

若き日の、

くまがい いちや

熊谷一彌選手の

スポーツマンシップ

1913年（大正2年）末、日本初となる学生による海外遠征が行われ、翌1月にマニラで開催された東洋選手権大会へ出場しました。

のちに初代オリンピック・メダリストとなる熊谷選手は シングルス準決勝進出・ダブルス準優勝という快挙を成し遂げました。

—その大会で、実はこんなことが起きていました—

KUMAGAE MAKES GREAT SHOWING

Darkness Saves Fottrell from Possible Defeat

A new star burst into the tennis firmament of the world yesterday when Kumagae, the husky little representative of Japan in the oriental championship tournament now in progress at the Manila Tennis Club's courts, made so brave a stand against Fottrell, hero of a hundred great championship tournaments, that the consensus of opinion was that the Japanese would have won the match if darkness had not interfered.

It must be said in justice to Fottrell that he was sick and ailing, and consequently far from his best game. That was Fottrell's misfortune and not Kumagae's fault. What was Kumagae's misfortune was that the condition of the American champion made necessary delay in the games, while the Japanese, unknown a week ago outside of his own college in Japan, was at all times ready to continue and never sought to rest.

Fottrell left the court twice, once after the second set and again after the third. In the latter case he was within his rights, as American Lawn Tennis Association rules provide a legal rest of seven minutes after the third set of a match. His opponent waited cheerfully ready at any moment to answer the call of the referee to resume play.

When Fottrell finally appeared, darkness was coming on rapidly. Most of the spectators felt that it would be impossible to conclude the set. An agreement was suggested whereby if the set was not concluded when it was too dark to continue the play, the players would begin again today on a fresh set. As Fottrell had already won two sets to Kumagae's one, and as the American was on the verge of exhaustion while the Japanese was almost as fresh as at the beginning, the Californian had everything to win and nothing to lose. Nevertheless the sportsman Kumagae assented readily to the agreement. Then when he had won five games to Fottrell's two on the fourth set, the referee decided that it was too late to play and the game was called. There was hardly a voice

raised to support this decision. Almost unanimously the spectators held that at least one game more should have been played so that Kumagae might have had an opportunity of evening up the set score. If Kumagae had won one against Fottrell, then the game might have been called.

Out of the whole mess, regrettable as it was, one man only gets credit—Kumagae. He displayed a quality of sportsmanship rare even among Americans. He had many reasons for kicking but neither he nor his friends availed themselves of them. It was left to Americans who had first been Fottrell rooters, to protest for the Japanese.

The matches themselves were the most thrilling ever seen on local courts. Kumagae was a constant revelation. Save only in the serve, he was Fottrell's equal, and as the match progressed, he became better while his opponent tired. When it is remembered that Kumagae had played three very hard sets with Weere in the boiling sun of the morning, the Japanese player's showing is all the more remarkable.

Fottrell in the beginning underrated his opponent, Kumagae, who never takes anything for granted and who tried for every ball no matter how impossible, started off with a rush and took the first three games. Then Fottrell took one and Kumagae took the next, making the score 4-1. Fottrell took the next three and the score was 4 all. Each took a game and brought the score to 5 all. Then Fottrell took the next two, winning the set. It had been the best set of the tournament, nearly every game going to deuce.

Fottrell seemed to be saving himself in the next game. His serve was not working so well and Kumagae soon had a lead which the Californian could not overcome. The Japanese finally won the set 6-4. Fottrell at the end of this set was plainly worried and Kumagae seemed to be in far better shape.

Fottrell, after a trip to the club house while Kumagae waited patiently on the court, came out refreshed for the third set. The American by a whirlwind game got a lead of 5-2. Then Kumagae took the next two games but failed on the third, the set going to Fottrell 6-4. During this set, Fottrell seemed to grow much more tired and at the end looked all in. Between games he



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所蔵：東京外国語大学アジア・アフリカ言語文化研究所

GREAT DOUBLES MATCH WON BY NEVER-SAY-DIE JAPANESE PAIR

Philippinos, Though Masters in the Science of Doubles, Bow To Indefatigable Playing of Visiting Team

In a match which held the interest of every spectator of a crowd the court. He was easily the star



大正3年(1914)マニラから帰国後の慶應義塾4選手の写真(個人蔵)※熊谷選手は右から2人目

当時まだ無名であった熊谷選手の快進撃は、現地マニラの新聞で大きく取りあげられました。“The Manila Times”では、熊谷選手の名前とその素晴らしさが、幾度も大きい見出しになりました。左は当時の新聞記事です。

大会中、準決勝<熊谷 対 フォットレル(米国) 戦>の大舞台上、拮抗した試合展開のなか、ある出来事がおきます。

フォットレル選手は第2セット、第3セットの終了時に休憩をとりました。

しかし、第2セット後の休憩はルール違反です。重なる休憩で試合が長引き、フォットレル選手のセット2-1リードで第3セットを終了したころには、日没が近くなっていました。第4セットは「セットの途中で日没中断した場合は途中ゲーム数を無効にし、翌日、第4セットを始めから再開する」という取り決めで行われることになりました。第4セット、5-2で熊谷選手がリードしたところで、審判が中断を宣告しました。そして翌日、フルセットまでもつれ込む接戦の末、熊谷選手は惜敗しました。

マニラの観衆や新聞は、熊谷選手に不運な展開となった事に同情し、新聞紙上では議論を呼びました。観衆は、熊谷選手の素晴らしいテニスの技量やボールに食らいつく熱意を賞賛し、相手がクラブハウスで水を浴びたり着替えるなど休憩する間も熊谷選手は試合再開のため休まずにスタンバイをし続け、中断やスコアの無効についても相手や審判に抗議しなかったスポーツマンシップを讃えました。熊谷選手を表彰すべきだという運動も起きました。

100年以上も昔の国際大会で、若い日本人選手のスポーツマンシップが、異国の地で人々の心を動かしたのです。

1月12日ダブルスの試合についての記事。見出しでは、熊谷・野村ペアのボールを諦めず追う粘り強い姿を「NEVER-SAY-DIE」、「不屈の」日本人ペアと表現している