

Thoughts on the 2020 Tokyo Olympics (this section has been quoted from President Komaba's message.)

The opening ceremony for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, which will last through to August 8th, was held on July 23rd in the middle of a State of Emergency that had been called for Tokyo.

Representing the first major event held since COVID-19 began to spread around the world, the Tokyo Olympics were originally delayed by one year out of concern over the global pandemic, but they are now being staged amid the spread of the Delta variant of COVID, amid a series of natural disasters, including flooding that has affected Japan, Europe, China and various other nations, and amid a mountain of other difficulties. The destructive act of forcing the event to be held while various sponsors are withdrawing and volunteers quitting from the point of view of placing the emphasis where it should be placed is exposing the lack of leadership we have in this country, while its citizens are wondering why the government is focusing its efforts on something other than the health and lives of the people.

If we take the narrow point of view, we cannot deny that we will be deeply moved by the performances of the athletes, who have worked so hard over a period of five long years with their sights set firmly on the Olympics. And, nobody can criticize them for not winning medals. When we see the gold medalists weeping with joy as they are interviewed and the silver medalists sobbing in disappointment (although there is an ambiguity in there somewhere...), we will overflow with life and energy both mentally and physically at these sporting achievements, and not be able to tear ourselves away from the television. From a personal point of view, what I would have liked to have seen is for the athletes competing against each other in stadiums filled with the roar of the supporters instead of empty stadiums after the threat of the coronavirus had passed so that they could be bathed in direct applause as they received their awards and medals.

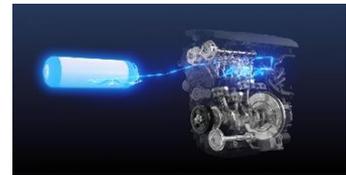
I am watching the 2020 Tokyo Olympics with mixed feelings as I wonder if this really is the best route to follow.

Automotive area (What are the hydrogen engines that Toyota is working so hard to develop?)

Toyota Motors entered a car with a hydrogen motor in the 3rd 2021 NAPAC Fuji SUPER TEC 24-Hour Super Endurance Race (hereinafter referred to as the Fuji 24-hour race) held at the Fuji Speedway between May 22nd and 23rd. Toyota president Akio Toyoda himself suggested that they enter a hydrogen-powered car in the race, and ROOKIE Racing, the racing team that he owns, nominated the president as one of the drivers under his driving name of MORIZO. The president outdid himself by taking the steering wheel of the hydrogen engine-mounted car at the Fuji 24-hour race. In addition to MORIZO, President Toyoda also has other "faces," one of which is the chairman of the Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association (JAMA). In his role as chairman of JAMA, the president has had something to appeal against since the end of last year. And that is, "there is more than one path to carbon-neutralization." On October 26th, 2020, Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga announced that the government would "aim at carbon-neutrality and a carbon-free society by the year 2050" during a general-policy speech he gave to an extraordinary Diet session. In other words, greenhouse gas emissions will be lowered to an effective zero by the year 2050. The trump card of this policy is electric vehicles (EVs), and Akio Toyoda is experiencing misgivings over this as both the president of Toyota Motors and the chairman of JAMA. Around 5.5 million people are employed by companies related to automobile manufacturing in Japan, and if every car in the world becomes an EV, the industry will lose around one million jobs. President Toyoda's is suggesting a path toward carbon-neutralization that involves keeping the engine... In other words, the use of cars powered by hydrogen engines is another way to achieve this target. Hydrogen engines do not emit any carbon dioxide (CO₂), the substance representative of greenhouse gases, during combustion. The majority of the exhaust gas is water vapor. The reason why hydrogen engines were suddenly thrust into the field of motor sports is that they provide the required speed and use well-tempered technologies. President Toyoda first came up with this idea in November 2020. Within just a few months, they had formulated an

