* (Tokyo Football Club). They would send seven representatives to the Far Eastern Games later that same year, indicating their outstanding ability and how other non-*undōbu* could dictate the earlier tournaments.<sup>59</sup> In comparison, amateur clubs surpassed British football's prominent academic institutions long before the FA Cup's commencement.<sup>60</sup> Both Oxford and Cambridge universities competed in the tournament's early editions, with Oxford winning the competition in 1873-74, but have not competed since the 1879-80 tournament. University teams have been mostly absent from the competition since then.<sup>61</sup> In Japan, educational institutions, particularly university teams, gradually dominated the competition (Table 2), which influenced the international team's selection of representative players.

**Table 2.** Percentage of academic institutions competing in the Emperor's Cup between 1921 and 1940

Iteration	Year	Number of Educational Institutions	Total Number of Entrants	Percentage (%)
1	1921	2	4	50.0
2	1922	2	4	50.0
3	1923	2	4	50.0
4	1924	1	4	25.0
5	1925	4	6	66.7
6	1926	<i>Suspended due to the death of Emperor Taishō</i>		
7	1927	5	8	62.5
8	1928	7	7	100.0
9	1929	7	8	87.5
10	1930	2	4	50.0
11	1931	5	7	71.4

<sup>59</sup> Greater Japan Football Association, *Dainippon Shūkyū Kyōkai Kaihō Taishō 10-Nendo* [Japanese Football Association Bulletin], 1921.

<sup>60</sup> Graham Curry and Eric Dunning, *Association Football: A Study in Figurational Sociology*. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), 138.

<sup>61</sup> Gonville & Caius College competed in the 1880–81 and 1881–82 tournaments but “scratched” (declined to play and so were eliminated) in the first round of both. Team Bath, representing the University of Bath, qualified for the first round on three occasions (2002–03, 2007–08, and 2008–09) whilst they were competing in the English Football League system.

12	1932	2	3	66.7
13	1933	5	8	62.5
14	1934	<i>Suspended due to the Far Eastern Championship Games</i>		
15	1935	4	6	66.7
16	1936	5	5	100.0
17	1937	4	4	100.0
18	1938	5	5	100.0
19	1939	8	8	100.0
20	1940	8	8	100.0

### ***The interruption of football during the period of the Second World War***

In the aftermath of the March 15 Incident of 1928, the Japanese government arrested numerous university students,<sup>62</sup> attempting to limit the spread of Marxist theory throughout the country. This crackdown contributed to a decrease in the number of universities participating in the Emperor's Cup in the following years. Before the Second World War, the *kōyūkai* undertook the internal administration of each university's *undōbu*. *Kōyūkai* was a body composed of student volunteers from numerous clubs, working autonomously to make decisions regarding the governance of extra-curricular activities, performing a role similar to many countries' student unions.<sup>63</sup> Today it is recognised as the previous body of the official alumni association of many Japanese universities. The encroachment of fascism in Japan during the mid-1930s saw a sharp increase in simulated military exercises instruction in schools,<sup>64</sup> which undoubtedly restricted schools and other amateur teams' participation in the Emperor's Cup competition, especially organisations such as *undōbu*, that offered no purpose for either the national defence or devotion to the nation. In 1941 the *kōyūkai* were reorganised into *hōkokudan* or *hōkokutai*, an ultra-nationalistic simulated army aligning with fascist ideologies, in the spirit of the home front.<sup>65</sup> Its remit permitted extra-curricular activities, though it forced many sports club members to undertake labour-intensive work, including shooting and other military

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<sup>62</sup> Henry DeWitt Smith, 'The Origins of Student Radicalism in Japan', *Journal of Contemporary History* 5, no. 1 (1970): 99.

<sup>63</sup> Masami Ichiyama, 'Kyūsei Chūgakkō no Kōyū-kai ni Okeru Seitōjichi no Sokumen: Kōyū-kai Kisoku no Bunseki o Chūshin ni [Aspects of Student Autonomy in the Alumni Associations of Old Junior High Schools: An Analysis of the Regulations of the Alumni Associations], *Bulletin of the University of Tokyo Graduate School of Education* 43, (2004): 1–13.

