

**Shizuto**  
**KAWAMURA'S**  
**alameda**

**Taiiku-Kai**, etc  
**scrapbook**



Shiz, with his wife, Spring, and sons Seiji, Jiro and George

**This album was made available by Seiji Kawamura.**

A few pages were not included, as they were unessential.

The majority of the items are about the Alameda, CA., Taiiku Kai (ATK) baseball team, but there are a few items about the Mudhens football team, and the Acorns basketball team.

They all existed before World War II and were an essential part of the Alameda Japanese community.

This album was scanned at high resolution in January 2022.



# HOKUBEI MAINICHI

1746 POST STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94115 U.S.A.

Mr. Shizuto Kawamura  
2207 Pacific Avenue  
Alameda, CA 94501

Dear Mr. Kawamura:

Enclosed are a couple of copies of the New Year's edition on Japanese American athletes and an envelope of photos and negatives that we used.

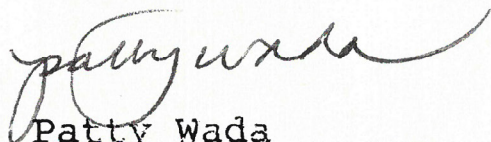
Needless to say, we couldn't have done this special issue without your help. You were a lifesaver, and we deeply appreciate your able and knowledgeable assistance. I hope this edition spurs every Japanese American community to start documenting its own sports history. The photos are great, but can you imagine all the wonderful stories that lie behind them?

We spent some 14-hour days here pulling it all together, so I hope everyone enjoys the issue.

Thank you again for coming to our rescue. We'll be talking to you soon as the day of ATK's plaque dedication nears.

Happy 1992.

Sincerely yours,



Patty Wada  
Associate Editor

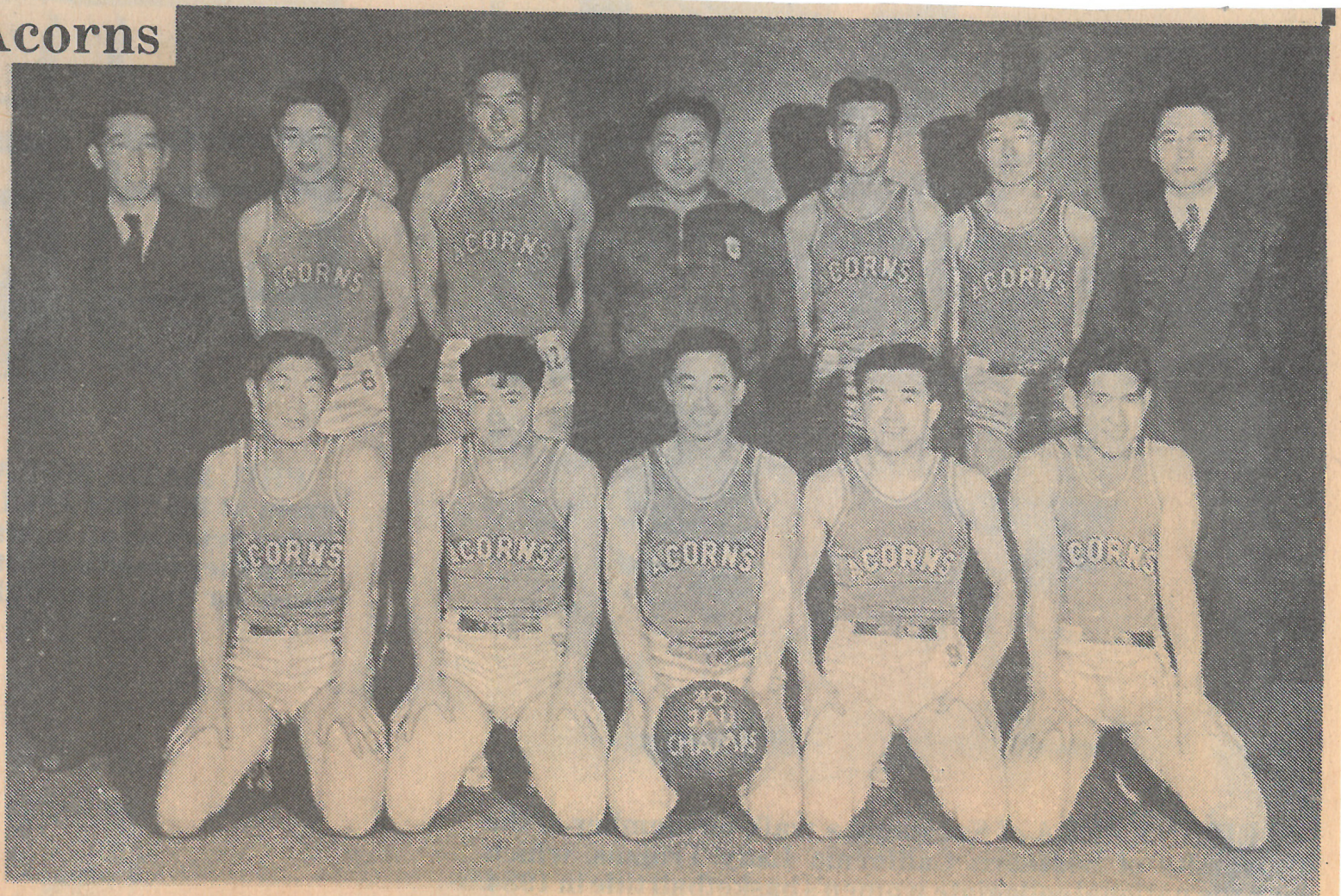


## Alameda Taiiku Kai



Members of the Alameda Taiiku Kai, 1928: (Front, l. to r.) Nabe Ide, Yutch Domoto, Gimbo Kimura, Bo Iwai, Aki Moriwaki; (Back, l. to r.) Mike Nakano, Al Hue, Dick Cy, Towata, Shiz

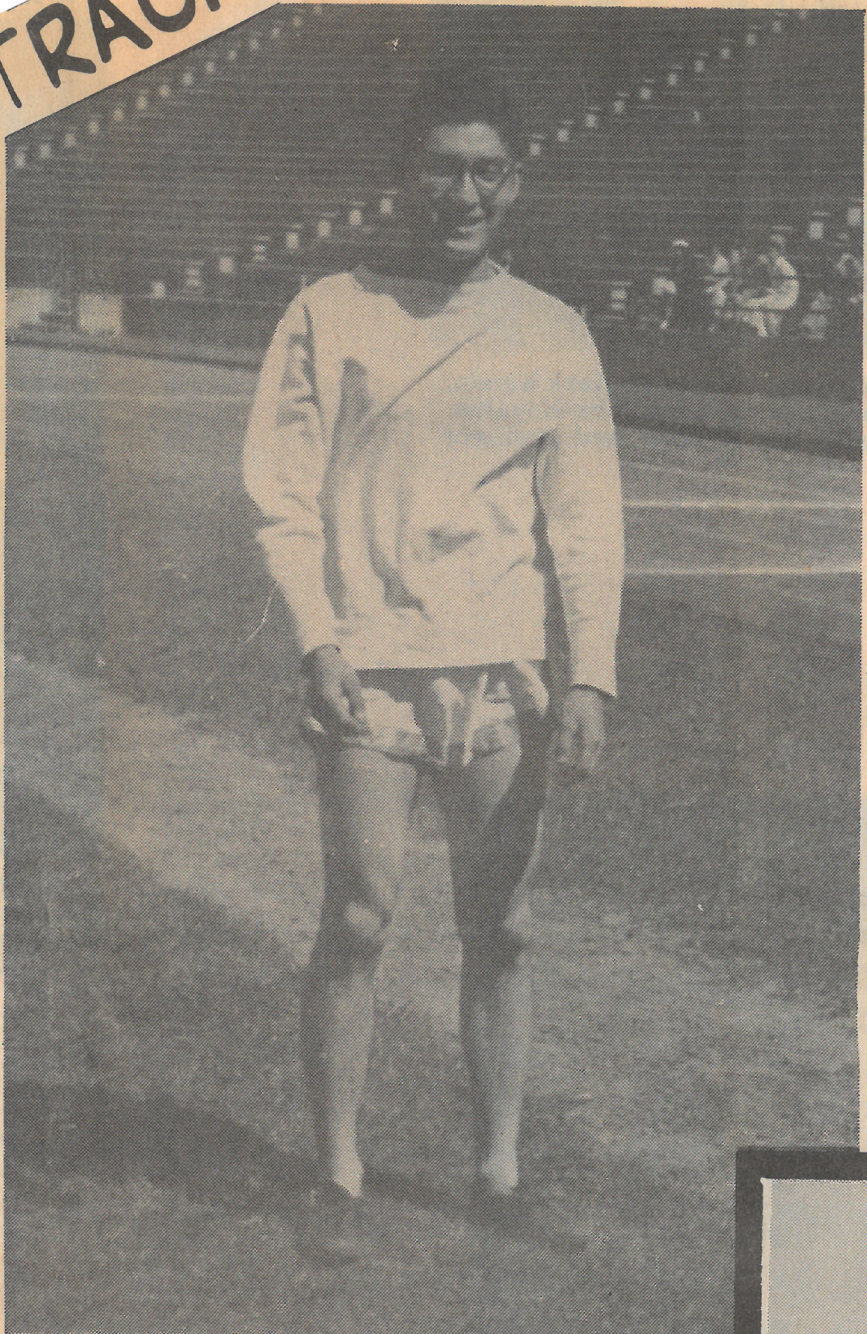
## Alameda Acorns



Winner, 1940 Northern California JAU basketball tournament: (Front, l. to r.) Yas Yamashita, Rolly Kadonaga, Shug Madokoro, Sam Rokutani, Non Iwahashi; (Back, l. to r.) Tad Hikoeda, assistant coach, George Tsuchiya, Howe Hanamura, Min Iwahashi, manager, John Hanamura, George Kuge and Kim Obata, head coach.



# TRACK



**GEORGE KIDO** was a sprinter and broad jumper for the Alameda High School track team from 1931-35. He went on to be a member of the UC Berkeley varsity track team, 1935-39, setting a broad jump record of 24'1½."



**GEORGE TANAKA** of Oakland played for the Alameda Mudhens basketball team from 1932-34. He was also an outstanding tennis player, being the No. 2 player on the UC Berkeley varsity tennis team, 1932-36.





DICK CY TOWATA was an outstanding third baseman and shortstop for Alameda Taiiku Kai, 1925.





1924: An all-star team made up of players from San Jose, Isleton and Stockton pose on the steps of the Aki Hotel in San Francisco's Nihonjinmachi. Those who can be identified are (front, starting second from left) Jim Okino of Stockton, Araki of Isleton, Ken Nushida, Logan Miyanishi and Frank Ito, all of Stockton, and (Back, second from left) Fred Koba of San Jose.



Circa 1930s: (l. to r.) Frank Ichishita, George Yoshioka, Jack Ota, Frank Shimada, George Yamaoka, Sheik Uyejo, Adrian Yamamoto, Masaji Kanemoto, Chick Hinaga, Harry Kanemoto, Harry Yoshioka, Yoshito Kanemoto, George Hinaga, Russel Hinaga.



## Book Examines JA Farm Community in Cortez



In May 1939, the Cortez baseball team beat Lodi, 6-0. The Cortez Wildcats were the only team in a league of six Japanese American teams to own their own ballpark. Posing after the game are: (front row, from left) George Tashiro, George "Cobby" Kajioka, Ernest Yoshida (manager), Nobuhiro "Nogi" Kajioka, Henry "Hank" Kajioka, Yukihiro "Yuk" Yotsuya (who provided this photo for the book); (back row, from left) Keichi "Deacon" Yamaguchi, Yeichi Sakaguchi, Fred "Pinto" Kajioka, Shizuma "Shiz" Kubo, Kaoru Masuda, Kaname "Ben" Miyamoto, Bill Noda, Minoru "Min" Yenokida.

