

JCal Otago JAPAN CAMP, 2018

Japan Camp 2018 attracted an amazing 30 participants, despite the fact that most were in the midst of studying for final exams. Participants arrived at camp at 9am on Saturday, 20th October, and were assigned to a team for the day's activities. Each group selected its leader, then chose their bunk rooms (boys and girls separate) for the night. After some icebreaking activities the 5 teams battled it out in a range of team-bonding challenges where they were awarded points to determine the overall winners, prize-takers, and MVP (Most valuable player).

Programme

The first activity was a group obstacle race (障害物競走), involving a sack race, net crawl, egg & spoon race, balloon balancing and bursting, ame-kui (飴食い = hunting for a lollie in a bowl of flour), and pan-kui kyo-u-so-u (パン食い競争 = biting bread off a hanging rope), in which one team member was assigned to a specific race section. After taking a break and having some lunch, they were quickly back into Undoukai (sports challenging), which consisted of tug of war (綱引き), jump-rope (縄跳び), kibasen challenge (騎馬戦), and water balloon fight (水風船合戦). The overall team points were then tallied up, and the winning team and MVP presented with their prize of Japanese snacks, a Japanese folding fan, and allowed to choose which area of camp they would like to clean on the last day!

With nightfall came the last of the day's activities, including a horror movie which is based on Japanese one (Rings), the scary kimo-dameshi (肝試し = 'test of courage' ghost walk), as well as a camp fire with drinks and snacks (chips, marshmallows, etc.). Some students performed "otagei" (オ

夕芸 = dancing with light sticks and music). The following day started fresh with a session of rajio taiso-u (ラジオ体操 = radio exercise) and a breakfast before participants took part in the Cultural workshop, which included Karate, Shodo (書道 = calligraphy), origami and traditional Japanese games (Kendama, daruma-otoshi, hyakku-nin isshu, etc.). The workshop ran on a rotational basis with groups spending 25 minutes at each station before moving on to the next. School games were also played indoors, including daruma-san ga koronda, musical chairs, hankachiotoshi. At the conclusion of the workshop, participants refueled with a lunch of yakisoba, yakiudon, and gyoza, tidied up what was left around the site, and headed home late Sunday afternoon, buzzing from the experience overall.

Food

Participants cooked together: Japanese curry & rice (Saturday night dinner) and Yakisoba, Yakiudon, and Gyoza (Sunday lunch).

Organisation

The initial idea for Japan camp came from our own desire to engage with the amazing and enjoyable experiences that Japan has to offer right here in NZ. We built Japan Camp 2018 on the basis of what one of the previous hosts accomplished a few years ago, altering what could have been more authentic experiences and adding more exciting activities to keep participants entertained and busy. The more we thought about ideas, the more ideas began to come up, and before we knew it, we had another solid foundation upon which we would base the entire camp. The organization process was certainly time-consuming, but following the plan made things easier and less stressful on the whole, and knowing that we would soon be able to share certain aspects of Japanese culture and language with other enthusiastic participants was a motivational drive that kept us going throughout. For those looking to hold something like Japan Camp themselves, I would certainly recommend giving the mentioned

activities above; majority of which can be purchased/built from materials here in NZ without the need to be in Japan. The team-building activities on the first day was a great way to get participants interacting with one another at the same time as learning and experiencing some unique cultural aspects of Japan. If you try to hold a camp like this in the future, please make sure that you have enough things to keep participants entertained during the 'Free time' when you are busy setting up for the next activity. This can easily be accomplished with packs or cards, board games, and manga, and, if all else fails, the hope that participants take the initiative to entertain themselves.

The following link will take you to our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/512254752530627/?ti=icl>.

Kei Takahashi, for Organising Committee, November 2018