<sup>64</sup> Allen Guttman and Lee Thompson, *Japanese Sports: A History*. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 156–7.

<sup>65</sup> Keiko Ikeda, 'Ryōsai-kembo, Liberal Education and Maternal Feminism under Fascism: Women and Sport in Modern Japan', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 27, no. 3 (2010): 547.

training.<sup>66</sup> The outbreak of the war brought about the suspension of the 1941 tournament, and two years later, all school sports competitions were banned.<sup>67</sup>

### ***Post-war period: From football to soccer***

Nevertheless, Japanese football culture overcame the wartime interruption. The resilience of football was probably the product of a long-term history of school traditions. The occupation of Japan by the United States during the post-war period influenced the preferred terminology of *sakkā* (soccer) to refer to the game in Japan instead of the pre-war *futtobōru* or *shūkyū* (football). Before the 1960s, Japanese publications would use both terms inter-changeably,<sup>68</sup> though it appears the 1959 name change of popular football magazine *Shūkyū* to *Sakkā* marked the widespread adoption of the term soccer across the country.<sup>69</sup> Though most teams changed their names to reflect this, the remnants of British influence are still observed in the current club names of many historically successful university teams, for example, *Waseda Daigaku Ashikishūkyū-bu* (Waseda University Association Football Club) and *Tōkyō Daigaku Undōkai Ashikishūkyū-bu* (University of Tokyo Association Football Club).

In the two decades following the Second World War, Japanese universities continued to be the dominant force in the competition. However, the emergence of *jitsugyō-dan* (corporate-amateur clubs), extra-curricular football teams organised and funded by prominent Japanese companies for their employees,<sup>70</sup> slowly began to challenge their monopoly on participation. Comparable to ‘works teams’ that emerged in England around the 1900s,<sup>71</sup> the lack of professional sports in Japan meant that graduating players would encounter a proverbial glass ceiling in their domestic game. As a result, the majority would commit their adult footballing careers to their workplace team. Furukawa Electric became the first company team to break the universities stranglehold, winning the competition consecutively in 1960 and 1961. The formation of the Japan Soccer League (JSL) in 1965, composed of company teams, completed the powershift. As an amateur league, all JSL players had to be employed by their respective companies as regular employees, with football remaining an ostensibly extra-curricular activity.

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<sup>66</sup> Atsushi Nakazawa, *Undō-bu Katsudō no Sengo to Genzai: Naze Supōtsu wa Gakkō Kyōiku ni Musubitsuke Rareru no ka* [Athletic Club Activities - Postwar and Present: Why are sports tied to school education?]. (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2014), 94.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

<sup>68</sup> Ministry of Education, ‘*Gakkō Taiiku Shidō Yōkō* [School Physical Education Guidelines]’, Ministry of Education, <https://web.archive.org/web/20080801141822/http://www.nicer.go.jp/guideline/old/s22ejp/> (accessed February 24, 2021).

<sup>69</sup> Japan Football Association, *Sakkā* [Soccer], January 1959, 1.

<sup>70</sup> Haruo Nogawa and Hiroko Maeda, ‘The Japanese Dream: Soccer Culture towards the New Millennium’, in *Football Cultures and Identities*, ed. Gary Armstrong and Richard Giulianotti (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), 224.

<sup>71</sup> Tony Mason, *Association Football and English Society, 1863–1915*. (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980), 30.

However, the reality was that such arrangements had more in common with the British pre-professionalism period during the late-1870s and early 1880s, when players would spend little time performing the work duties for which they were 'employed', dedicating significant amounts of time towards footballing activities.<sup>72</sup> The success of teams such as Furukawa Electric, Hitachi, Toyo Industries, and Yawata Iron & Steel represented a sliding doors moment in Japanese football. It initiated a significant transitional period, incorporating amateur-centric teams from educational institutions and 'semi-professional' corporate-amateur teams, ending with the inception of professionalism and the establishment of the J. League.