ITHACA, N.Y. — *Farming the Home Place: A Japanese American Community in California, 1919-1982* by Valerie J. Matsumoto has been published by Cornell University Press.

In 1919, against the backdrop of a long history of anti-Asian nativism, a handful of Japanese families established Cortez Colony in a bleak pocket of the San Joaquin Valley. Matsumoto presents a vivid account of three generations of women and men in this community.

Bringing to light the dynamic forces that shaped Cortez Colony from its founding through 1982, she shows how the choice to cultivate an ethnic community reflects shifting needs as well as shared history.

Matsumoto chronicles conflicts within the community as well as obstacles from without as the colonists responded to the challenges of settlement, the setbacks of the Great Depression, the hardships of World War II internment, and the opportunities of postwar reconstruction.

Tracing the evolution of the gender and family roles of members of Cortez as well as their cultural, religious and educational institutions, she docu-

ments the persistence and the flexibility of the ethnic community and demonstrates its range of meaning, from geographic location to state of mind.

Noting the important role that food plays in family and community events, Matsumoto has included over 20 recipes, for everything from somen salad to Jello mochi, with a list of terms.

Matsumoto is an associate professor of history at UCLA. A graduate of Arizona State University, she received her Ph.D. from Stanford University.

"The men and women of Cortez shared with me a richly textured past woven from the sturdy threads of their lives," Matsumoto said in her introduction. "Major themes in Japanese American studies took on greater dimension when examined through the range of their experiences.

"Their stories revealed the presence of human toil behind the shining fruit in the supermarket, and illuminated the benefits and tensions of participation in a close-knit ethnic

community.

"I hope my research can affirm the significance of this history and that it will stimulate further exploration by the third and fourth generations whose choices even now are shaping the future of the community."

Gary Okihiro of Cornell University commented, "This finely nuanced, intricate study is particularly excellent in its discussion of familial, gender and generational relations and of changes over time. Perhaps most important is Matsumoto's recovery through oral history of voices that personalize and enliven a disciplined examination of the human experience."

Roger Daniels of University of Cincinnati called the book "unique in Japanese American studies and rare among studies of immigrant and ethnic groups in America. The only study of Japanese Americans that looks at a community and its families from a feminist perspective, *Farming the Home Place* makes skillful use of oral history and provides valuable information on a community that remained rural even after World War II."



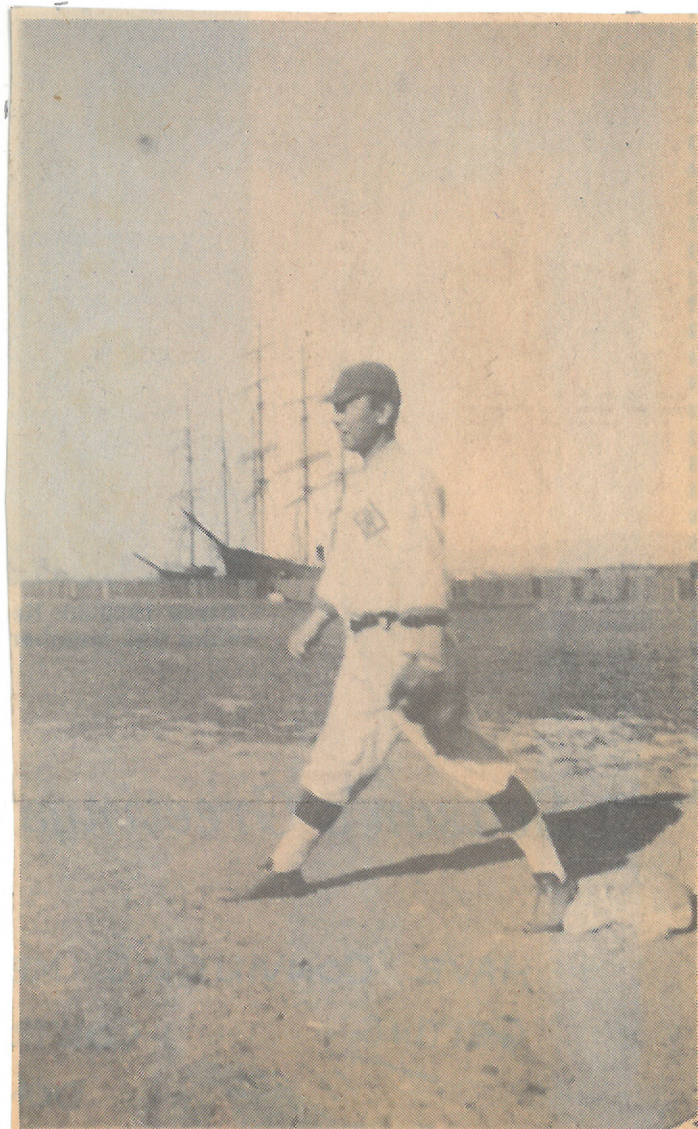


### Stockton Yamato

Circa 1920: (Front, l. to r.) Johnnie Akaba, Frank Mirikitani, Ted Shindo, Frank Ito, Nobu Matsumoto, Ken Nushida; (Back, l. to r.) Logan Miyanishi, unknown, Henry Usui, unknown, Mr. Komura of the Stockton Times, Jim Okino, Lefty Taniguchi and George "Pop" Suzuki. Nushida was the first JA to play in the Coast League for the AAA Sacramento Solons. The Yamato Ballpark, located on the southern outskirts of Stockton, was paid for and built by the Issei in the 1920s.



SHUG MADOKORO was an all-around athlete, who played basketball for the Alameda Mudhens (1932-37), the S.F. Mikados (1937-39) and the Alameda Acorns (1939-40). He was on the Mudhens' football team and as a member of the ATK baseball team was named to the First Team of the Nichi-Bei N.C. All-Star Nine in 1940.

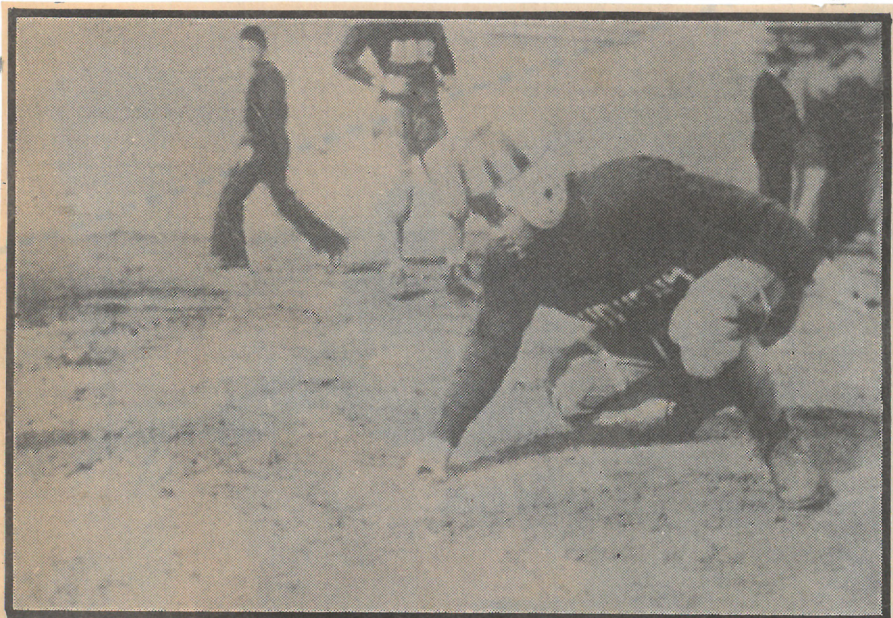


Circa 1920s: A member of Alameda Taiiku Kai stands in right field of the ATK Ballpark, located next door to the Alameda-Oakland Estuary complete with clipper ships docked in the harbor. ATK members are planning to dedicate a plaque at the site of the old ATK Ballpark this February.

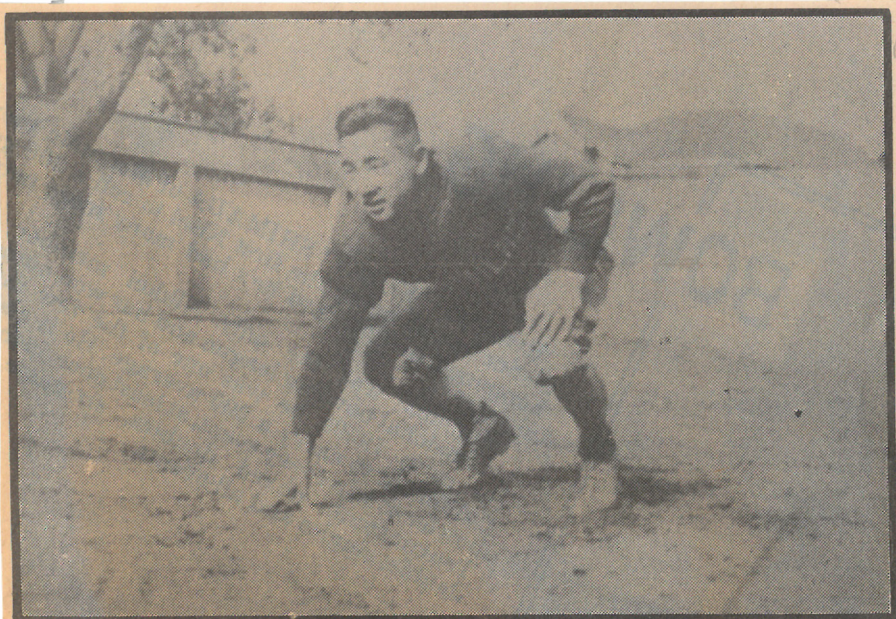




Alameda Mudhens, 1932: (Front, l. to r.) Hiroshi Kanda, Min Nakayama, Masayoshi Morino, Oski Kono, Kiyu Nogami, Tak Yamashita; (Middle, l. to r.) Tates Hanamura, George Rokutani, Mas Iwaihara, Masaru Mizokuchi, Robert Iwataki; (Back, l. to r.) Haruo Imura, manager, John Mukoyama, Joe Yoshino, John Hanamura, George Tanaka, Taro Takeda and Sus Kanzaki, trainer.



MAS IWAIHARA played football for the Alameda Mudhens in 1932. He also made a name for himself sumo wrestling in the 1930s, becoming one of the few outstanding Nisei sumotori of the time.



KIYO NOGAMI of Alameda played football for the Mudhens in 1932. He was also a member of the Alameda Taiiku Kai baseball team from 1931-37 and on the UC Berkeley varsity baseball team (1932-36) as its first string shortstop. He was with the Kono All-Star Baseball Team that went and played in Japan in 1937. He went on to play professional ball with Japan's Hankyu Braves for several years.

