

Winter Olympics in Northern Italy Promise Plenty of Drama on Ice and Snow

2月6日イタリア北部の都市で第25回冬季オリンピックが開幕しました。オリンピックの舞台では、わずかな差が大きなドラマを生みます。歓声の裏で下される判断や予想外の出来事が、選手の運命を左右することもあります。結果だけでなく、その背景にある決断やルールのあり方に目を向けると、見え方は変わるかもしれません。あなたは、大舞台での判断や出来事をどのように受け止めますか。



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

Japan already has a deep affinity for the two host cities. Milan, as a "fashion capital," attracts many Japanese tourists. And this will be the second Winter Olympics held in Cortina d'Ampezzo.

At the 1956 Games held there, Chiharu Igaya won the silver medal in the Alpine skiing men's slalom. This was the first medal for a Japanese athlete at the Winter Olympics.

Milan is also well known as the home of two powerhouse soccer clubs. Keisuke Honda once wore the number 10 jersey at AC Milan, while Yuto Nagatomo was for several years a key player for Inter Milan.

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1. Article

Actually, Cortina d'Ampezzo had been set to host the 1944 Winter Games. But they were cancelled due to the outbreak of World War II. Tokyo suffered a similar fate. It was slated to host the 1940 Summer Olympics. But even though these became Olympics that never were, Japan's capital finally realized its dream of hosting the Olympics in 1964. And it went on to do so for a second time in 2021.

For veteran Olympian Sara Takanashi, who will be competing in ski jumping events for the fourth **consecutive** Winter Games, this will likely be her last Olympics. On the other hand, the blossoming of young athletes such as figure skater Ami Nakai and ski jumper Nozomi Maruyama is encouraging, as they have the potential to win medals.

In the popular women's curling event, Fortius will be representing Japan after eliminating the previous Olympic silver medal winner, same-generation team Loco Solare, in the national championships.

As for Japan's **prospects** in the snowboarding events, although the recent injury to Ayumu Hirano, the reigning men's halfpipe gold medalist, is definitely concerning, there are still plenty of young gold medal hopefuls in each event.

Meanwhile, even though Russia continues its invasion of Ukraine, a handful of Russian athletes with recognized neutral status will be competing in the games on an individual basis. Russia invaded Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula immediately after the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics. And President Vladimir Putin gave a speech ordering the dispatch of troops to assault Ukraine immediately after the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics.

The United Nations General Assembly passed a **resolution** calling for an Olympic truce before and after the Milan Cortina Games. However, Russian drone attacks on Kyiv and other locations in Ukraine have continued during the truce period called for by the resolution. Sports **sanctions** are obviously too lenient for countries that turn their backs on Olympic values.

The Winter Games face various serious problems, including concerns about a lack of snow due to global warming. But as these Milan Cortina Winter Games **commence**, the first priority must be to ensure that the competition proceeds smoothly.

Finally, we would like to express in advance our heartfelt appreciation for the achievements and skills of athletes from Japan and other nations we will be witnessing.

2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. consecutive 連続の

The New York Yankees have won five consecutive World Series, from 1949 to 1953.

2. prospects 見通し

The company is discussing its prospects for growth in overseas markets next year.

3. resolution 決議

The committee passed a resolution to improve safety rules in the workplace.

4. sanctions 制裁

The government announced economic sanctions against the country for breaking international law.

5. commence 開始する

The graduation ceremony will commence at noon, so please take your seats before that time.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. Who won Japan's first Winter Olympics medal and in which event?
2. What did the United Nations General Assembly call for before and after the Games?
3. What environmental concern is mentioned as a problem for the Winter Games?
4. How do you think politics and sports should be related during international events like the Olympics?
5. What can host cities do to deal with problems such as global warming and a lack of snow?

4. 冬季五輪開幕 氷雪の新旧活躍を楽しむ

ミラノ・コルティナ冬季五輪が2月6日（日本時間7日未明）、イタリア・ミラノのサンシーロ・オリンピックスタジアムで開会した。聖火はミラノとコルティナダンペツツオの2カ所で灯（とも）された。

いずれも日本に縁深い町だ。「ファッショントの都」として日本人観光客も多いミラノは、サッカーの強豪2クラブの本拠地としてもおなじみだ。ACミランではかつて本田圭佑が「10番」を背負い、インテル・ミラノでは長友佑都が中心選手として活躍した。

コルティナダンペツツオでは2度目の冬季五輪である。1956年大会では、アルペン競技の回転で猪谷千春が銀メダルを獲得した。これが日本選手の冬季五輪初メダルだった。コルティナは44年大会の開催地に決まっていたが、第二次世界大戦のために中止となった。同様に40年大会が幻の五輪となって64年に悲願の実施を遂げ、2021年に2度目の五輪を開催した東京の歩みとも酷似している。

大会では、新旧日本選手の活躍を楽しみたい。長く冬の競技を楽しませてくれたフィギュアスケートの坂本花織は今季限りの引退を明言している。スキージャンプで4大会連続出場の高梨沙羅もこれが最後の五輪となる可能性が高い。一方でフィギュアの中井亜美やジャンプの丸山希らメダルを望める若手の覚醒が頼もしい。

人気のカーリングでは前回銀メダルのロコ・ソラーレを破って同世代のフォルティウスが出場する。

スノーボードではエース平野歩夢の負傷が心配だが、各種目で後進の金メダル候補がめじろ押した。

一方でウクライナに侵攻するロシアからは、中立と認められた選手が個人資格で出場する。ロシアはソチ大会直後にクリミア半島へ侵攻し、北京大会直後にはプーチン大統領がウクライナ派兵命令の演説を行った。

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4. 冬季五輪開幕 氷雪の新旧活躍を楽しむ

国連総会はミラノ大会前後の五輪休戦を決議したが、決議が求める休戦期間中もキーウなどへの無人機攻撃が続いている。五輪の価値に背を向ける国に、スポーツ界の制裁は甘すぎる。

温暖化で雪不足も懸念されるなど、大会が抱えるさまざまな問題は深刻だが、開幕する大会には、まず円滑な競技の進行を望みたい。そして国内外の選手の活躍や妙技に、心からの拍手を送りたい。



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