Embassy of Japan and the Washington Wizards Commemorate “Japanese Heritage Night”

NEWS RELEASE

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WASHINGTON, D.C.—In celebration of both the Japanese community in the D.C. area and the upcoming 110th Anniversary of the gift of cherry blossom trees from Tokyo to Washington, D.C., the Embassy of Japan and the Washington Wizards were proud to come together to host “Japanese Heritage Night” during the Washington Wizards game against the Toronto Raptors on January 21.

The event marked the strong ties that Japanese NBA players and Tokyo 2020 Olympians Rui Hachimura of the Washington Wizards and George Washington University alumnus Yuta Watanabe have to the D.C. area. Videos featuring Hachimura’s visit to his hometown, his favorite things, as well as a recap of the Japanese Heritage Night basketball clinic featuring students from the Keisho Center and from the Japanese immersion program at Fox Mill Elementary were featured ahead of the game. Ambassador Tomita remarked that the event was "a reminder of the power of sports to connect people and of the friendship between Japan and the US."

The Washington Wizards’ “Japanese Heritage Night” featured activities focused on Japanese culture, an interactive installation of a Japanese ema (絵馬) wishing wall and a booth featuring the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Torch to celebrate the recently concluded Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games. Fans were able to see Japanese Heritage Night Matchup Animation throughout the night, player headshots in Japanese, as well as graphics with facts on Japanese culture at the end of timeouts. The national anthem was performed by Kimiko Shimada, the choral director of the Japanese Choral Society of Washington. The game also featured a performance by Taiko Drummers and a message from Ambassador Tomita about the long-lasting ties between Japan and Washington, D.C. was presented during the game.

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Photos from the event can be found here.
A video recap from the event can be found here.
About The Embassy of Japan

The Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C. is the diplomatic mission of Japan to the United States. The Embassy of Japan is located at 2520 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, D.C., in the Embassy Row neighborhood. For more information, please visit https://www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/itpfort_en/index.html, or follow the Embassy on social media at @JapanEmbDC.

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