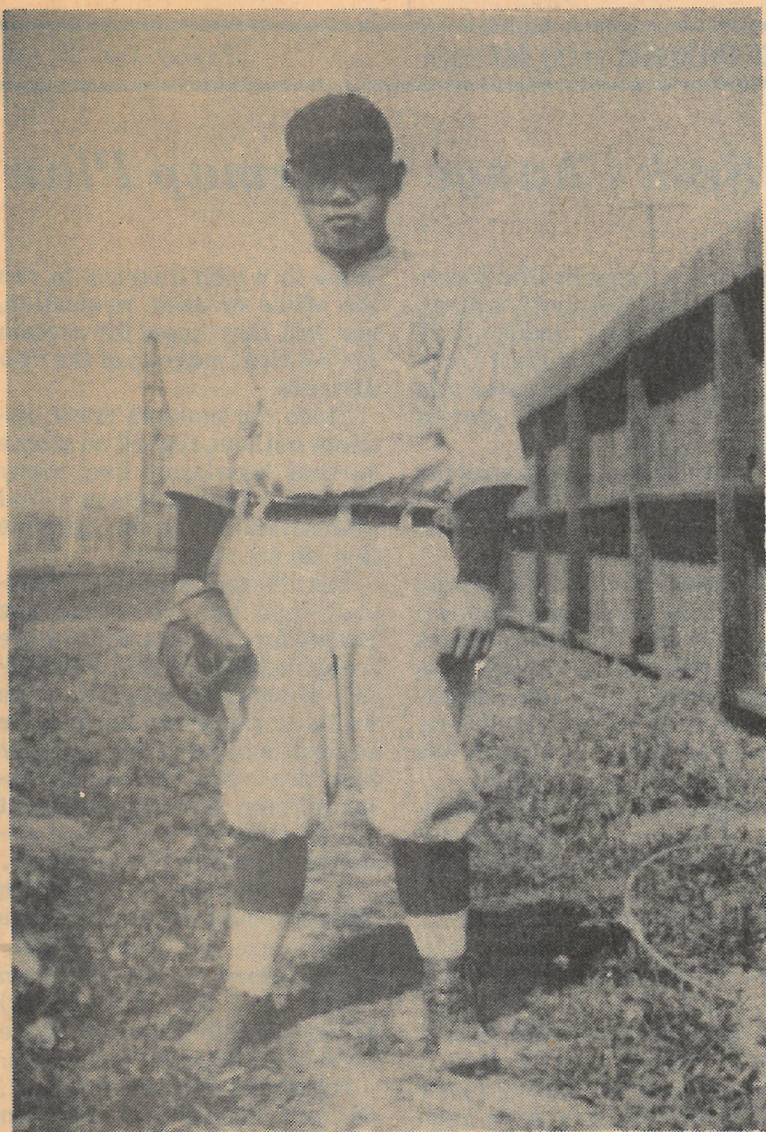


SAM ROKUTANI was a member of the Mudhens basketball team in 1932. He also excelled in baseball, pitching for the UC Berkeley varsity team from 1936-39 and for Alameda Taiiku Kai, 1935-41. He was named to the Second Team of the Nichi-Bei N.C. All-Star Nines in 1940.



Hokusei  
Fri. 12/27/91

Coming Up in New Year's Edition



Japanese American athletes will be the subject of our New Year's edition to welcome in 1992, the Year of the Monkey.

For a taste of things to come, pictured above is Mike Nakano, who was known as the Babe Ruth of Alameda. A southpaw, he played with Alameda Taiiku Kai from 1921-1933. He was an outstanding first baseman and long ball hitter.

An eight-page photo spread of other athletes and teams that have filled Japanese American sports history await you in our Jan. 1, 1992 edition. We hope you enjoy it.

## ATK took pride in calling island its baseball home

■ Japanese baseball leagues flourished until World War II

By Win Currier  
STAFF WRITER

An aged and faded photo shows Hisaki Hayashi warming up his arm for a baseball game. In the background are Clipper Ships of the Alaska Packers tied up in the estuary.

The picture was taken in the late 1920s or early '30s as Hayashi was enjoying another pleasant Sunday of competitive baseball for the Alameda Tai Kukai, the local Japanese team which competed primarily against other Japanese teams and also against college teams visiting from Japan.

Pacific Avenue resident Mas (Fred) Nakano, who played for the team for many years, explains that Alameda Taiiku translates as Alameda Athletic Club. And it was the ATK Diamond by which the field came to be officially known. Locally, the reference was the "Jap Diamond." Nobody took offense at the terminology then.

With the estuary behind it, the field was on the northwest corner of Walnut Street at Clement Avenue. The land was owned by James Rolph, then mayor of San Francisco. He allowed the Japanese team to use the land rent-free after the team's original playing area at McKinley Park became too small with the park's addition of tennis courts.

Japanese men built the field themselves. Graded it, tended it. Put up grandstand areas down the baselines. And every Sunday, they played baseball.

Hisaki Hayashi and his wife, Chitose, owned the Tokyo Cleaners at Park Street and Pacific Avenue. Chitose, who died in 1988, would stay in the store, which

took in laundry in addition to cleaning.

She'd do seamstress work, too, while her husband, who died in 1970, worked every day at a variety of jobs.

"He had to work a lot to take care of four sons and a daughter," explains his son Arthur (Tadashi) Hayashi.

Tad Hayashi remembers that every spring all the men would go down to the field and cut down the weeds.

"Most of them were gardeners so they had the equipment," noted Tad, who is the older of the four Hayashi boys.

Mas Nakano remembers the elder Hayashi as as a "very good coach or teacher to young players."

"He really knew the game," Mas said.

Tad Hayashi recalls when he was "5 or 6, my dad had me out playing catch." He went on to play seven days a week.

"I'd practice or play games for Alameda High on Monday through Friday, play Legion ball on Saturday and for ATK on Sundays," said Tad, who was a pitcher on teams coached by Carl Young and Hal Eifert.

Some were even more dedicated to ATK.

"I played third base, mostly, and also pitched some," said Shizuto Kawamura, a pioneer of the team who was born in 1906 and still lives on Pacific Avenue. "I didn't go out for high school ball, so I could play ATK. I started with the team when I was 15 (in 1921) and played through 1929 when I graduated from the University of California.

"Then I played three more years, but gave it up. Getting too old I guess."

After the World War II internment of Japanese-Americans,

Please see **Japan**, 20p





Shizuto Kawamura  
2207 Pacific Ave  
Alameda, CA 94501

## "Alameda Spc

# Japan: Nakano starred

Continued from 18p

"Shiz" retired in New York and came back to Alameda.

Also back in Alameda, after retiring from working with the Internal Revenue Service in Dallas, is Shug Madokoro, who is now a Harbor Bay Isle resident. Mas' brother, Mike, lives on Webster Street.

Madokoro recalls that the first team wore a big letter "A" on its uniform.

"The ATK came later," he said. "I guess we were just called the Alameda ball club then. I remember Oakland had a team, but I never thought they were as good as us. We had some of the Oakland players come over with us later, though.

"We played in the Northern Division group, which I think extended down to Fresno. Then there were other teams in Southern California."

Mas Nakano remembers that the top teams (in addition to ATK) were the San Jose Asahi, Stockton Yamato and teams from Fresno and Sacramento. Other cities had teams, too, but these were the best.

The all-dirt but immaculately maintained field was bordered by Baxter Lumber Company, where telephone poles were treated and stored. Batters would hit toward the estuary and Tad Hayashi remembers someone down the third base line by the name of Mr. Abe.

"I don't remember his first name — had a stand where you could buy candy, soft drinks and cigarettes," he said.

The team would pay expenses by passing the hat and by various fundraisers.

"We had a large Japanese community extending from Foley Street to Walnut from Santa Clara Avenue to the Estuary," Hayashi said. "They all showed outstanding support in the Japanese community and filled the stands every Sunday."



Mas Nakano

Games were mostly low scoring thanks, in part, to a fast-balling left-handed pitcher named Ben Tanizawa, who now lives in the Mt. Eden area of Hayward. Mas Nakano remembers him as a "very deliberate pitcher" . . . meaning he was in no hurry to get the job done.

Harry Kono had bought the Hayashi Florists (no relation to the other Hayashi family) and managed the team. Hayashi Florist was located where Towata Florist is situated, virtually unchanged, at Oak Street and Santa Clara Avenue.

Dick Towata was an outstanding shortstop for the original ATK team and brother John, who owns Towata Florists and is a former member of the Alameda Recreation and Park Commission, also played baseball but not for ATK.

Taro Takeda was also an outstanding hitter and Sam Okitani, who was wounded in World War II and now lives in Arkansas, could hit as well.

College teams came over from Japan — Keio and Waszda. University of Tokyo came over and so did the Tokyo Giants, who played against an all-star Japanese team at the Oakland Ball Park in Emeryville.

When Kono assembled an all-star team to go to Japan in 1935, Mas Nakano recalls they had Ala-

ameda players Kiyo Nogami, a shortstop who had played at the University of California, catcher Tut Iwahashi and pitcher Tanizawa.

"I was picked for the team, but came down sick so I couldn't go," Nakano added.

Nakano, who was in Chicago when he decided to be known as Fred — a name he kept when he became a florist in the Montclair district of Oakland — was a third baseman. His brother Mike was a first baseman.

Caucasian players from Alameda also went on that trip. Nick Carter, Alex White and Al Brown were recalled by longtime Alameda semi-pro player Frank McCormick as part of that team.

When did the era end? Nobody seems to know exactly.

The interest seemed to die in the late 30s. Then came the war.

Tad Hayashi remembers when Japanese, Germans and Italians were officially described as "enemy aliens" and first ordered to turn in radios with shortwave bands, cameras and weapons.

"I took my father's three beatup cameras and turned them in at the police department," Hayashi said. "You know, when my father came back, he went in and they were there waiting for him."

He was first taken to Tanforan in April of 1942, then we went to Utah.

"They asked for volunteers for the service, but I passed that up, got a permanent pass which meant we could go any place except the West Coast," he said. "I went to Detroit . . . and got drafted.

"A Japanese sergeant asked me to read some symbols, I did, and went to Army Language School with some others. The rest of our unit was sent to Italy. I ended up with the occupation forces and so it was my first visit to the old country."

The memories of that, of his Alameda and Japanese heritage intertwined, have prompted Hayashi to make a move to write of those times "so the children and grandchildren can learn how it was."

"Maybe some of us are ashamed of the internment, I don't know," he said. "But I think the future generations should know about it."



August 26, 1991

To: Former ATK Members

Dear

Subject: Memorial Plaque for old ATK Ball Ground

The idea of putting up a plaque to commemorate the location of old ATK ball ground, came up jointly during a conversation between "Lil" Arnerich, Alameda City Councilman and Ki Nomura at the Alameda Golf Course a short time ago.

Since then, Friends of ATK\* and an ATK AD-HOC Committee\* met twice. The first meeting was held on July 31, 1991 at the site of the original ATK ground to discuss the proposed memorial plaque and to select a good site. The second meeting was held at Buena Vista United Methodist Church on August 21st. We went over in detail, the progress made by Friends of ATK in obtaining permission to place the plaque in the front garden of Alameda City Bureau of Electricity property, where the ball ground used to be. Mr. Arnerich also showed slides of typical memorial plaques placed throughout Alameda and a slide showing the actual location where our rock will be placed. We adjourned with a promise that it is now our turn to make the project a success.

The AD-HOC Committee is calling a general meeting of all available former ATK players. You are all invited. We need your input and favorable reaction and support to this project. Our meeting will be on September 6th, Friday 1:30 p.m. at Buena Vista United Methodist Church, 2311 Buena Vista Ave. Alameda, CA 94501.

Sincerely yours,

ATK AD-HOC COMMITTEE

\*Friends of ATK

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| "Lil" Arnerich | Alameda City Councilman                  |
| Bill McCall    | President, Alameda Bureau of Electricity |
| Win Currier    | Staff Writer of "Alameda Times-Star"     |
| Jack Clark     | Former Sport Editor                      |

\*ATK AD-HOC COMMITTEE

|               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| Tad Hayashi   | Mike Nakano    |
| Shiz Kawamura | Ki Nomura      |
| Shug Madokoro | Ben Tanisawa   |
| Mas Nakano    | Dick Towata    |
|               | Michael Yoshii |



# Alameda remembers Taiiku players

■ A marker is placed at the old diamond to honor Japanese athletes of 1916-40

**M**OST STORIES in the July 4 "Alameda Sports Legends" Progress Edition of the Alameda Times-Star served a dual purpose.

For some, it was fascinating news of an Alameda heritage newcomers — and many long-time residents — knew little or nothing about. For others, it was an opportunity to reflect upon their memories, cherish the memories, and relive happy days of a gentler era.

And for those who once played baseball for Alameda Taiiku (Alameda Athletic Club), it was an opportunity to memorialize those individuals and those days about which most Alamedans — including many Japanese — are not aware.