engine and mounted it onto a car. The official announcement of a hydrogen-powered car being entered into the race came on April 22nd, but at that time, the endurance tests for the engine had not been completed. The name of the car that was alternately driven by Takuto Iguchi, Masahiro Sasaki, MORIZO, Takamitsu Matsui, Hiroaki Ishiura and Kamui Kobayashi was the ORC ROOKIE Corolla H2 Concept, and as the name suggests, it was based on the Corolla Sports concept. Toyota Motors and ROOKIE Racing are planning on entering the Hydrogen Corolla in the season's remaining super endurance races, and they intend to make the best use of the knowhow they gained during the Fuji 24-hour race. With regard to the actual engine, the current target is for it to generate the same output as the gasoline engine mounted onto the GR Yaris (200kW, 272ps) as swiftly as possible in order to prove the potential of hydrogen engines.

Although there is still room for improvement, there is no doubt that hydrogen engines are the engines of the future. Future developments are sure to attract much attention.



Source: GQ JAPAN

Keihin Seimitsu Kogyo (New recruit training)

KSK's new recruits have been taking part in training programs for around four months since they first entered the company on April 1st.

In addition to classroom studies, visits to other companies and training at our factories, they have also received practical training in actual work environments. With regard to the main features of this year's training and the points of modification, including the decision-making on each new employee's applicability for their official assignments, whereas up until now each new employee has received a wide range of practical training at several workplaces, this year they learned about the difficulties involved in manufacturing and KSK's technologies, as well as maintaining a sense of responsibility with regard to defect-free process completion being drummed into them to ensure that they develop into proficient workers, and each recruit spent two months at each workplace for continual practical training.

The new recruits reported on their training at a briefing session held on July 23rd, and they then flew the nest into the departments to which they have been officially assigned.

Post-editorial Notes: (2020 Tokyo Olympics and women's softball)

Although the Olympics have only just started, Japan has already harvested a large number of medals in judo, table tennis, skateboarding, women's softball and various other events, and the author has been sitting steadfastly in front of the TV for periods exceeding 18 hours.

Seeing the speed and height gained by basketball's Hachimura and Watanabe shifted my mind back to a long time ago... They reminded me of Michael Jordan and the other members of the first Dream Team when they played in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics. I was stationed in America at that time, and I was consumed with the sense of being half American, which made me seriously root for and cheer on America and American teams under the guise of it being my second mother country teams up until I returned to Japan four years later. Even in the remotest areas of the countryside, a sense of patriotism exists that cannot be compared to Japan, and sensing the deep levels of pride everybody had in their country was rather pleasant for the author.

The four major sports categories (American football, baseball, basketball and hockey) that are extremely popular in America are only considered to be minor sports through the remainder of the world, and I pondered on the fact that the star categories of the Olympics are soccer, volleyball, table tennis and other ball games, as well as swimming, athletics, gymnastics and the martial arts...

Incidentally, although this also comes under the title of a minor category, the author's wife has a friend whose daughter took part in the 2004 Athens Olympics as a member of Japan's women's softball national team, so the author has been very interested in women's softball since then.

She won the heart of a middle-aged man who drank himself into oblivion with nearly twelve 500ml cans of beer every day with her gentleness. When I first met her, all of the members of the Japanese national team at that time, from Reika Utsugi (the current team manager) downward, displayed very charming personalities, so I felt very nostalgic at seeing softball return as an Olympic event for the first time in many years.

The sport officially returned for the first time in three tournaments since Japan won the gold medal at the Beijing Olympics in 2008... And once again Japan has taken the gold medal...

On the night of July 27th, my entire family was glued to the television... Seeing the team's beautiful

softball is a sport with a long history, and it is a pity that it has disappeared from the lineup in the next Olympics (Paris in 2024)...

Seeing the passion with which the team approached their target seemed to drum into me the belief that a time comes when it is necessary to do one's best even if the future cannot be predicted, and I realized that I had a lot to learn from them, which I engraved on my heart.

P.S. I sincerely hope that softball will be revived in the Los Angeles Olympics due to be held in 2028.