### ***Was the structural transition from school-amateur to professionalism a success?***

A combination of declining attendances and a failure to establish itself as a global footballing power resulted in Japan establishing its first professional football league, the J. League, in 1992.<sup>73</sup> Teams were prohibited from retaining their parent company names and would instead have to forge strong links with their local communities.<sup>74</sup> Banning company names was an epoch-making and innovative aspect, especially since Japanese professional baseball, the most popular team sports in Japan at the time, had propagated the customary epithet. For example, the Yomiuri Giants, taking their name from owners' Yomiuri Shimbun Holdings, a Japanese media conglomerate.<sup>75</sup> However, the J. League was based around the European grassroots culture of local football clubs. As a result, the initial name change of the Kawasaki-based 'Yomiuri Football Club' to 'Yomiuri Verdy' was rejected by J. League chairman Saburō Kawabuchi. They subsequently adopted the name 'Verdy Kawasaki' before transitioning to their current name 'Tokyo Verdy'. Unsurprisingly, local governments were keen investors. Becoming a J. League team's hometown would allow them to 're-forge local identity around a common ambition'.<sup>76</sup> Professional football clubs contribute significantly to local identity in the United Kingdom (UK), especially in places with few local identity symbols to call on.<sup>77</sup> Such was the case

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<sup>72</sup> Graham Curry and Eric Dunning, *Association Football: A Study in Figurational Sociology*. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), 143.

<sup>73</sup> Haruo Nogawa and Hiroko Maeda, 'The Japanese Dream: Soccer Culture towards the New Millennium', in *Football Cultures and Identities*, ed. Gary Armstrong and Richard Giulianotti (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), 225–6.

<sup>74</sup> John Horne and Derek Bleakley, 'The Development of Football in Japan', in *Japan, Korea and the 2002 World Cup*, ed. John Horne and Wolfram Manzenreiter (London: Routledge, 2002), 95.

<sup>75</sup> Yoshiyuki Osumi, 'J Rigū no Kadai [Challenges of the J. League]', in 'Sakkā Rashisha' to wa nanika [What is 'soccer-ness'?), vol. 3 of *Gendai Supōtsu Hyōron [Contemporary Sports Critique]*, ed. Toshio Nakamura (Tokyo: Sobun Kikaku, 2000), 66–74.

<sup>76</sup> Jonathan Watts, 'Soccer Shinhatsubai: What are Japanese consumers making of the J. League?', in *The Worlds of Japanese Popular Culture: Gender, Shifting Boundaries and Global Cultures*, ed. Dolores Martinez (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 189.

<sup>77</sup> N A Phelps, 'Professional Football and Local Identity in the 'Golden Age': Portsmouth in the mid-twentieth Century', *Urban History* 32, no. 3 (2005): 459–80.



of the Urawa Red Diamonds (previous Mitsubishi Heavy Industries), as described by Osumi Yoshiyuki:

Urawa, the [former] capital of the Saitama prefecture with a population of 400,000, was not a nationally known city and lacked any kind of ‘local identity’. However, the birth of the Urawa Reds has brought the region together. The Reds struggled to strengthen their team and were bottom of the table for the first two years of the J. League. However, loss after loss, the fans never left the stadium. Because the Reds club was the first symbol of ‘local identity’ in Urawa’s characterless bedroom community, the Reds club’s management put its ties to the community first. The people of Urawa saw in the Reds what they wanted, albeit a weak team. Alternatively, perhaps it was because they were a weak and helpless team that they felt they had to support them, deepening their spiritual bond.<sup>78</sup>

As a sport, football had been imported to Japan from Britain nearly 120 years previously, but only with the establishment of the J. League did grassroots football culture finally permeate Japan. It initiated a paradigm shift away from school-orientated traditions to a football culture rooted in local community clubs. Despite this, educational institutions continue to retain prominence, providing a vital recruitment pathway for aspiring Japanese professional footballers. For example, Keio, a university team, still holds the record for most Emperor’s Cup championships, and three of the competition’s ten most successful teams remain universities (Table 3). These are impressive feats, especially when compared to Oxford University’s early sole success in the FA Cup. Additionally, high school football teams are sufficiently strong enough to regularly challenge their professional counterparts’ youth teams. For example, in 2020, Shimizu Higashi High School football club defeated local J. League youth team Shimizu S-Pulse 4:1 in league competition.<sup>79</sup> Educational institutions remain relevant throughout the competition’s history, with numerous teams representing educational institutions qualifying consistently for each iteration. However, it is doubtful that they can ever again challenge their professional counterparts in the competition. Though, of all the competitions highlighting Japanese football’s relationship with education, none symbolise it better than the Emperor’s Cup.