A meeting was held at Buena Vista Avenue Methodist Church, one of two spawning grounds for many of the athletes (including the formation point for the softball teams known as the Barons in local recreation leagues). Japanese of that era, approximately 1916 through 1940, would attend Japanese school either at the Buena Vista Avenue Methodist Church or at the Buddhist Temple on Pacific Avenue.

Through the welcome of the Rev. Michael Yoshii, pastor of the



Win Currier

Buena Vista church, six of the former Taiiku ballplayers assembled to plan for the placing of a marker at the site of the long-gone diamond.

Not surprisingly, it was Councilman Lil Arnerich who set the dream on its path toward becoming a reality. At the meeting, he showed the group slides of markers (huge rocks with plaques affixed) at Krusi Park — honoring Alameda's championship Babe Ruth team — and at Lincoln Park — commemorating the Indian burial grounds that gave Mound Street reason for its name.

**T**HE SLIDES also showed where the rock-plaque will be placed . . . on Clement Avenue in front of the Bureau of Electricity Jenny Sub-station. Note that the operative word here is *will* be placed . . . not *might* be placed.

Details are being mapped by the former Taiiku players for wording on the plaque, date for the ceremony and what will go with it . . . and then it's go-for-it mode.

Thanks to Arnerich's efforts,

this grand chapter of Alameda's past — a part of the wealth of the city's Japanese community's contributions as early-day vital residents of this city in which they lived and which they served so well — will be enshrined forever.

**W**HILE ON the subject of Alameda's illustrious Japanese community, let's take time to salute the "powers that be" for the all-too-rare good sense in naming the park on the Bay Farm Island side of the bridge of that name in honor of John Towata.

As noted here previously, no one in my memory — which is pretty good — has been more sincerely dedicated to his role on the Recreation and Parks Commission than was John. This role, however, was simply a carryover of John's role in the community. It wasn't just an official and public posture he took in his thoughtful consideration of individual and general well being of Alamedans. This was John's general attitude toward life.

It's a park designed for flowers, plants and green grass — a place to relax and marvel the beauties of nature. So very appropriate for him.

He was a truly wonderful man whose public duties were just a carryover of his personal way of living . . . true consideration of others.

It's a very meaningful tribute to a very meaningful man.



October 22, 1991

To: Former ATK Members and Supporters

Dear

Subject: Memorial Marker at Site of old ATK  
Baseball Field

With great support from our Friends of ATK, the ATK AD-HOC Committee is making excellent progress on the idea of a marker to memorialize the site of the old ATK baseball field. The attached article by Win Currier which appeared in the August 26, 1991 issue of the Alameda Times-Star describes the ATK project.

The marker will be in the form of a 15"x 21" bronze plaque with the inscription:

ATK BASEBALL FIELD

1916  1938

DURING THE YEARS 1916 - 1938 THIS WAS THE APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF HOME PLATE OF THE ALAMEDA JAPANESE-AMERICAN ATK BASEBALL FIELD. GAMES WERE PLAYED ON WEEKENDS AGAINST OTHER JAPANESE-AMERICAN AND TOP FLIGHT SEMI-PRO TEAMS. IT SERVED BOTH AS A RECREATIONAL AND SOCIAL GATHERING PLACE FOR THE JAPANESE COMMUNITY. THIS PLAQUE IS PROUDLY DEDICATED IN HONOR OF THE PLAYERS AND THEIR LOYAL SUPPORTERS.

DEDICATED 1992

The plaque will be embedded in a large rock and the immediate area artfully landscaped with perhaps Japanese pines.

When the project is completed the committee is planning a dedication ceremony to memorialize individuals who played for ATK and their many loyal supporters.

To carry out this project we need your financial support. Estimated cost of the bronze plaque, rock, installation, landscaping and miscellaneous expenses is \$2,500.00. About 65 players participated with ATK, and over half of whom are now deceased. Please send your support funds by November 30, 1991 to Toshi Mikami (Treasurer), 3114 El Sereno, Alameda, CA 94501. Please make checks payable to "ATK Memorial Fund".

Sincerely yours,

ATK AD-HOC Committee



## Alameda Ballplayers to Dedicate 'Field of Dreams'



Members of the 1926 Alameda Taiiku Kai (Alameda Athletic Club) baseball team are (front, l. to r.) Yutch Domoto, Mike Nakano, Cy Towata, Shizu Kawamura, Bo Iwai, Jimmie Hanamura

and Min Omata.

(Back, l. to r.) unknown, Earl Tambara, Al Hue, Alameda Taiiku Kai president Harry Kono, unknown, Frank Mukaida and Frank Ito.

ALAMEDA — Once upon a time, in an era pre-dating the chaos of wartime internment and the Pacific War, they played a game called baseball in their own little "field of dreams." They were the Alameda Taiiku Kai (Alameda Athletic Club) or "ATK," as they were fondly called by members and followers.

Between the years of 1916 and 1940, the ATK hosted other Bay Area teams, as well as visiting teams from Japan at their home field located in the heart of the Alameda Japanese

American community.

Today on Clement Street, the Bureau of Electricity Jenny Sub-Station, and beyond it, the Alameda Homeless Shelter, now occupy the land that was a spawning ground for Alameda's Japanese American athletes.

The City of Alameda, with the support of City Councilman Lil Arnerich, is planning to commemorate the ATK by dedicating a rock-plaque at the site of their old field. The plaque will be embedded in a large rock with an inscription

honoring the players and their loyal supporters. The immediate area will also be landscaped with a Japanese design. The dedication is tentatively set for February 1992.

About 65 players participated with the ATK, and nearly half of them are now deceased. Any former players, family members or friends interested in supporting the project are asked to contact Shiz Kawamura, chair of the ATK Ad-Hoc Committee, at (510) 865-2547.



.....FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.....FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.....

Contact:

Mr. Shiz Kawamura  
(510) 865-2547

ALAMEDA TO REMEMBER TAIKU PLAYERS

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①  
MAILED TO: HOKUBEI, MAIN CH.  
1746 POST ST.  
S.F. CA 94115  
C/O. PATTY WADA.

②  
NICH, BEI, TIMES  
2211 BUSH ST  
P.O. BOX 193098  
S.F. CA. 94119



PLANNING MEETING FOR  
DEDICATION OF THE JAPANESE A.T.K. BASEBALL FIELD

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 1992  
10:00 a.m.

AGENDA

CITY OF ALAMEDA/RECREATION & PARK DEPARTMENT WILL ASSIST BY PROVIDING:

McKINLEY PARK

1. McKinley Park Recreation Center. (10:00 a.m. until conclusion)
2. Tables and chairs at Recreation Center.
3. Kitchen area.
4. Rest room facilities.

DEDICATION AREA

1. Speakers' platform.
2. Public address system.
3. Approximately 50 to 75 chairs.
4. Background sign (if there's a place to hang it).
5. Cover and rope for rock and plaque.
6. Extension cords, should they be necessary.

ADDITIONAL

1. Printing of programs.
2. Other needs.



# Plaque to remember part of Alameda's past

By Win Currier 12/19/91  
STAFF WRITER

ALAMEDA — A cherished but little known part of Alameda's sports past will be memorialized Sunday, Feb. 9, when a handsome plaque will be dedicated on the site of the old Alameda Taiiku Kai (ATK) Baseball Field.

The 2 p.m. ceremony is the culmination of dedicated effort by a former member of the ATK (Alameda Athletic Club) baseball team to remind longtime residents and make newcomers aware of the field which served as an active baseball site from 1916-1938.

The field was on the northwest corner of Walnut Street and Clement Avenue, built and maintained by the Japanese team on land owned by James Rolph, then mayor of San Francisco, who allowed its use on a rent-free basis.

A handsome plaque is being created through Dave McCarver and Ken Kahn's Alameda Awards, who have met with the committee on a regular basis in order to develop the proper wording and crafting of the 21-by-15 inch bronze marker.

The plaque will be placed on a large rock and will be situated in front of the Alameda Bureau of Electricity's substation on Clement Avenue.

The raised lettering on the plaque says:

"During the years 1916-1938 this was the approximate location of home plate of the Alameda Japanese American ATK Baseball Field. Games were played on weekends against other Japanese American and top flight semi-pro teams. It served both as a recreational and social gathering place for the Japanese community. This plaque is proudly dedicated in honor of the players and their

loyal supporters."

The ATK team continued to play its home games at Lincoln Park when the field became no longer available.

The final season for the team began May 4, 1941, when Alameda Taiiku hosted the San Jose Asahis in the opening game of the Northern California Japanese Baseball League's A Division.

Returning regulars that year included Sam Rokutani, Shug Madakoro, Taro Takeda, Yas Yamashita and George Nakano plus Sat Yamasaki and Shig Imazumi. Rokutani, a left-handed pitcher formerly a star for the University of California baseball team, was voted the No. 1 pitcher for the league the previous season. Joining the team that year were Rolly Kadonaga, Tad Hayashi, Non Iwahashi, Harry Kanemasu, Yas Furuya, Keiji Hitomi, Taneo Sugiyama, Min Ota, Bombo Yamasaki, Arata Furuno and Keiji Ota.

Shiz Kawamura, chairman of the dedication committee, has been able to compile a list of 65 players who at one time were members of the team. Many of the group are current Alameda residents and several others reside in nearby communities and are taking an active role in the planning.

Listed on the ATK Ad-Hoc Committee are John Hanamura, Tad Hayashi, Shug Madokoro, Mas Nakano, Mike Nakano, Sam Narahara, Ki Nomura, Kenji Ota, Taro Takedo, Ben Tanisawa, Dick Towata, Etch Utsumi and Michael Yoshii.

Following the dedication ceremonies, a reception is planned for the McKinley Park Recreation Center. McKinley Park was the original site of ATK games, but when the area became too small following the addition of tennis courts, the move was made to the ATK field.



PRESS RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Shiz Kawamura  
(510) 865-2547

January 25, 1992

**ATK TO DEDICATE MEMORIAL PLAQUE**

ALAMEDA - A Dedication Ceremony commemorating the site of the field for the old Alameda Taiiku Kai baseball team will take place on Sunday, February 9, 1992 at 2:00 p.m.

The Alameda Taiiku Kai (ATK) were a local baseball team which played from 1916 - 1938. The ATK hosted visiting teams from Japan, local semi-pro teams, and other Japanese American teams from California. The ATK AD-HOC Committee, consisting of old players and friends, was formed last July with the nostalgic idea of placing a memorial plaque at the site of where the team played. The Bureau of Electricity, Alameda Homeless Shelter, and U.S. Army Base now occupy what once was their "field of dreams" on the corners of Clement Ave. and Walnut St. Not only was the field the site of ATK baseball games, but many Japanese Community events were held there as well.

Participating in the Dedication Ceremony will be former ATK player, Kay Nobusada, and a number of city officials. Another former player, Tad Hayashi, will be the Master of Ceremonies. The ATK AD-HOC Committee cordially invites the public to attend this event.

For more information call Shiz Kawamura at 865-2547.



# Alameda celebrates ballpark's heritage

■ Marker to be placed at site of former Japanese-American ballfield

By Win Currier  
STAFF WRITER

ALAMEDA — A fondly remembered part of Alameda's baseball history will be memorialized on Feb. 9, when a marker will be dedicated at the site of the Alameda Taiiku Kai (Alameda Athletic Club) Baseball Field.

The field, built and maintained by Alameda's Japanese-American community, was the home of the ATK baseball team from 1916 to 1938.

There, the ATK team would host other Japanese-American teams for Sunday games that were the centerpiece of recreational activity within the community.

Leading Bay Area semi-pro teams and collegiate teams from Japan were also frequent visitors to the picturesque field bordering the estuary.

An ad-hoc committee, comprised mainly of former ATK players, has organized the dedication and the reception that will follow.

Ceremonies are scheduled to begin at 2 p.m., highlighted by the unveiling of a plaque, which will be placed on a huge rock in front of the Alameda Bureau of Electricity substation on Clement Avenue at the foot of Walnut Street.



