



Home Run News

World Children's Baseball Fair Newsletter
a non-profit organization



Happy Holidays!

Season's Greetings! Hope all of you have had a great year. I wish you all the best of health and happiness for the coming year.

It's a great pleasure to report to you that the 2003 WCBF Summer Week Event was successfully held in August in Yamaguchi Prefecture in Japan. 2004 will mark WCBF's 15th Anniversary - we're truly excited that we'll celebrate the Summer Week Event in Hyogo Prefecture, Japan.

Who would have thought that the WCBF Family would have grown nearly 3500 people from 81 countries around the world!?! It's amazing to realize how long we have been working (and enjoying!) towards our goal of promoting friendship and peace among children of the world through baseball clinics and fun activities. It would never have been possible without the generous sponsors, dedicated WCBF staff, hard working host city officials, excellent IBAF Coaches, and enthusiastic volunteers over the last 14 years. I

**Message from
WCBF
N. America
Founding
Director,
Akiko Agishi**

sincerely thank all of them and I give my deepest appreciation to Mr. Sadaharu Oh and Mr. Hank Aaron for their vision and leadership towards the goodwill of the world's children. As you may know, Mr. Oh, as manager of the Daiei Hawks, recently won the Japanese Professional Baseball 2003 Championship! My heartfelt Congratulations to Mr. Oh & the entire team!!

Although the world economy has continued to struggle and the 21st Century has started off with global uncertainty and difficulty, I positively believe that we should continue our efforts to help our children make the dream of world peace come true.

- Akiko Agishi



2003 WCBF Participants from the USA:
Elijah Benzvi, Frisco TX
Chase Holmes, Hyannisport MA
Molly Pearlman, Cooperstown NY
Ken Tewell, Fountain Valley CA
Lauren Calsada, Chatsworth CA
Deb Bettencourt (Chp), Pawtucket RI

WCBF 2003 Official Schedule:

- 8/11 Participants arrive. Registration & orientation.
- 8/12 Distribution of equipment & uniforms. Welcome party.
- 8/13 Opening Ceremony & photo session. Baseball Clinic #1. Exchange game. Exchange event with Shimomoseki kids at Kammon Kaikyo Fireworks Festival.
- 8/14 Baseball Clinic #2. Exchange game. Exchange event with Tokuji children.
- 8/15 Baseball Clinic #3. Exchange game. Exchange event with Ube children at Onda Park Swimming Pool.
- 8/16 Baseball Clinic #4. Exchange game. Exchange event with Ajisu children.
- 8/17 Baseball Clinic #5. Exchange game. Goodwill Party. VIP Banquet.
- 8/18 Baseball Clinic #6. Exchange event. Closing Ceremony.
- 8/19 Children depart for home.

Catch Your Dream!

おいでませ・YAMAGUCHI・世界少年のつどい
WCBF
第14回世界少年野球大会・山口大会
THE 14TH WORLD CHILDREN'S BASEBALL FAIR 2003 IN YAMAGUCHI, JAPAN
2003年8月11日(月)・19日(火) 会場 下関市、宇部市、山口市、徳地町、阿知須町



**WCBF 2003 Participating Countries
(18 countries total):**

Australia, Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, Guam, Hungary, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Saipan, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, USA, Japan.



WCBF 2003 YAMAGUCHI

COACHES CORNER

- This year's event was well programmed and ran smoothly. I'm sure the coordination of four locations for the clinics was not easy. Due to rain on Sunday 8/17, the clinic location had to be changed at the last minute but everything worked out fine. Overall, things ran very well, and everyone seemed happy and content. The meals worked out fine, everyone was happy and no weight loss to report this year. The fields in the past have been very good, but this year's facilities were excellent. The field staff was very cooperative, understanding, fast acting and efficient. The assistant coaches seemed a bit younger this year but for the most part they did a good job with the coaches and the children. The biggest challenge every year is getting the local hosts and chaperones to partake in the daily activities on the baseball field. The coaches want to thank the whole WCBF staff for their dedication to the children and for making our jobs easier. Without these special people it would be impossible to operate this event at a first class level. **THANK YOU!** — George Santiago, 2003 Head Coach

- I would like to thank the WCBF and the IBAF for once again giving me the opportunity to be a part of this year's fair in Yamaguchi. I commend the executive committee and organizers of the WCBF for putting on a highly successful event. I am also thankful to the citizens of Yamaguchi Prefecture for the way they welcomed us and the children into their hearts. Their treatment of us was absolutely first class. They managed to put on a great show, one they can be very proud of. Angel Bonilla, IBAF Coach (1990-2003)



Report from Deb Bettencourt, USA Chaperon WCBF 2003

First and foremost, I miss the kids! The trip itself was amazing. Traveling back and forth to Japan with the 5 kids was crazy enough but once all the groups got together and all the kids were traveling in this train of buses and on the 2 domestic flights in Japan, it was insane! But the kids were great.