**Table 3.** Previous winners of the Emperor’s Cup representing academic institutions

Institution Name	Winners	Runners-up	Years Won
Keio University	9	4	1932, 1936, 1937, 1939, 1940, 1951, 1952, 1954, 1956
Kwansei Gakuin University	7	1	1929, 1930, 1950, 1953, 1955, 1958, 1958

<sup>78</sup> Yoshiyuki Osumi, ‘J Rigū no Kadai [Challenges of the J. League]’, in ‘*Sakkā Rashisha*’ to wa nanika [What is ‘soccer-ness’?], vol. 3 of *Gendai Supōtsu Hyōron* [Contemporary Sports Critique], ed. Toshio Nakamura (Tokyo: Sobun Kikaku, 2000), 72–3.

<sup>79</sup> Shimizu Higashi High School, ‘*Shiai Kekka/ Shizuoka Ken Yūsūrigu B Rīgu Dai 2-set* [Results/ Shizuoka Youth League B Section 2]’, Shimizu Higashi High School, <https://shimizu-east.com/games/result/1453/> (accessed February 25, 2021).

Waseda University	4	2	1928, 1938, 1963, 1966
University of Tokyo	3	1	1931, 1946, 1949
Chuo University	2	3	1957, 1962
Kobe High School	1	0	1927

### ***The amateur code of Japanese football and participation at the Olympic Games***

The Olympic Games provided Japanese football with the opportunity to demonstrate the prominence of school sports, imbued with staunch amateur ideals. Although many other countries had embraced football professionalism, the Olympics, with its amateur code, suited the amateur-orientation of Japanese sports, providing them with an opportunity to compete on a level playing field with the rest of the world. The close integration of educational establishments into Japanese football is reflected in the player selections for Japan's early forays into the sport at the summer Olympic games (Table 4). The 1936 squad primarily incorporated players from university teams,<sup>80</sup> with the heavily unfancied Japanese side sensationally defeating Sweden 3-2 in the first round in a match dubbed 'the miracle of Berlin' by the Japanese media. It became immortalised in Japan by the commentary of Swedish radio broadcaster Sven Jerring:

Japanese, Japanese, defending Japanese, wildly striking Japanese and equally wildly attacking Swedes. Japanese who jump, Japanese who throw themselves, Japanese who flaunt themselves. Japanese who do everything to take the victory for Nippon. And Swedes, Swedes who fought honestly but now beaten.<sup>81</sup>

Japan's victory came as a relative shock to the European populace, especially given football's western origins. However, in Japan, where school-amateurism had deeply embedded itself in football, success in a sport that utilised an amateur code generated little surprise. Even with the abolishment of the amateur code in the 1970s, subsequent iterations saw a moderate inclusion of present university players, influenced by both the ascent of company football teams and the approaching anticipation of professionalism within the sport. A notable exception was in 2004. Two players: Yūhei Tokunaga (Waseda University), and Sōta Hirayama (University of Tsukuba), were selected for the Olympic squad, despite being active members of their university teams.

**Table 4.** Number of players from undōbu to represent Japan at selected summer Olympic Games

<sup>80</sup> Hiroshi Kagawa, *Irebun* [Eleven], January 1976, 168–9.

<sup>81</sup> Daniel Grefve, 'ARKIV: 80 år Sedan "Japaner, Japaner" [Archive: 80 Years Ago "Japanese, Japanese"', Sveriges Radio, <https://sverigesradio.se/artikel/6487956> (accessed February 16, 2021).