The Alameda Taiiku Kai baseball team played Sunday games from 1916 to 1938.

The ATK team began competition at McKinley Park, where the reception will be held, but when part of the ballfield was used to make room for tennis courts, a new site was needed.

James Rolph, who was the mayor of San Francisco at the time, owned the land bordering the estuary and made it available to the ATK team for its home field.

Players, along with others from the Japanese-American community in Alameda, cleared the field and built the backstop and seating area. It became a late-winter tradition to go to the field each year to remove weeds, rocks and other debris to get set for the season ahead. The field also served briefly as a practice site for the Alameda High School football team.

Shiz Kawamura is serving as chairman of the ATK ad-hoc committee that has planned the big event. A large rock has been obtained in preparation for

affixing the plaque, which will be unveiled at the ceremony.

The plaque is inscribed: "ATK Baseball Field. Alameda Taiiku Kai (Alameda Athletic Club). During the years 1916-1938 this was the approximate location of home plate of the Alameda Japanese-American ATK Baseball Field.

"Games were played on weekends against other Japanese-American and top-flight semi-pro teams. It served both as a recreational and social gathering for the Japanese community. This plaque is proudly dedicated in honor of the players and their loyal supporters."

Pictures of the historic field are marked by the estuary background, where the tall ships of Alameda Packers can be seen.

Interest in the memorializing of the field was spurred by a reminder published in the Alameda Times-Star's July 4 special Sports Legends edition.

Former ATK team members

and others have met on a regular basis and secured permission from the Bureau of Electricity to install the rock and plaque at the substation site.

The Alameda Recreation and Park Department helped plan the dedication ceremony and reception.

Members of the ATK ad-hoc committee include John Hanamura, Tad Hayashi, Shiz Kawamura, Shug Madokoro, Mas Nakano, Mike Nakano, Sam Narahara, Ki Nomura, Kenji Ota, Taro Takeda, Ben Tanisawa, Dick Towata, Etch Utsumi and Michael Yoshii.

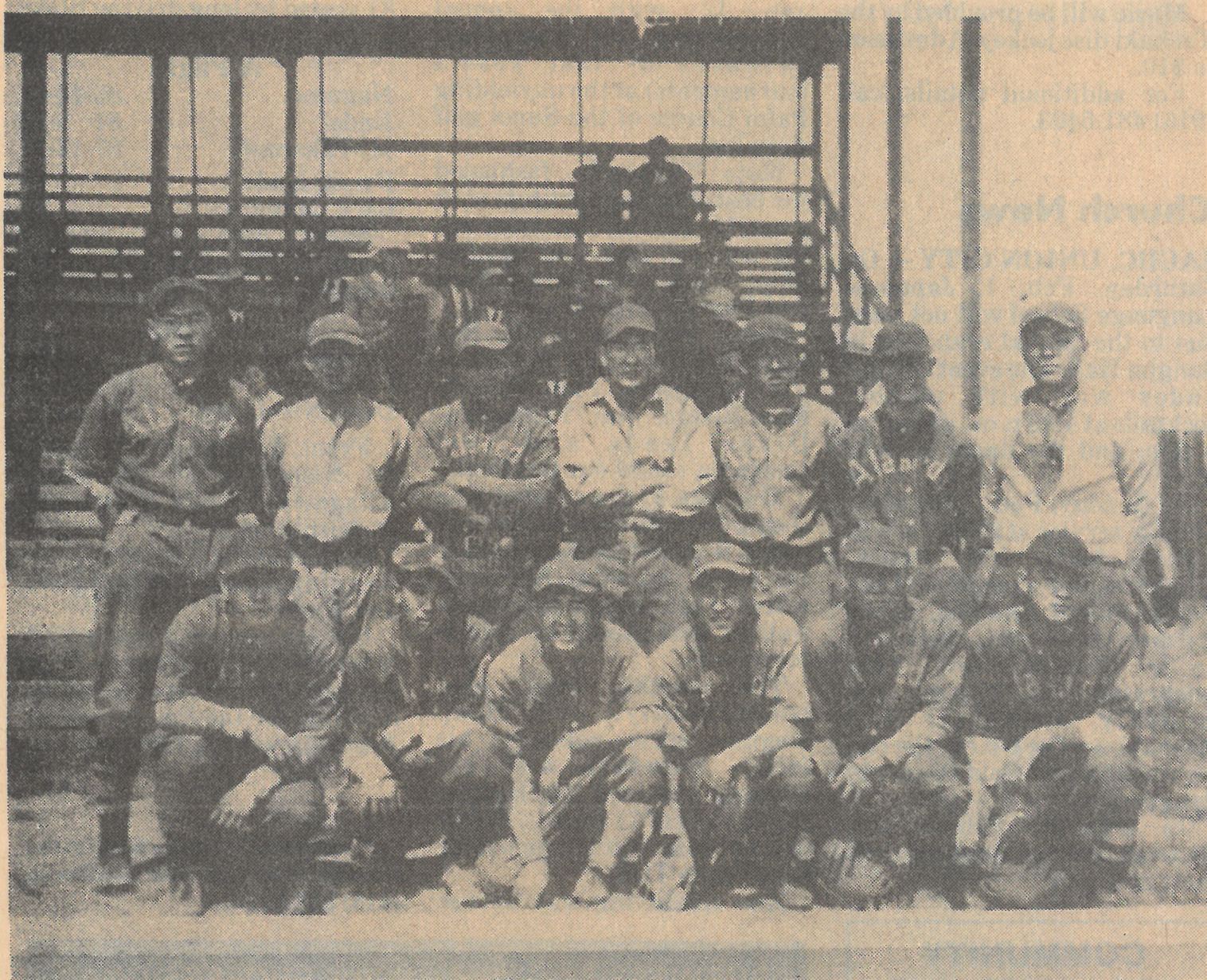
Others involved in the ceremony, who are listed as "Friends of ATK," include City Councilman Lil Arnerich; Bill McCall, president of the Bureau of Electricity board; Sherry and Dale Lillard of the Alameda Recreation and Park Department; and Jack Clark and Win Currier of the Times-Star sports department.



Dick Towata, an ATK third baseman-shortstop in 1925.



## Plaque to Mark Site of Prewar Baseball Field



A prewar photo of Alameda Taiiku Kai members.

**ALAMEDA** — The site of the baseball field where in prewar years the Alameda Taiiku Kai played its games and rose in glory will be commemorated on Sunday, Feb. 9, at 2 p.m.

The field was located on the northwest corner of Walnut Street and Clement Avenue, where a memorial plaque will be dedicated at "home plate." The diamond was built and maintained by the young Nikkei ballplayers, with the blessings of then-Mayor of San Francisco James Rolph, who owned the land.

This site, which served as ATK's "field of dreams" from 1916 to 1938, is now occupied by

the Alameda Bureau of Electricity, Alameda Homeless Shelter and a U.S. Army base.

ATK competed against other Japanese American teams and hosted visiting players from Japan and local semi-pro teams.

The plaque will mention that the site doubled as a social gathering place for the prewar Japanese community, noting its significance in both Alameda and Japanese American history.

The ATK Ad Hoc Committee, which is organizing the dedication, consists of former ATK players and friends who have been planning the ceremony since last July. Members include Shiz Kawamura (chairman),

John Hanamura, Tad Hayashi, Shug Madokoro, Mas Nakano, Mike Nakano, Sam Narahara, Ki Nomura, Kenji Ota, Taro Takeda, Ben Tanisawa, Dick Towata, Etch Utsumi and Michael Yoshii.

Former ATK player Kay Nobusada will be participating in the event, as will a number of city officials. Hayashi will be the master of ceremonies.

Following the dedication, to which the public is invited, will be a reception at McKinley Park Recreation Center, 2165 Buena Vista Ave.

For more information, contact Kawamura at (510) 865-2547.



## MEMORIAL TO MEMORIES



Mas Nakano (back row, second from left) was a member of the Alameda ATK team in the 1930s. The site of the field on which the team played will be dedicated Feb. 9.

## Friendship field to be dedicated

*"ALAMEDA JOURNAL"*  
By Lucinda Ryan  
Staff Writer

1/31/92

The Buddhist and Christian boys set up their baseball diamond on a dirt field at the northeast corner of Walnut Street and Clement Avenue. The girls cheered from the sidelines, but they didn't play. It was 1916, a time when it was considered unseemly for girls to play baseball.

Alameda natives Shiz Kawamura and Mas Nakano played on that field in the '20s and '30s. They lived within a few blocks of one another, one on Pacific Avenue, the other on Lincoln Avenue, a neighborhood with a close-knit community of Japanese Americans. Now 86 and 80 years old respectively, the two men gave up their bats more than 60 years ago and traded them in for golf clubs.



KAWAMURA



NAKANO

"In the olden days, (my

neighborhood) had only one church," Kawamura recalled, "the Methodist church on Buena Vista Avenue. We all lived happily together. The kids from the Buddhist families came to our church and went to Sunday school there."

But in 1916, Kawamura said, the Buddhist Temple was built and the boys and girls began to see each other less. They missed the young community they had developed through church activities. That absence led to a new enterprise to draw them together again — the Alameda Taiiku Kai (translation: Alameda Athletic Club) baseball team.

"Baseball brought us back together," Kawamura said.

### ■ Field of weeds

Mas said a former San Francisco mayor owned the vacant, weedy property at Clement and Walnut and allowed the team and other athletes to use it free of charge.

"The upkeep was done by fans," Mas said. "The outfield was all weeds, and we used a sickle on it."

"I played there every Sunday, 52 times a year," Kawamura said. "We showed off for the girls. That's how we got so good. We got a lot of enthusiasm from our fans. We raised money for equipment by pass-

ing the hat to the spectators."

A young boy who would grow up to become mayor of Alameda one day, Bill McCall, used to retrieve balls that strayed from the field into the road or a neighbor's yard, Kawamura said.

"We couldn't afford new balls," he explained.

The team played other Japanese-American teams from as close as Sacramento to as far away as Japan. When the ATK played out of town, the boys travelled by train and streetcar.

To "revive the memory" of ATK, which disbanded in 1938 at the approach of World War II, Kawamura has worked with other former team members to coordinate a dedication ceremony scheduled for Feb. 9 at the site of the old field, now paved over and serving as a parking lot for the Marine Reserve Center on Clement Avenue.

The public is invited to attend the event, which will be held at Walnut Street and Clement Avenue at 2 p.m. City officials and ATK players will be present, and a memorial plaque will be placed at the site.

A reception following the ceremony will be held at McKinley Park Recreation Center, corner of Buena Vista Avenue and Walnut Street.



# Nichi Bei

JAPANESE AMERICAN

San Francisco, Calif. 94115

P.O. Box 193098, San Francisco, Calif. 94119

## Alameda Taiiku Kai to Dedicate Memorial Plaque

ALAMEDA — A Remembrance and Dedication Ceremony commemorating the site of the field for the old Alameda Taiiku Kai baseball team will take place on Sunday, Feb. 9 at 2 p.m.

The Alameda Taiiku Kai (ATK) were a local baseball team which played from 1916 to 1938. The ATK hosted visiting teams from Japan, local semi-pro teams, and other Japanese American teams from California.

The ATK Ad-Hoc Committee, consisting of old players and friends, was formed last July with the nostalgic idea of placing a memorial plaque at the site of where the team played.

The Bureau of Electricity, Alameda Homeless Shelter, and U.S. Army Base now occupy what once was their "field of dreams" on the corner of Clement av. and Walnut st.

Not only was the field the site of ATK baseball games, but many Japanese community events were held there as well.

Participating in the Dedication Ceremony will be former ATK player, Kay Nobusada, and a number of city officials. Another former player, Tad Hayashi, will be the master of ceremonies. The ATK Ad-Hoc Committee invites the public to attend this event

with reception following at McKinley Park Recreation Center. In case of rain, the Dedication Ceremony will be held at the McKinley Recreation Center, 2165 Buena Vista av. and Walnut st.