Everyone wanted to interview the American girls, Molly and Lauren. Lauren had gotten tired of saying the same things over and over so together we came up with a new response for her to give, "I want to come back and volunteer for the WCBF some day." I hope she has the opportunity someday because it is a wonderful experience.



The clinics were very well organized and there was enough translation provided so that everyone knew what was going on. The kids had no problem interacting with each other and made friends very easily. The boys were great with the girls. I guess now-a-days it is more common to find girls and boys playing baseball together. I never experienced that when I was their age so I was curious to see how it would all play out. They got along great! I could go on and on forever. But the most important thing is that I express my sincere gratitude to the WCBF for giving me this honor. It is something I will treasure for the rest of my life. And my thanks to the kids who helped me created some wonderful memories.

KIDS CORNER

- My Best Summer Ever! I made many friends at the Fair, including some from as far away as Australia and Nicaragua. We attended a baseball skills clinic almost every day. They were nicely organized and fun. After the clinics finished, we participated in many fun cultural exchange events. These were some of my favorite experiences. We went to a fireworks festival, an aquarium, and a cave. We always had the chance to be with lots of kids from all over the world. The food at the dormitory cafeteria was very good. In fact, it was so good that I took a picture of my last meal! The Fair was the best experience I have ever had. It was really fun making friends with kids from different countries. I wish I could go back every year. If you have the chance to go, you will REALLY have a great time. Ken Tewell, age 10



- Japan is a lot different from the USA. When I got home I automatically took my shoes off at the door, even though my family and friends do not. I made a lot of new friends. I had a lot of fun, also. I learned a lot about the beautiful country of Japan. I especially liked playing baseball with people I have never met before from different countries. I am very grateful that I could go to Japan! It was a great experience and if I could, I would definitely do it again. Molly Pearlman, age 10



- Before I went to Japan, I did not know what to expect. I saw so many kids from different countries. The most difficult thing was missing my family and trying to stay away from the spiders and mosquitoes, which for some reason liked me. My favorite part of practice was pitching, sliding and pop-ups. I made lots of friends from the Japanese, Australian and Nicaraguan teams, even though it was not easy to communicate with them, since we did not know each other's language. Still, we had a lot of fun together. I really enjoyed some of the local trips and the closing ceremony. I liked the coaches very much and I feel I improved my baseball skills a lot. I wanted to thank WCBF for giving me this special opportunity. Elijah Benzvi, age 10

2003 WCBF Yamaguchi IBAF Coaches List

- George Santiago, Head Coach, USA
- Angel Bonilla, USA
- Ila Borders, USA
- Fidel Breijo, Cuba
- Jorge Gabriel Cosio, Cuba
- Greg Kosloff, USA
- Teruhisa Mizukawa, Jpn
- Taizo Nomura, Japan
- Kengo Takarada, Japan
- Mike Valcke, Canada



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THANK YOU

WCBF gives a heartfelt THANKS to all our generous donors & supporters (\$100 & over):

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EDITOR'S NOTE

The next summer week event will be held July 29-August 6, 2004 in Hyogo Prefecture, in the Kansai region. The capital is Kobe. WCBF-North America hopes to hold the annual summer event either in the USA or in Latin America. in the near future. George Santiago, Sary Benzvi and all the WCBF Board members and IBAF coaches are working hard to make it happen!! If you can recommend any sponsors, or have any great host city suggestions, please call us at WCBF-N.A. HQ at (323) 957-9852 or by Email at creant@aol.com. -LK



World Children's Baseball Fair
6630 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood CA 90028
Tel: 323 957-9852, Fax: 323 464-8048
Email: CreativeEntpr@worldnet.att.net
Web: www.wcbf.org

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