TIAS - Japan Cricket Association (JCA) Field Visit: Sano International Cricket Ground, Sano City-Tochigi Prefecture: August 18th, 2020

August 18th, 2020 created an opportunity to follow up on the visit by **Japan Cricket Association (JCA**; Web: www.cricket.or.jp), to TIAS, University of Tsukuba (August 5th) by having a business trip-field trip to the JCA's **SANO INTERNATIONAL CRICKET GROUND** (2472 Kanayanaka-cho, Sano-shi, Tochigi 327-0026). The aim was two-fold: first - to have a hands-on experience by being at the **cricket pitch and the JCA office in Sano** meeting the association members there, and second – to discuss on a couple of research projects under the Sports Science and Medicine (SSM) module (http://tias.tsukuba.ac.jp/masters-programme-2/science-and-medicine/) of TIAS program in order to find common interests leading to a **long-term academic-sport partnership**. I was accompanied by Jowon Jung (TIAS researcher) and the two SSM module students (Kai Png and Saravana Perumal S). Additionally, it gave an opportunity to get a feel of the Internship locational and facilities where JCA has kindly agreed to take **TIAS 5th batch students as Interns**. Thank you **Alan Curr** (Head of Cricket Operations, JCA) for arranging the visit, and the time, welcoming us to Sano; thanks again Morita san for linking us with JCA.

<Photo of Events to be followed in August explained by Alan>

The meeting started with an introduction and greeting by the **JCA CEO Naoki Alex Miyaji** (https://www.japantimes.co.jp/sports/2020/01/30/more-sports/cricket-2/japan-cricket-association-takes-ambitious-steps-grow-game/) and moving to the beautiful cricket ground, which was indeed impressive. The flat surface covered with short cut green grass contained the 2 pitches and it seemed like the **perfect cricket ground**. The net facilities – outdoors and indoors were available and we could see some on-going training. Alan explained how the cricket ground was perfected from one to two pitches, and the team development along with junior level coaching and training. We were also informed on how the JCA operates; it's funding and relationship with Japan Sport organizations and the ICC, and the national and international matches and events they have. JCA's commitment to cricket with a **holistic approach to not just sport but community and city-region**, was there to see. In the near future,

they expressed their desires to **strengthen the grassroot of the athletes** and to **promote the games in the regions all across the country** hopefully in preparation for the 2026 Asian Games in Aishi-Nagoya.

TIAS-JCA exchanged ideas on the research proposals tailored to cricket athletes - including "Physical Needs and Feasibility Analysis for Performance of Cricket athletes" and "A Pilot Study to Develop a Program on Anti-Doping for Cricket in Japan", and possibilities therein. Targeting of the **athlete management** will further improve and focus on athlete's muscle build. **Awareness and knowledge** of anti-doping tailored to the Cricket Association hopes to educate young athletes in catering their professional career. Furthermore, students and the researcher interacted at various levels to try understanding better the JCA and its activities. Potential opportunities linking TIAS with JCA through the **academic-research-sport base** was a common understanding between Prof. Rakwal and Alan, and to be discussed further. **All of them expressed their thanks to JCA for this opportunity to visit and look forward to learning more about JCA and working with them.**

Thank you JCA-SICG and TIAS.

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LINKS: http://tias.tsukuba.ac.jp/ https://cricket.or.jp/en/ https://japancricketblast.com/
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