For more information, call Shiz Kawamura at (510) 865-2547.

写真はアラメダ体育会のメンバー

○一八六五—二五四七

詳細の問い合わせはシズ・カワムラさん(五)

ツ通りとクレメント街の交差した地点。

ので、場所はウォルナツツ通りとクレメント街の交差した地点。

深い結びつきの印として残されることになったもので、場所はウォルナツツ通りとクレメント街の交差した地点。

陸軍基地が使用している。ホームベースを型どった記念碑の設置は、当時を知る人々の思い出、地元アラメダと日系社会との深い結びつきの印として残されることになったもので、場所はウォルナツツ通りとクレメント街の交差した地点。

電力局、アラメダ・ホームレス・シェルター、米

用した。現在はアラメダ

ら三八年までゲームで使用した。現在はアラメダ

同体育会は一六一六年から三八年までゲームで使用した。現在はアラメダ

球跡は当時、サンフランシスコ市長だったジェームズ・ロルフ氏の私有地で、同体育会は一六一六年から三八年までゲームで使用した。現在はアラメダ

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碑を設置する式典が二月九日(日)午後二時から行われる。同所はアラメダ体育会が試合を行った思い出の場所。

第二次大戦前に日系人野球チームが使用したアラメダ市内の球場に記念碑を設置する式典が二月九日(日)午後二時から行われる。同所はアラメダ体育会が試合を行った思い出の場所。

2/1/92 アラメダ体育会使用の球場跡に記念碑

幸雄、書記 千代聖香さんが務める。



**ATK field dedication set for Feb. 9:** The remembrance and dedication of the Japanese-American ATK baseball field will take place Sunday, Feb. 9, at 2 p.m. at Clement Avenue and Walnut Street. A plaque will be dedicated on that day to the Japanese-American's who played in the ATK league from 1916-1938 on that spot. A reception will follow at McKinley Park Recreation Center or, in case of rain, the dedication ceremony will take place at the McKinley Recreation Center.

1/21/92



# ATK Field — always an Alameda treasure

**W**OODROW WILSON, BABE Ruth, The Roaring Twenties, The Great Depression, Prohibition, The New Deal.

These names and events are in history books.

But all of them were current discussion during the 22-year lifespan of the unique baseball field built, maintained and enjoyed by Alameda's Japanese community as the home of the Alameda Taiiku Kai from 1916-1938.

Many former members of that team will join with their families, friends and wellwishers Sunday afternoon when a plaque is dedicated marking the site of this little known but highly meaningful part of Alameda's sports history.

A special section, Japanese American Athletes, was part of the Jan. 1 edition of Hokubei Mainichi, a daily Japanese newspaper published in San Francisco. The handsome pictorial featured photos of Japanese-American teams and individuals who had left or are leaving their mark on the world of sports and in their communities. It's interesting and significant that there is no city more prominently represented than Alameda.

The latter fact can be attributed to two things — Alameda's leading role plus interest and concern of local Japanese Americans that these individuals and their role not be forgotten.

The ATK Baseball Field (Alameda Taiiku Kai — working translation-Alameda Athletic Club), was situated on Clement Avenue at the foot of Walnut Street. There's a lot of history on that land, now identifiable in part by the Bureau of Electricity substation, in front of which the handsome plaque will be unveiled implanted on a huge rock.



Win Currier

**T**HE AREA is as close as possible to where home plate was located. As noted in the special July 4 Sports Legends supplement to this paper, the Japanese families worked each year to clear the area of weeds, rocks and other clutter to prepare for the much anticipated season.

James (Sunny Jim) Rolph, then mayor of San Francisco and owner of the land, gave the OK for ATK to use the field after their first playing area at McKinley Park was reduced in size when the park added tennis courts. It's fitting, therefore, that the reception which will follow the 2 p.m. dedication will be held at the McKinley Park Recreation Center.

Some Caucasian teams sometimes faced ATK and individuals used it for practice and fun during the week — but games were mainly between Japanese American teams from throughout the state. University teams also came from Japan. The field even was used briefly for Alameda High football practice. In addition, the large Japanese community in Alameda also used it for non-sports events.

The Hokubei Mainichi supplement features on the cover page a large picture of Dick (Cy) Towata, described as "an outstanding third baseman and shortstop for Alameda Taiiku Kai, 1925."

Basketball shows George Tanaka playing for the Alameda Mudhens from 1932-34, Shug Madokoro, "an all-around athlete" for the Mudhens in 1932-37, the S.F. Mikados 1937-38 and Alameda Acorns 1939-40, and Sam Rokutani, a member of the Mudhens basketball team in 1932 who "also excelled in baseball playing for the University of California varsity team 1936-39 and Alameda Taiiku Kai 1935-41."

The Alameda Acorns are pictured as winners of the 1940 Northern California JAU basketball tournament. Kim Obata was head coach, Tad Hikoeda, assistant.

We also find George Kido, sprinter and broad jumper for Alameda High 1931-35, then with the Cal varsity track team 1935-39 set a broad jump record of 24-1½. Kiyo Nogami is shown

playing for the Alameda Mudhens football team in 1932, noting him as playing for Taiiku Kai 1931-37, Cal varsity baseball 1932-36 as first string shortstop and later playing pro ball with Japan's Yankyu Braves. Alameda Mudhens 1932 football team is pictured with personnel including, picked here at random, Min Nakayama, Oski Kono, Tak Yamashita, Tates Hanamura, Haruo Imura, John Mukoyama, Joe Yoshino, John Hanamura, George Tanaka and Taro Takeda.

**A** GROUP PHOTO of ATK, 1928, includes Dick Towata and Shiz Kawamura, member and chairman, respectively, of the ATK ad hoc committee for the big event.

A wide angle shot, circa 1920-30, shows the ATK field, its backstop and stands. The picture shows Keio University of Japan here to play the ATK team which included Earl Tambara, Shiz Kawamura, Al Hue, Mike Nakano, Dick Towata, Nabe Ide, Yutch Domoto, Gimbo Kimura, Bo Iwai, John Towata, Aki Moriwaki and Jim Hanamura.

Mention, too, is made of Alameda's George Tanaka, Cal varsity tennis; Mike Nakano "first baseman and long ball hitter with ATK 1921-33, known as the Babe Ruth of Alameda."

Photos showing the entire field are hard to come by. The composite picture can be obtained only in the mind's eye. From one angle, you see the basic backstop and the seating area. From the another you can see a side fence and a tall tower and telephone or power pole in the back. The Baxter Lumber Company processed the poles on the land, and stories have it that it was through their generosity that the field became available.

True flavor of the field's early days can be found in a photo showing the outfield where the masts of the tall clipper ship can be seen in the background. Picture home plate walking in from Walnut and Clement with left field on the Estuary side and center field toward the Miller-Sweeney (Fruitvale) Bridge.

This is the area where a meaningful part of Alameda's baseball history was made. It wasn't just Lincoln Park, then Washington Park that created this great heritage. Quietly, with publicity given but noticed primarily by the Japanese-American community, the ATK Field made its share of history. They did their own work, asked for nothing and enjoyed creating what is now to be permanently marked as a major milestone in Alameda's sports history.

The team continued until the 1941 season, but the old field was taken for other uses, and games moved to Lincoln Park. An era had ended.

Those days will live again — at least in memory — when, at long last, the precious part of Alameda history will be permanently memorialized for those who otherwise would not be able to share in this treasure.

Win Currier's column appears every Monday in the Times-Star.



# Two days until field of dreams comes true

## ■ Ceremony for Alameda Taiiku Kai plaque is in place

By Win Currier  
STAFF WRITER

ALAMEDA — Calling it "a dream come true," Shiz Kawamura has proclaimed everything is ready for the long-awaited dedication of a plaque marking the site of the ATK Baseball Field.

Ceremonies will begin at 2 p.m. Sunday on Clement Avenue at the foot of Walnut

Street, where the Alameda Taiiku Kai (Alameda Athletic Club) team played baseball from 1916 to 1938. The unveiling of the plaque will climax months of preparation.

Kawamura, 86, is chairman of the ad hoc committee that has worked on the dedication of the site, which was a colorful part of Alameda's sports history.

The ATK field, then bordering the estuary, was owned by Mayor James Rolph of San Francisco.

Players, their families, and other mem-

bers of the Alameda Japanese-American community built and maintained the field, which was also used for other community activities in that era.

Kawamura has noted that when the local Buddhist Temple was built in 1916 after both Buddhists and Christians had worshipped in the Buena Vista Avenue Methodist Church, friends were drifting apart. He said the formation of the ATK helped make the separation less painful.

"Baseball brought us back together," he said.

In 1992, many of the ATK players are still together, and have been busy preparing for Sunday's festivities, which will include Alameda civic dignitaries as well as members of the Japanese-American community and the public.

A reception will follow at the recreation center in McKinley Park — where ATK baseball began prior to the acquisition of the field that will be commemorated.

The plaque will be implanted on a huge

Please see **ATK, A-12**

## ATK: Ball field is memorialized

Continued from A-1

rock in front of the Alameda Bureau of Electricity Jenny substation. The rock will be as close as possible to where home plate was located in front of high wooden bleachers.

Tad Hayashi, whose father Hisaki was one of the pioneer members and co-founder of the team, hopes many members of the public will attend the ceremonies. Seating will be provided on a blocked-off Clement Avenue.

Hayashi, who also played for the team, vividly recalls his dad issuing the call to him to come along and get busy clearing the field for the big season ahead.

Alameda always had a strong entry in the Northern California Japanese Baseball League. Even after the ATK field had closed and the team had moved its home games to Lincoln Park, it was highly respected.

In 1940, for example, Toro Takeda was an all-league second baseman and Sam Rokutani was an all-league pitcher.

Takeda is a member of the ad hoc committee for Sunday's big event, while Sam Rokutani (and his brother George) are both living out of state but have been kept up to date on the happenings.

Among those getting honorable mention on the 1940 team were Yosh Inouye, Shug Madokoro and Harry Nagawara. Madokoro is a member of the committee, but the other two are deceased.

Teams in the Japanese league represented Lodi, Sebastopol, Stockton, Mt. Eden and San Jose that year. In other years, Gilroy, Watsonville and Hollister also fielded squads.

While fans watched the game from the stands, others would head down the third-base line where a Mr. Abe (pronounced "ahbay") sold candy, soft drinks, cigarettes and other favorites.

Hayashi's dad owned Tokyo Cleaners on Park Street. The Rokutani family also was well known for its auto repair garage on Park Street.

In Sunday's ceremony, Mayor Bill Withrow will read a city of Alameda proclamation honoring the event, then Bill McCall, president of the Bureau of Electricity,

and Councilman Lil Arnerich will speak.

McCall, who once played on the ATK Field, was instrumental in obtaining Bureau of Electricity permission to place the marker on the bureau's property.

Arnerich, himself a former professional baseball player whose older brothers also played on the field, was instrumental in planning and clearing the way for the ceremonies to be held.

Following a Koto selection by Grace Okamoto, comments of Alameda Taiiku Kai players will be given by Kay Hobusada, who played on the ATK team from 1936 to 1938.

The invocation will be offered by the Rev. Michael Yoshii of the Buena Vista Avenue Methodist Church and the benediction will be delivered by the Rev. Zaikei Taniguchi of the Alameda Buddhist Temple.

The unveiling of the plaque will be conducted by two ATK representatives.

The plaque reads: "ATK Baseball Field, 1916-1938. Alameda Taiiku Kai (Alameda Athletic Club). During the years 1916-1938 this was the approximate

location of home plate of the Alameda Japanese-American ATK Baseball Field.

"Games were played on weekends against other Japanese-American and top flight semi-pro

teams. It served both as a recreational and social gathering place for the Japanese community.

This plaque is proudly dedicated in honor of the players and their loyal supporters."