Year	<i>Undōbu</i> represented (Number of players selected)
1936	Waseda University (9) Tokyo Imperial University (3) Keio University (1) Tokyo Higher Normal School (1) Waseda University Senior High School (1)
1956	Kwansei Gakuin University (2) Waseda University (1) Rikkyo University (1) Chuo University (1) Kansai University (1)
1964	Waseda University (2) Chuo University (2) Rikkyo University (1) Meiji University (1)
2004	Waseda University (1) University of Tsukuba (1)

## The legacy of British football ethics for extra-curricular football participation in Japan

Whilst educational institutions played a prominent role in the Japanese game's domestic and international success during its formative period, both company and professional teams have since eclipsed them in the latter half of the twentieth century. Despite this, school and university *undōbu* continue to be vital proponents of football culture throughout Japan. Their continued relevance is due to the secondary role these extra-curricular clubs perform and their broader effect on their participants' identity.

Moral education, training focused on the development of 'character', has long been a critical facet of the Japanese school curriculum, aimed at cultivating a 'morality that serves as the foundation for living better with other people as an autonomous human being and acting with responsible judgment'.<sup>82</sup> In addition to its inclusion as a regularly taught subject, it expects students to apply moral education principles throughout all aspects of their school lives, with extra-curricular activities being a key component.<sup>83</sup> Strict age hierarchy forms an essential part of Japanese society. The relationships formed between *senpai* (senior students) and *kōhai* (junior students) in extra-curricular clubs facilitate this cultivation.<sup>84</sup>

While such structures predate Western influences during the Meiji Revolution, these inter-student relationships bear a strong resemblance to the prefect-fagging system

<sup>82</sup> Sam Bamkin, 'The Taught Curriculum of Moral Education at Japanese Elementary School: The Role of Classtime in the Broad Curriculum', *Contemporary Japan* 32, no. 2 (2020), 1–2.

<sup>83</sup> Mayumi Nishino, 'The Challenge of Developing Meaningful Curriculum Initiatives for Moral Education in Japan', *Journal of Moral Education* 46, no. 1 (2017), 46.

<sup>84</sup> Peter Cave, 'Bukatsudō: The Educational Role of Japanese School Clubs', *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 30, no. 2 (2004), 403–6.

that emerged in English public schools during the early nineteenth century.<sup>85</sup> The adoption of similar principles into the Japanese educational system was no accident. Allen Guttman and Lee Thompson noted that early Japanese headmasters ‘were inspired by the examples of Eton, Harrow, Rugby, and other English “public schools”’:

After graduating from Tokyo University, [Hiroji] Kinoshita spent several years studying law in Paris, but what most impressed him during his European sojourn was the annual Oxford-Cambridge boat race at Henley on the Thames. He was especially struck by the high-minded ethos of fair play, which reminded him of what the Japanese were claiming as their own tradition of *bushidō* (the warrior’s path). This ethos Kinoshita attributed to the collegians’ education at Eton and other “public schools,” where dedication to sports and to the humanities (in that order) seemed to produce a lifelong devotion to national service. If *Ichikō* (Tokyo First Higher Middle School) was to produce a similar class of active young men eager to serve their country, sports had to be a central part of their school experience. And they were. “From sunup to sundown—before, between, or after classes—the crack of bamboo swords and baseball bats filled the air”.<sup>86</sup>

Whilst Japan willingly integrated the British moral code during the late nineteenth century, the period between the Sino-Japanese (1894-5) and Russo-Japanese (1904-5) Wars provoked a widespread emergence of indigenous nationalism and the subsequent rejection of imported Western values.<sup>87</sup> They were subsequently reinterpreted, becoming a fusion of imported British and traditional Japanese values, thereby allowing them to remain accepted. One measure that helped realise this was their translation into *kanji* (Chinese characters), rather than *katakana*, a Japanese syllabary usually reserved for foreign-originating words. Inevitably, this led to the widespread acceptance that these values had originated within Japan.<sup>88</sup> Their emergence and prolonged endurance within Japanese society are partly due to their association with traditional values and culture, notably, the continued adherence to strict hierarchical relationships between seniors and juniors in *undōbu*. In Japanese universities, the expression: ‘fourth-years are gods, third-years are nobles, second-years are commoners, first-years are slaves’ is commonly used to represent such relationships.<sup>89</sup> Reasoning that by forcing junior members to endure their senior’s unreasonable demands and brutal orders, this would eventually develop

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<sup>85</sup> Graham Curry and Eric Dunning, *Association Football: A Study in Figurational Sociology*. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), 33–4.

