



Yesterday's **Highlight**

Young athletes and veterans make strides

On the fourth day of the Kobe 2024 World Para Athletics Championships, the weather changed drastically from the previous day's rain to an early summer climate with blue skies and rising temperatures. With the cheers of the students (children from local school, a number of new world records, championships records and region records were set.

■ **Women's 400 m T20**

One of the two world records set on the fourth day of the event was set in the women's 400 m T20 final. On the 19th, 17 athletes participated in the preliminary round, and 8 advanced to the final race. Among the gold and bronze medalists of the last Paris Championships, it was India's Deepthi Jeevanji who took the lead smoothly the entire time. She marked 55:07, breaking the previous world record by 0:05 seconds. The gold medalist in last year's Asian Para Games, who had just broken her own Asian record (56.18 seconds) in the qualifiers on the May 19th.



"I'm happy to win the championship after Asian Para Games and happy to set a new world record. I want to win a gold medal in Paris." she said.

Niina Kanno of Japan broke the Japanese record by 0.02 seconds with a time of 59.22 seconds. After the preliminary race the day before, she expressed regret,



saying, "I don't want to make a mistake like I did yesterday, I'm scared and I want to run away." "But when I started, I fought against my feelings and thought, "We're not gonna lose, we're gonna keep pace with the athletes around us." I think not running away led me to set a personal best." she said with a smiling face.



Jeevanji who won the championships, we have an opportunity to run together in the past International competition. "She was very fast and strong. Today, I tried to chase her once again."

When asked about my next goal, I said, "I want to improve my running style and start dash, in order to reach the 58 seconds". Hope that she will continue to grow at its own pace step by step.

■ Men's Long Jump T12



For men's long jump T12, in which 9 athletes participated, the result of the first 3 trials left only 8 participants for the final. The Uzbekistan's Doniyor Saliev, defending champion and world record holder from Paris 2023 (7.47m mark), failed all his first 3 attempts and could not advance for the final round.

The winner is Azerbaijan's Said Najafzade, who made a big jump of 7.30m in the first 3 trials. He took the top spot at 6.99m from the beginning, and, in his second trial marked 7.28m his new personal best, and, in the third attempt, he just marked a new personal best once again.

Chasing Najafzade was Kar Gee Wong of Malaysia. After Najafzade in the third attempt, he became a second with a record of 7.05m. In addition, Daiki ISHIYAMA of Japan chased the top 2 athletes with 6.85m, in his third attempt as well.

The game moved in the second half. Based on the result of the first half, the attempt sequence is changed to decrescent order. The fourth trail of Najafzade in the final was a foul, and he skip the fifth one, and just concentrating in final sixth attempt. On the other hand, Wong's fourth shot was 6.61m, and his fifth shot was a foul, depending on the last trial as your rival. Under this circumstance, Ishiyama marked 6.97m and was very close to the top athletes.

For the final sixth attempt, Ishiyama jumped first and he marked 7.08m, the best result of day and took the second place, replacing the 7.05m mark of the Wong (he has changed the runaway distance up to 43.5cm).

In the final trial, Wong jumped 6.93m, and after this result, Ishiyama's silver medal was conformed.



Najafzade, who made his last jump, he fouled once again and won this championships with 7.30m.

"It's amazing, I could win my first championships with my new personal best. The Paris Paralympics is just three months ahead, and I'm aiming to win at the next Paralympics Games in Paris, because I got the bronze medal in Tokyo 2020. (Najafzade)

Ishiyama, who won his first medal at the world championships, sat upright and waited for his turn before the final attempt. "I remembered sitting up straight and concentrating when I was in high school. So I just tried it and it works!"

When Ishiyama was heading to the pit for second half, Saliev yelled "Good luck brother", who finished without any official record during this championships in Kobe. With the advantage of host country and support from the championships, Ishiyama made a big leap forward.

■ **Men's 100m T13**

Skander Djamil Athmani of Algeria won the final of the 100m Men's 100m T13, with a new record of 10.44 seconds. Japan's Shuta Kawakami won the silver medal in 10.70 seconds, breaking his own Asian record.

Norway's Salum Ageze Kashafali, who set the world record in 2023 with a time of 10.37 seconds, also competed in the race. Everyone was paying attention to the champion's run, but Athmani was the one who jumped out. Kawakami, who chased Athmani with a smooth acceleration from the start, seemed to be caught by the champion Kashafari just before the goal, but Kawakami escaped by 0.09 seconds.



"I have been waiting a long time to win the 100m race. There was a time when he participated in the 400m due to injuries. Finally coming back to the 100m and winning is exceptional. A one-year-old daughter is waiting in Algeria. I want to give her today's medal as a present." Athmani said.

Kawakami, who won a silver medal at his first world championship, expressed his joy in a gutsy pose when he finished. "I was able to improve my time by correcting my posture that I lost just after the start of the qualifying round the day before and entering the final." He was scheduled to participate in the Paris Games last year, but he missed out due to a last-minute injury. He won his first medal on the big competition at this year's World Championships and secured the ticket for the Paris Paralympics Games.

"We have finally reached the starting line of the world stage. Kawakami showed and proved that Japan can compete with the fastest class of the world (Para Athletics). in the fastest class in Para. That said, I am very disappointed that we lost to Athmani today. As we prepare for the Paris Paralympics Games, we aim to improve our record by improving our basic sprinting ability and skills in the acceleration phase from the start." he said.

■ Women's discus throw F53



Four athletes participated in the women's discus final in the F53 class for athletes with lower limb disabilities who use wheelchairs. In the game, each player throws six consecutive trials using a throwing platform (special chair for competition). Tokyo Paralympics gold medalist Elizabeth Rodrigues Gomes (Brazil) won her third consecutive championship with her sixth throw, a new championships record 17.22m. Keiko Onitani of Japan won a silver medal by throwing 14.49m, a new Asian record, in her second throw while competing in the world championships for the first time. With this big throw, which improved her personal record by 3.06m, she hope to be nominated for the Paris Paralympics team.