MARY F. CALVERT — Staff

Former Alameda Taiiku Kai baseball players who will be present for a plaque dedication at the former club's field include (front row, left to right) Toro Takeda, Shiz Kawamura, Tad Hayashi, (back row, left to right) Dick Towata, Ki Nomura, Mas Nakano and Mike Nakano.



You are cordially invited  
to attend the

"REMEMBRANCE AND DEDICATION"  
OF THE  
JAPANESE-AMERICAN A.T.K. BASEBALL FIELD



Sunday, February 9, 1992  
2:00 p.m.  
Clement Avenue and Walnut Street  
Alameda, California

Reception following at  
\*McKinley Park Recreation Center  
2165 Buena Vista Avenue and Walnut Street

\*In case of rain, the Dedication Ceremony  
will take place at the McKinley Recreation Center.



## ATK BASEBALL FIELD

1916



1938

ALAMEDA TAIKU KAI  
(ALAMEDA ATHLETIC CLUB)

DURING THE YEARS 1916-1938 THIS WAS THE APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF HOME PLATE OF THE ALAMEDA JAPANESE AMERICAN ATK BASEBALL FIELD. GAMES WERE PLAYED ON WEEK-ENDS AGAINST OTHER JAPANESE AMERICAN AND TOP FLIGHT SEMI-PRO TEAMS. IT SERVED BOTH AS A RECREATIONAL AND SOCIAL GATHERING PLACE FOR THE JAPANESE COMMUNITY. THIS PLAQUE IS PROUDLY DEDICATED IN HONOR OF THE PLAYERS AND THEIR LOYAL SUPPORTERS.

DEDICATED FEBRUARY, 1992

\*Tad Hayashi - Former A.T.K. player for the 1936-1938 teams. Tad's father, Hisaka Hayashi, was one of the original players and co-founder of the A.T.K. organization.

\*\*Kay Nobusada - Former A.T.K. player for the 1934 - 1936 teams.

Floral centerpiece donated by Towata Florist.  
Flower baskets donated by Ben Tanisawa.  
Program donated by Schroeder Dent.

Special thanks to Alameda Awards.

## A.T.K. BASEBALL FIELD DEDICATION

1916



1938

Former site of Alameda  
Taïku Kai Japanese-American  
Baseball Field

Sunday, February 9, 1992  
2:00 p.m.

Clement Avenue & Walnut Street  
Alameda, California



FRIENDS OF A.T.K.

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Lil Arnerich    | Councilman,<br>City of Alameda                                      |
| Bill McCall     | President, Alameda<br>Bureau of Electricity                         |
| Win Carrier     | Sportswriter,<br>Alameda Times Star                                 |
| Jack Clark      | Former Sports Editor,<br>Alameda Times Star                         |
| Sherry McCarthy | Recreation Manager,<br>Alameda Recreation and<br>Park Department    |
| Dale Lillard    | Recreation Supervisor,<br>Alameda Recreation and<br>Park Department |

A.T.K. AD-HOC COMMITTEE

|                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| John Hanamura          | Ki Nomura         |
| Tad Hayashi            | Kenji Ota         |
| Shiz Kawamura          | Taro Takeda       |
| Shug Madokoro          | Ben Tanizawa      |
| Toshi Mikami           | Dick & Lee Towata |
| Mas Nakano             | Etch Utsami       |
| Mike Nakano            | Michael Yoshii    |
| Sam & Dorothy Narahara |                   |

PROGRAM

- I. Welcome and Introductions  
Tad Hayashi\*
- II. Invocation  
Reverend Michael Yoshii,  
Buena Vista United  
Methodist Church
- III. Proclamation  
E. William Withrow, Mayor  
City of Alameda
- IV. Speakers  
Bill McCall, President  
Bureau of Electricity, Alameda  
Lil Arnerich, Councilman  
City of Alameda
- V. Koto Selection  
Grace Okamoto
- VI. Comments of A.T.K.  
Kay Nobusada\*\*
- VII. Unveiling of Plaque
- VIII. Benediction  
Reverend Zaikai Taniguchi,  
Buddhist Temple of Alameda
- IX. Closing Remarks  
Tad Hayashi

Refreshments

McKinley Recreation Center  
2165 Buena Vista Avenue and Walnut Street



Many thanks to the generous donors who made this successful event a reality:

Mrs. Alice Abe  
Hi Akagi  
Kazuo Date  
Yutch Domoto  
Yas Furuya  
John Hanamura  
Mrs. James Hanamura  
Ms. Masa Hanamura  
Paul Hayashi  
Tad Hayashi  
Mrs. Tomoe Hitomi  
Non Iwahashi  
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Jiro Kawamura  
Shizuto Kawamura  
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Mrs. Tomiko Komoto  
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Mrs. Viola Kuze  
Shug Madokoro  
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George Nakano  
Makoto Nakano  
Mas Nakano  
Mrs. Yone Nakayama  
Shig Nakayama

Additional Donors

Mutsu Hayashi  
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Tomio Nakayama  
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Mrs. Chieko Takaki  
Mrs. Nellie Takeda  
Taro Takeda  
Ben Tanisawa  
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Mrs. Judy Wiener  
Tom Yamagami  
Yon Yamagami  
Yas Yamashita  
Mrs. Kazu Yumae

ATK Dedication Committee  
February 26, 1992



# THE BOYS OF SUMMER RETURN

"ALA. TIMES STAR"



BEN MARGOT

Members of Taiiku Kai baseball team gather to reminisce Sunday at their former field.

## Players remember 'field of dreams'

■ Plaque marks site of team's former field

By Kathleen Kirkwood 2/10/92  
STAFF WRITER

ALAMEDA — Twelve former members of the Alameda Taiiku Kai baseball team gathered once again at home plate on Sunday, remembering sunny days more than 50 years ago in their

own "field of dreams" along the Oakland Estuary.

About 200 well-wishers turned out to commemorate the Japanese-American team's former baseball field, on what is now mostly U.S. Marine Corps property and the site of an electrical substation on the 2100 block of Clement Avenue.

A bronze plaque was installed at the approximate place where ATK players

stepped up to bat in games between 1916 and 1938, before World War II changed their lives and the world around them.

The Rev. Michael Yoshi, of the Buena Vista United Methodist Church, dubbed the ATK's former diamond a "field of dreams" for both the team and the Japanese-American community at the time.

Please see **Field**, A-10

## Field: Bringing back memories after 50 years

Continued from A-1

"It was a place in which people gathered so many years ago to enjoy life the recreation of baseball," he said.

K. Nobusada, a former second baseman for the team, started playing there in 1934, when he was 18.

"This is like a homecoming," said Nobusada, who is 75, retired, and lives in Monterey.

"We had a good team, we were very dedicated to baseball," he said.

Nobusada was a featured speaker at the event, and said he was most grateful to the first generation of Japanese-Americans, who had constructed and maintained the field for their children.

The land was donated rent-free by then San Francisco mayor James Rolph, and the community cut down the weeds each spring for the baseball diamond, and for other events, picnics and even Sumo wrestling.

"They had the foresight to plan and provide recreational facilities for the younger generation," Nobusada said.

The team played in the Northern Division, which competed against other Japanese-American and semiprofessional teams.

The name, Alameda Taiiku Kai, means "Alameda Athletic Club" in Japanese.

The dedication, which was held indoors at the McKinley Park recreation center because of an impending storm, drew many local civic leaders and Japanese-Americans, many of them relatives of former players.

On hand were Mayor Bill Withrow and council members Karin Lucas, Lil Arnerich, Richard Roth and Joe Camicia.

Arnerich, who helped organize the day's events and arrange for the plaque, told the former team members and many local Japanese-Americans that their past achievements were being recognized.

"You are living that again today. Today is your day," he said. "A day of dreams."



## Marker Dedicated to Prewar Nikkei Athletes



Former Alameda Taiiku Kai members: (standing, from left) Tad Hayashi, Mike Nakano, Mas Nakano, Taro Takeda, Cy (Dick) Towata, Kay Nobusada, Ben Tanizawa, Sam Narahara, Shiz Kawamura; (kneeling, from left) Shug Madokoro, Kenji Ota, John Hanamura.

By PATTY WADA  
Hokubei Mainichi

ALAMEDA — With the threat of rain clouds overhead and a cold wind blowing, Nisei ballplayers who proudly wore the uniform of Alameda Taiiku Kai gathered on Feb. 9 to dedicate the site of their former ballpark.

The baseball diamond, which stood on the corner of Walnut Street and Clement Avenue in prewar years, was the stage for budding and accomplished Nisei athletes from 1916 to 1938. The approximate location of home plate has been marked with an ATK commemorative plaque surrounded by newly planted pines.

Taking a step back in time, the greying but still handsome Nisei athletes fondly referred to the former playground as their "field of dreams" — where great plays were etched in memory and championships were won or lost.

This was clearly their day — to see and greet former teammates, to talk story and to bask in their contribution to Nikkei sports history.

But this was also a time of learning for the younger generation, who, along with Issei and Nisei, packed themselves like raincoated sardines into the standing-room-only McKinley Recreation Center, where the dedication program took place.

Listening to the stories and witnessing the unveiling of a second commemorative plaque, one could sense the feelings of pride and joy in the hearts of these men and their families. One Sansei woman in the audience, obviously touched, repeated what she had heard, informing latecomers that "This was their field of dreams."

Feb. 9 was declared "ATK Day in the City of Alameda" by Mayor E. William Winthrow Jr. The city proclamation noted that



Participants look at the ATK photo exhibit.

Photos by Kazuyoshi Arai

the ATK players built the field and the grandstands, and every spring would cut the weeds and do the required maintenance.

The field also doubled as the site of the Alameda Japanese community picnic, complete with sumo tournament and costume parade.

A small photo display featured various players of ATK's

baseball, basketball and football teams, with the oldest photo dating back to 1913. Members of the crowd took their turn peering at the photos and expressed delight or surprise at spotting husbands, fathers and friends as they looked in their teens more than 50 years ago.

Serving as emcee for the program was Tad Hayashi, who played for ATK from 1936 to 1938. His father, Hisaka Hayashi, was co-founder and one of the original players of the organization.

Also on the program to talk about the club was Kay Nobusada, who was on the ATK roster for the 1934 to 1936 seasons.

Displaying the teamwork of their playing days, former ATK members organized the entire affair. Given a special nod of thanks were committee members Ki Nomura and Shiz Kawamura for their ideas and many hours of hard work.

Working with them to see this project through were Hayashi, John Hanamura, Shug Madokoro, Toshi Mikami, Mas Nakano, Mike Nakano, Sam and Dorothy Narahara, Kenji Ota, Taro Takeda, Ben Tanizawa, Dick and Lee Towata, Etch Utsumi and Michael Yoshii.

Following the program and the "official" picture-taking outside, ATK members showed that they still have great timing. Just as everyone filed back inside for an informal reception, the first raindrops began to fall.



ベイエリア  
コミュニティニュース

懐かしさ一杯!!  
ATKの仲間集う

アラメダ市にあるマツケンレー・レクリエーションセンターは九日、日系スポーツマンで埋まった。これは一九一六年か

ら三八年まで、日系二世が中心となった野球チーム「アラメダ体育会（ATK）」のホームグラウンドだった同所に記念のプラックを設置するイベントが開かれ、当時を懐かしむ人や歴史のコマを知りたい多くの若い世代

が集まったもの。当日はウィリアム・ウイスロー・アラメダ市長がこの日を「アラメダ市のATKデー」として、記念の日と定めた。日系人の手で整備され、野球場として利用されてきたこの地には、多くの思い出が秘められており、ベイスを型どった記念プラックの設置に、当時を知る人々は懐かし気に思い出に浸っていた。

会場には一三年に撮影された写真をはじめ、ATKの野球、バスケットボール、フットボールなどの古い写真がスポーツを愛する日系人の姿を示していた。この日の司会者タッド林さんの父はATK創設者の一人であった。ATK華やかな頃の思い出をケイ・ノブサダさんが語り、また記念プラック設置に尽力した人々に感謝状が贈られた。琴の演奏で日本的な雰囲気

とを一般に知らせる一つの印を刻んだ。



ATKの記念プラックと関係者

The Alameda Journal ■ February 11 - February 13, 1992

Nearly 300 attend ATK field dedication

From Journal staff reports

Local baseball players from the 1920s and '30s came from as far away as Colorado to dedicate their former makeshift diamond at Clement Avenue and Walnut Street.