<sup>86</sup> Allen Guttman and Lee Thompson, *Japanese Sports: A History*. (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2001), 81.

<sup>87</sup> Keiko Ikeda, ‘The History of Modern Sport in Japan: the British Influence through the Medium of Sport on Imperialism, Nationalism and Gender with Reference to the Works of JA Mangan’ in *Manufacturing Masculinity: The Mangan Oeuvre - Global Reflections on J.A. Mangan’s Studies of Masculinity, Imperialism and Militarism*, ed. Peter Horton (Berlin: Logos Verlag Berlin, 2017), 140.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 145–6.

<sup>89</sup> Shuichi Okabe, ‘Supōtsu ni Naizai suru Mondai ni Tsuite (4) Supōtsu Senshu no Rinri-kan [The Problems Inherent in Sport (4) The Ethics of the Athlete]’, *Bulletin of Nara Culture Women’s Junior College* 40 (2009), 46.

patience and mental strength.<sup>90</sup> Such environments persist in football *undōbu* today, as noted by Japanese professional footballer Shōgo Taniguchi, describing his initial experience of football in high school:

First of all, of course, the hierarchy was very strict. I was brought up in a (grassroots) club team until junior high school, so Otsu (High School) was my first experience of such an environment. It was not a question of choosing to accept it or not; I had to accept it (laughs). I was also busy outside of football. The underclassmen really have a lot to do, like cleaning and tidying up. If you notice something, you have to act immediately. It was a continuous process. However, I didn't take any issue with it. I just thought, 'this is what (extra-curricular) club life is all about'. In fact, I felt that with these kinds of experiences, I would be able to deepen my relationships with other people. It was a frantic life at the time, but now I think it was very worthwhile.<sup>91</sup>

However, whilst Japanese youth football, deeply embedded within schools' extra-curricular activities, has maintained a development environment designed to prioritise the 'character development' of its participants,<sup>92</sup> such values do not reflect British youth football's historical priorities.

The early adoption of professionalism in British football has ensured that the pathways for young boys transitioning into the sport full-time closely intertwine with professional clubs.<sup>93</sup> However, before the 1960s, it was illegal for clubs to employ players under the age of seventeen as full-time professionals.<sup>94</sup> Clubs circumnavigated such procedures by recruiting boys as either 'ground staff' or 'office boys' from ages as young as fifteen<sup>95</sup> and provided a source of cheap labour for clubs whilst they undertook regular football practice.<sup>96</sup> In 1960 the system was, ostensibly, legalised with the FA's classification of the 'apprentice player', able to join the club from 15 as a footballer in-training.<sup>97</sup> Whilst clubs could retain up to fifteen players, there was no formal education provision beyond the football instruction they received, save the FA's dictation that clubs

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Yuki Nishikawa and Akina Okada, 'Hajimete no Bukatsu ga Jibun o Kaeta Kawasaki Furontāre Taniguchi Shōgo [My First Club Activity Changed Me: Shogo Taniguchi, Kawasaki Frontale]', *Asahi Shimbun*, <https://4years.asahi.com/article/12187701> (accessed January 29, 2021).

<sup>92</sup> Thomas Blackwood and Douglas C. Friedman, 'Join the Club: Effects of Club Membership on Japanese High School Students' Self-concept', *Japan Forum* 27, no. 2, (2015): 262.

<sup>93</sup> Gerry Stewart and John Sutherland, 'The Trainee System in Professional Football in England and Wales', *Education+Training* 31, no. 1 (1996), 25.

<sup>94</sup> Des Monk and Dave Russell, 'Training Apprentices: Tradition versus Modernity in the Football Industry', *Soccer & Society* 1, no. 2 (2000), 63–4.