"I am so happy that I won my third gold medal at the World Championships in my favorite country, Japan. I want to win the gold medal at the Paris Paralympics." Rodriguez Gomez said with a smile.

She was a volleyball player but switched to parasports due to illness. After participating in the Beijing Paralympics in wheelchair basketball, she started throwing in a sitting position in Para Athletics in 2011. She broke the world record (17.80m) last fall, but is now 59 years old. "I think I will retire someday. I'm so happy that a new athlete like Onitani started competing. I want you to spread and promote the seated throwing event." she said.



Onitani looked back with a calm smile, "My goal was to finish in second place and qualify for the Paris Paralympics. I had a good feeling and though since the beginning, but for my surprise, I could obtain the great result. I would be nervous at my first world championships, but it seems that I'm ready and so excited, mentally I'm in good condition as well.

I got a incurable disease when I was in University, and spend 6 to 7 years recuperating. During her rehabilitation, she was involved in Parasport world, and she made her first participation in 2022, with slowing discus. She growth rapidly, in October of the same year, she become a national team member and she has participated at the Asian Para Games in Hangzhou China, with mark of 11.01m.

The strength she worked on in winter practice later on led to the big throw of the day. As a future goal, she said, "I'm going to practice hard aiming to achieve 15m in Paris. And I would be happy if I could encourage someone to challenge themselves by competing."

On the fourth day of the competition, Maya Nakanishi (women's long jump T64) and Mana Sasaki (women's 400m T13) both athletes won bronze medals.

Competition Schedule and Results



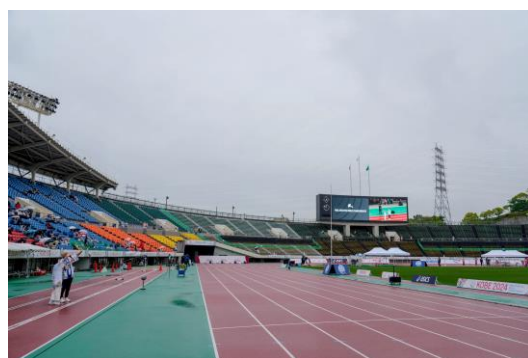
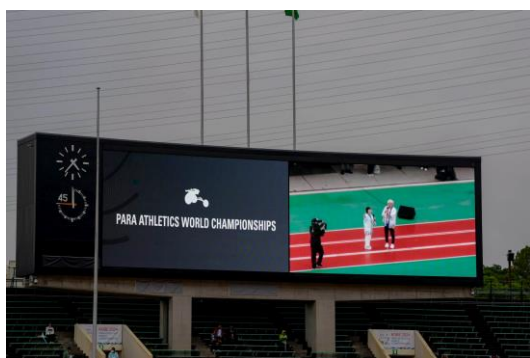
GO KOBE 2024!

High school student with no arms succeeds in capturing the competition with a drone!

On May 19th, the 3rd day of the competition, there was an event of filming with drone by Miyuu Miyazaki, a 3rd grade high school student in Kobe, who was born with no arms.



Ms. Miyazaki operates with skills the controller and the monitor panel by her foot. She succeeds in capturing the whole venue from the air before the evening session with operating a drone from a small hill beside of the venue. When the aerial video shot with a telephoto lens on the drone was projected on the big screen in the venue, shouts of joy were raised by the specters who watched over including Akemi Masuda, the chairperson of the championships, and Mitsuya Takaya, PR leader of the competition. After 1 minute filming, she smiled in relief finishing 15 minutes operating drone and make it return to the starting point. Ms. Miyazaki was watching the aerial video on the monitor and said, "there are a larger number of people than I imaged, and it is pleasure to see them waving their hands."





However, there was a trouble, the drone was flying upward automatically returned to its original position, due to a communication failure, Ms. Miyazaki respond the situation calmly, rebooting the system and make the drone flying up again.

This day was a challenging day.

There was a light rain, it was difficult weather condition for drone operating.

A drone she used today, carried a camera with a telephoto lens compatible with shooting from far distance. It has a diameter of approximately 1.6 meters and weighs 10 kilograms, it's quite big.

This drone is 10 times larger than one Ms. Miyazaki usually uses, and this make controlling harder. Additionally, it was the first time for her to performance aerial shooting before unspecified number of people including the staffs.

"I felt more nervous than usual. But a little tension turns fun too. It was really fun today."

Ms. Miyazaki has been operating and shooting drones since a junior-high student, and passed the national examination of controlling drones : Unmanned Aircraft Remote Pilot, at age of 16 last year.

Now she is a member of Universal Drone Association (UDrA), its activities aim to contribute to a universal society and had experiences for shooting of fireworks festival.



Kotaro Enomoto, the representative director of the International Drone Association, who has coached Ms. Miyazaki from the beginning, came and support today, "some people would be in panic when a trouble happened, but Miyuu-chan has not only knowledge and the skills also an ability of responding a unexpected situation calmly as predicting danger", he said.

Ms. Miysazaki watched a race of Visual Impairment in this Kobe 2024 before this day. "the running skills of an athlete and a guide runner was very high. It was very interesting to see them running together just in front of me", she surprised.

"In the future, I'd like to send videos of touristic sites to the people who is unable to go out easily. I'm interested in shooting Kobe Nunobuki Gardens and Oji Zoo for instance."

"Drones have high potential to make our life useful for an aged society but still the number of the pilot with disabilities is small. I hope Miyuu-chan's succeed will be a someone's chance to challenge this activity " Mr. Enomoto told us with expectation.