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# Chicago Sports and CNAА

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# The Chicago Shimpo

THE CHICAGO JAPANESE AMERICAN NEWS

Friday, May 9, 2003

## Chicago Sports and CNAA



Lisa and Moary Doi in front of South Wall of Sports Photo on the opening day of "Chicago Sports! You Shoulda Been There."

By Alice Murata  
Special to the Shimpo

The Bulls Six NBA Championship Trophies and the Bears Super Bowl XX Trophy are among the many Chicago Sports Memorabilia that can be seen at the Chicago Historical Society's Chicago *Sports! You*

### *Shoulda Been There* Exhibit.

Rich in historical firsts Chicago boasts having the first Special Olympics, starting the Roller Derby, and beginning the Negro Leagues. John Russick, curator, used more than 300 sports objects and 21 stories to tell how sports helps us establish a sense of civic pride in

Chicago. We use sports to develop identity based on race, religion, gender, ethnicity, and community and sports are a bigger part of our lives than we realize.

Although the major focus is

on Chicago's major teams: Bears, Bulls, Cubs, Sox, and Blackhawks, the Chicago Japanese American Historical Society was successful in hav

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## Chicago Sports

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memorabilia from the Chicago Nisei Athletic Association (CNAA) included in the Neighborhood and Community Sports section. A showcase is shared with the German Turner League, Jewish Hebrew Institute, and Catholic Organization under Bishop Sheil.

Jane Hidaka loved seeing the CNAA items included. Featured are the Buddhist Temple of Chicago's ACES 1975 Score book, 1965 Midwest Buddhist Temple A League Trophy and red jersey, Christ Presbyterian Church's 1980 Blue T shirt, and David Miyako's bat and baseball glove.

Several sports photos from shortly after World War II are included such as a women's camp baseball photo from the DuSable African American Museum, Ben Chikaraishi's MBT girls team, Pat Amino's Playoff shot between the Ting-a-Lings and Serenes, and 1980 track meet at Amundsen High School.

Thomas Mayahara recalled the first CNAA meeting on La Salle Street in 1946 with teams such as the Huskies, Marushos, and Zephyrs, which was formed by Jim Hata of Seattle and Bill Adachi of California.

They were sponsored first by the Courier, the first Nisei newspaper, and then by Dresslers Drug Store on Clark and Division. They practiced on the southside, in Shields Field and played official games at Olivet Institute. CNAA founders included Bill Adachi as the first president and Joe Okabe, Sam Zaiman, Jack Hamashi, and Thomas Mayahara.

Ben Chikaraishi recalled that the board contained representatives from the various churches, social, and athletic clubs. The league offered recreational opportunities for young people who sometimes



The photo was provided by the Japanese American Historical Society.

the Diversey Driving range with final play at the Glendale Country Club.

Raising funds was left to each team. Sponsorship was sometimes possible from Japanese American companies such as General Mailing. Parents supported pancake breakfasts and spaghetti lunches which brought them closer as they worked together. The central funds for CNAA was from a yearly raffle at the all day all star games. Success for the CNAA is credited to everyone's generous volunteering of time and services. Ben credits the CNAA in the 60's of keeping their children so busy in healthy sports that they did not have time to get into the drugs and alcohol that was prevalent then.

Sports in a big way steadily declined as the youth got older and by 1965 the rental cost for gyms had increased so that it was difficult to operate with the reduced numbers of participants. Still today, a small sports program continues on Saturday mornings staffed by Sanseis, Ty Momii, David Toguri, and Kaz Ideno for children 8 to 14.

Sports has always been an important socialization activity in the lives of Japanese Americans since they arrived from Japan in the 1880s. A sense of community was built as they

2004. When you go, please be sure to look for Bruce Matsuo at bat on the large south wall of sports pictures in the main entrance.

### Notice:

**Asian American Festival** at the Daley Center. CJAHs will do Japanese American crafts with Chicago Public School children on May 20<sup>th</sup> from 11 to 1:30 PM.

**Hiroshi Sugimoto Architecture Exhibit** at MCA. The CJAHs co-sponsored the opening for this exhibit and will co-host with MCA a breakfast on May 23, 2003.

**Field Museum, Greater Chicago Leadership Conference** on May 27, 2003.

CJAHs offers children's programs for libraries and schools including some in the coming months.

Two exhibits in the works  
In partnership with Consul General Sakaba, CJAHs is working on an exhibit highlighting the 150 years partnership between Chicago, United States, and Japan since Commodore Perry sailed his black ships into Tokyo Bay demanding Japan end its isolation and