<sup>95</sup> Andrew Parker, 'Great Expectations: Grimness or Glamour? The Football Apprentice in the 1990s', *The Sports Historian* 15, no. 1 (1995), 110.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 112.

<sup>97</sup> Chris Platts and Andy Smith, 'The Education, Rights and Welfare of Young People in Professional Football in England: Some Implications of the White Paper on Sport', *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics* 1, no. 3 (2009), 326.

should allow players time to pursue educational activities during their apprenticeship.<sup>98</sup> Despite the continued expansion of youth football, with professional clubs now able to contract hundreds of young players from the age of eight, such educational sentiments have remained firmly ingrained within the sport. Although education provision is now a compulsory component of professional football academies, it retains a perception of being an unnecessary distraction from footballing activities.<sup>99</sup>

On the contrary, Atsushi Nakazawa, a Japanese sports sociologist, summarised the comparison between the sports in Japan and Britain, stating that whilst Japan's integration of football into its education system has ensured that it has principally always focused on 'human development'. In Britain, participation has predominantly retained a focus on the advancement of athletic performance.<sup>100</sup> Furthermore, as independent businesses in their own right, professional football clubs have a vested interest in cultivating strong 'athletic identities' in their players,<sup>101</sup> which is highly desirable in sporting institutions and is associated with increased commitment and performance.

## Conclusion

The Japanese education system was an active vehicle in both introducing and integrating football culture into the country. British teachers taught the game in higher educational institutions when Japan was actively employing foreign teaching personnel. However, what is of greater importance is how the games ethic, which had emerged in English public schools, had been recognised and accepted in Japanese education for a purpose beyond physical recreation. The integration of student-led extra-curricular organisations into schools and universities nationwide ensured that football culture developed primarily within the education system, with Japanese sports retaining strong connotations with education even in the present day. While Britain embraced football professionalism relatively soon after its re-organisation in public schools, Japan remained intensely loyal to its amateur origins, with clubs emerging externally from its educational institutions. Japanese university teams were the dominant power in domestic competition and international selection between the late-1920s and early 1960s. However, the emergence of company teams and the subsequent founding of the JSL greatly marginalised their influence, relegating educational institutions' role to a step on the pathway to footballing prominence. Although company teams were gradually drifting away from the sport's amateur ideals, they continued to remain popular within educational settings. Furthermore, while this paper describes the mainstream historical pathway of professional

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<sup>98</sup> Des Monk and Dave Russell, 'Training Apprentices: Tradition versus Modernity in the Football Industry', *Soccer & Society* 1, no. 2 (2000), 64.

<sup>99</sup> Andrew Parker, 'Lifelong Learning to Labour: Apprenticeship, Masculinity and Communities of Practice', *British Educational Research Journal* 32, no. 5 (2006), 695.

<sup>100</sup> Atsushi Nakazawa, *Undō-bu Katsudō no Sengo to Genzai: Naze Supōtsu wa Gakkō Kyōiku ni Musubitsuke Rareru no ka* [Athletic Club Activities - Postwar and Present: Why are sports tied to school education?]. (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2014), 50–1.

<sup>101</sup> Tom O Mitchell et al., 'Exploring Athletic Identity in Elite-level English Youth Football: A Cross-sectional Approach', *Journal of Sport Sciences* 32, no. 13 (2014), 1294–5.

football's integration into Japan, grassroots football's development pathway has been seldom explored in academic literature.<sup>102</sup> Such a perspective requires further exploration when considering the complete history of football in Japan.

Despite the emergence of professionalism, Japanese educational institutions remain the country's primary facilitator of footballing culture. The fact that the country's professional teams still recruit from both university and high school clubs highlights the standing that educational institutions retain in their footballing culture. The effectiveness of J. League academies does not differ significantly from *undōbu*. The educational value of sports that such institutions are keen to emphasise suggests that Japanese players are less inclined to focus solely on sports participation. The amateur ethic focused on developing a student's 'character' provides social and psychological experiences that may contribute to a more 'balanced identity', especially compared to young players in more prominent footballing nations.

## Notes

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