Alamedan Mas Nakano, now 80, was a member of the Alameda Taiiku Kai, a baseball club made up primarily of Japanese boys,

who, with friends and family, turned a weedy dirt lot (now the parking lot of the Marine Reserve Center on Clement Avenue), into a weekly Sunday sports spot for the baseball players and their fans.

The dedication ceremony, held Feb. 9, was attended by nearly 300 people, including city officials, clergymen and ATK members and fans, according to Na-

kano.

"We had more people than we expected," Nakano said. "It was so crowded, some people had to stand outside."

The threat of rain moved the ceremony indoors to the recreation center at McKinley Park, where a plaque designating the "ATK" baseball field was unveiled.

continued on page 12

ATK

continued from page 3

Nakano said lots of memories were shared during the ceremony, including those from Ted Hayashi, whose father was a charter member of the ATK.

"He reminisced about how his dad spent so much time playing baseball," Nakano laughed.

The ATK dissolved at the advent of World War II. It was first started in 1916, when boys who attended Buena Vista United Methodist Church got together with those from the newly built Buddhist Temple for weekly ball games after the Sunday services.



# A special gathering worth remembering

**I**T WAS TIME to reflect in the afterglow.

The occasion was a gathering of seniors at the big hall next to the Buena Vista Avenue Methodist Church. This steadily expanding group of Japanese-Americans were in a community-sing mode when the visiting sportswriter entered the side door of a hall he didn't even know existed.

The writer was told the building, the church social hall, dates back to 1927. This, let me point out, proves — if another Islander, who also dates back to that same date in Alameda, was not aware of the hall — how much we all have to learn about the city.

And, more importantly, about each other. But, anyway . . .

The group gets together every other Wednesday morning. There's a bit of singing, aided by the words projected on a screen, a short break for cookies and tea or coffee, a program and then lunch. The theme of this particular day was the obvious — the reflections on the dedication of a plaque marking the site where the Alameda Taiiku Kai baseball team played from 1916 through 1938.

Most of those in attendance at the mid-week get-together had also been present for the ceremonies and the social hour that followed at McKinley Park Recreation Center two Sundays ago. While the day's program had



**Win Currier**

special meaning for all, there were none more deeply affected than the players and their families.

Joanne Takata, whose energy seems to know no bounds, coordinates the activities for the senior group whose membership is primarily from both the Buena Vista Avenue Methodist Church and the Alameda Buddhist Temple. The second of the six offspring of Mrs. Nellie Takeda (a kindergarten schoolmate of former mayor and current Bureau of Electricity president Bill McCall) and who also is a docent at the Oakland Museum, Takata was a blessing in sincerity and genuineness as she was moved to tears of joy over the warmth of this reunion. There was nothing artificial about it.

**I**MAGINE THE memories that must have gone through each person's mind. Very personal, very private things. Something long forgotten was suddenly brought out of that deep, unfathomable storehouse of our memories and found as a treasure long forgotten.

Shiz Kawamura, who had worked diligently and effectively as chairman of the ad hoc committee for the big event, presented a brief report on what had gone into the months of preparation and then provided commentary on a show of slides which allowed us to look at the group as young men — and young women — on and around the hallowed field.

Scenes of the young men and women seated in the stands and of the players posed either in their ATK uniforms or, as in the case with Dick (Ci) Towata, in his Alameda High uniform. He was on the Otto Rittler-coached team which won the Northern California prep championship and was an infield teammate of future major leaguers Dick Bartell and Johnny Vergez.

There were pictures, either individual or group photos, of virtually all of the ones who were in attendance. And, while there were 65 who played for the ATK teams, one man who did not was an extremely vital force on the committee.

Ki Nomura was a Berkeleyan at that time, but it was his suggestion to Councilman Lil Arnerich one day at the golf course that set the wheels in motion. Arnerich responded with speed and thoroughness . . . and a lot of work.

While the cold weather and threat of rain forced the program inside, there were no complaints — just joy in what was happen-

ing. Both the Rev. Mike Yoshii of the B.V. Methodist Church and the Rev. Zaikei Taniguchi of the Buddhist Temple had words appropriate to the event.

The messages from Mayor Bill Withrow, McCall and Arnerich were on the mark — Arnerich paying special tribute to individuals whose role was significant. Moreover, the thoughts and reflections of Kay Hobusada, a player from 1934-36 who came up from Monterey, and the low-key master of ceremonies work by Tad Hayashi made for a memorable program.

**T**HE GATHERING overflowed the seating area into the refreshment room and hallway — and even outside. Attendance, to put it mildly, was above anyone's realistic expectations but a delight to all.

So the week-after gathering offered much in the way of conversations, remembering the good times, the good natured kidding of before-and-after comparisons between the old slides and the at-the-scene presences of Kawamura, Towata, Mike and Mas Nakano, Shug Madokoro, Sam Narahara and Taro Takeda — all of whom the sportswriter spotted.

Marvelous people, marvelous gatherings.

May they long endure.

*Win Currier's column appears every Monday in the Times-Star.*



FEB. 25, 1992

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

# Thanks for all your help

Editor: The ATK baseball field dedication and ceremony on Feb. 9 was a great success. The whole idea would not have been possible without the support and guidance provided us by so many friends. Special thanks to Win Currier for his excellent coverage of the event, and to the following for their cooperation and help:

Alameda City Council member Lil Arnerich; Sherry McCarthy and Dave Lillard of the Alameda Recreation and Park Department; William McCall and Larry Starr of the Bureau of Electricity; and Dave Freitas of Golden Gate Fields.

To the 65 former ATK baseball players and their loyal supporters who donated the funds to cover the entire costs, a big "Thank You."

**Shizuto Kawamura**  
**Ki Nomura**  
Ad Hoc Committee

ALAMEDA JOURNAL  
**ATK thanks**

Editor:

The ATK Baseball Field dedication and ceremony on Feb. 9 was a great success. The whole idea would not have been possible but for the support and guidance provided us by so many friends. Special thanks to Lucinda Ryan for her excellent coverage of the event, and to the following for their cooperation:

Alameda City Councilmember "Lil" Arnerich;

Alameda Recreation and Park Department, Sherry McCarthy and Dave Lillard;

Bureau of Electricity, William McCall and Larry Starr;

Golden Gate Fields, Dave Freitas.

To the 65 former ATK baseball players and their loyal supporters who donated the funds to cover the entire cost, a big "thank you."

**Shizuto Kawamura**  
**Ki Nomura**  
Ad Hoc Committee  
Alameda

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FAX: (415) 567-3926

*Mrs. & Mrs. Kawamura -*

*Thought the reunion & dedication was great - you all have a lot to be proud of.*

*Thanks, too, for the ATK pin. I wore it to work the following Monday. And thanks for allowing me to share the ATK story with our readers.*

*Sincerely,  
Jerry Wada*



February 12, 1992

Tom Tuttle, Editor  
Alameda Times Star  
1516 Oak Street  
Alameda, CA 94501

Dear Mr. Tuttle:

The ATK Baseball Field Dedication and Ceremony on February 9, 1992 was a great success. The whole idea would not have been possible, but for the support and guidance provided us by so many friends. Special thanks to Win Currier for his excellent coverage of the event, and to the following for their cooperation and help:

Alameda City Councilmember, "Lil" Arnerich  
Alameda Recreation and Park Department: Sherry McCarthy and  
Dave Lillard  
Bureau of Electricity: William McCall and Larry Starr  
Golden Gate Fields: Dave Freitas

To the sixty-five former ATK baseball players and their loyal supporters who donated the funds to cover the entire cost, a big "Thank You."

Sincerely,

*Shizuto Kawamura*

Shizuto Kawamura  
Ki Nomura  
Ad Hoc Committee



# ATK reunion brings back memories

**O**N MONDAY, FEB. 17, 1992, this column began "It was time to reflect in the afterglow."

The cause for that observation was a luncheon at the Buena Vista Avenue Methodist Church social hall at which time a gathering of Alameda's Japanese-American community — and a few guests — were still luxuriating in the aftermath of the previous Sunday's festivities marking dedication of a plaque near the site of the field on which Alameda Taiiku Kai baseball team played from 1916 through 1938.

The anniversary of that happy dedication day was the reason — or excuse — for many closely involved with the event to get together for lunch at the Kamakura restaurant.

It was, indeed, a day to remember, a day that culminated much dedicated work and planning by those who were part of those happy days and others who gave of their time and effort to make the celebration the success it was.

Most of today's Alamedans were not aware that the Japanese-American baseball team existed, let alone had its own field. In truth, even after the celebration, most of them still aren't aware. And that's unfortunate.

The role the Japanese-American community played in the city's history was a notable one, as indicated last year with exhibits and programs at the Ala-



WIN  
CURRIER

meda Museum. A significant part of that history was the Alameda Taiiku Kai (Alameda Athletic Club), which was involved in many athletic activities but none that matched the baseball teams.

**G**ATHERED TO dine, socialize, trade memories and current events at this reunion were Shiz Kawamura, Ki Nomura, Ben Tanizawa, Tad Hayashi, Toro Takeda, Mas Nakano, Mike Nakano, Cy (Dick) Towata, Sam Narahara and ladies Lilian Nakano, and Dorothy Narahara along with Lil and Norma Arnerich and this correspondent.

Fortunately, the 1992 ATK roster of former players involved remains intact and the recollections are just as vivid as the year ago.

The weather was pretty shaky the day of the 1992 celebration, so the event was moved inside the McKinley Park Recreation

Building. The threat of rain — which didn't materialize until later — didn't dilute the enthusiasm of the hundreds of participants, many of whom came from considerable distances to help rekindle memories of the happy Sundays at the park.

Youth of today would undoubtedly turn up their noses at the ATK field, just as they put down the Washington Park diamond, which was just fine for major and minor leaguers in the hey-day of semi-pro baseball. The ATK diamond, however, wasn't just a baseball field. It was a field put together as a labor of love by the ballplayers and their families. People who cared, and that's the difference.

As noted a year ago, teams from throughout California — and some visiting university teams from Japan — played on that storied diamond just off the estuary, behind where the Bureau of Electricity substation is now located. Early day pictures show the Alaska Packer clipper ships in the background behind the outfield. Wooden stands were packed with spectators whose home team representatives gave them plenty for which to cheer.

**T**HE HUGE rock, obtained by Lil Arnerich through Golden Gate Fields' Dave Freitas, adorned with the handsome plaque created by Dave McCarver and Ken Kahn of Alameda Awards, stands in front of the substation as a constant re-

minder to passersby of the the historic significance of that site.

After the lunch, we trekked to visit that site again. This time, it was raining, raining hard at times. But nothing could dampen the spirits of those to whom that site — and that marker — mean so much.

A grand followup to that get-together was another visit to the Buena Vista Avenue Methodist Church social hall the next day where senior Japanese Americans again enjoyed a program under direction of Joanne Takata, energetic, personable and highly efficient daughter of Mrs. Nellie Takeda. The highlight of the day was celebration of the birthday of Dick (Cy) Towata, who turned 90 on Feb. 8. Featured visitor was Towata's high school teammate, ex-major league great Dick Bartell. The Lincoln Park baseball field on which they both played championship ball for Otto Rittler's Hornets will be named in Bartell's honor in April.

In spite of the unfathomable discomfort some city officials have in honoring deserving Alamedans so that the future generations will be aware of their accomplishments, this is going to be a major event not just for Bartell but for all who believe the city should honor its own.

*Win Currier's column appears every Monday in the Times-Star.*