

E-Mail Newsletter from Mayor of Okayama City “Challenge of Legendary Okayama” (22)  
June 24th Issue

**【Bring dream to power. Grab the victory, Japan’s national team!】**

Hello, I’m Omori, Mayor of Okayama.

The group leagues of the World Cup Soccer in Brazil 2014 are getting close to the climax and the groups that are going to the final round have been decided.

The most surprising thing was Costa Rica in group D as “a group of death” that has many winning countries at the World Cup before. Costa Rica is the only country in the group that hasn’t won the World Cup but they advanced to the final round with their 2 consecutive wins while people think it is difficult for them to win.

On the other hand, Spain “the invincible” who won the last tournament and England “homeland of soccer” were defeated before reaching the final round although they were the top choices for the championship. There were series of unpredictable twists. I can feel the real pleasure of the World Cup with the powerful teams from over the world.

And the second round for the team Japan. They fought differently against Greece compared to the first round with the Ivory Coast. They owned the ball almost all the time but didn’t score till the end because a Greek player was fouled out of the game and it focused on the defense. The game ended in a draw.

I was a little disappointed because if Mr. Aoyama was changed to someone else as the third card, he could have brought the team an interesting result.

Anyway, Japan took 1 point by this match so there is still a chance to win in the group league until the third round.

As for the third match on the 25<sup>th</sup> against Colombia, they are a strong team in the

group who are already set for the final tournament. Japan absolutely needs to win this match.

I hope Mr. Aoyama who has not played on the pitch will play at the next match. I also hope the team will bring its own ability in offence and display their soccer style to grab a victory.

It depends on the result of the match of the Ivory Coast versus Greece and the victory of Japan of this match if Japan can go on to the final tournament. An only precedent of a team who went on to the final tournament after defeated in the first match, ended in a draw in the second match, and won the third match is Turkish team in 2002 joint tournament held in Japan and Korea. So it is very difficult situation for Japan.

However, as I think many people remember, the Turkish team became the best 4 after defeated Japan at the final tournament. At the semi final, they didn't win against Brazil but they finished third after defeated Korea After overcoming a high hurdle, Japan will have an opportunity to possibly be ranked in a higher place.

The match against Colombia will be kicked off at 5am. It is early in the morning but let's wish for Japan's victory.

Bring dream to power. Grab the victory, Japan's national team!

(And go for it, Fagiano Okayama!)