

Email Newsletter from Mayor of Okayama (118) July 19, 2019 Issue

【The National Intercity Nonpro Championship Baseball Series which marked a new history】

Hello, I'm Masao Omori, Mayor of Okayama.

On July 14th, I went to Tokyo Dome to cheer for City Light Okayama who made the 90th National Intercity Nonpro Championship Baseball Series debut which was their dream for years.

City Light Okayama participated in the series in 47 years representing Okayama City. The first match with Miyazaki Umeda Gakuen started by me tossing the first ball wishing for the victory.

I practiced tossing balls very well on that day as I was impressed by the beauty of the grass. However, once I heard the call of "play ball" at the ceremonial first pitch, the ball flew over the right-handed batter because I felt the pressure of him.

I ran to the catcher, Mr. Nakatani, and said sorry to him. He replied in a relaxed manner, "it's OK. I got it!" I sensed that he is relaxed and he can make it today.

City Light Okayama scored first at the 2nd inning and took a lead throughout the match. The starter, Mr. Gotoda, was pitching well so I was wondering when he would replace him with a relief pitcher. The manager, Mr. Kiriyama, ordered a pitcher, Mr. Hiraoka with a completely different pitching style, to replace Mr. Gotoda at two down in the 7th. The opponent couldn't hit the ball at the first round. The manager observed the whole game and took a great direction.

As for batting, the captain, Mr. Maruyama, played his part as a leadoff, Mr. Tamura and Mr. Kotake, the sluggers, slammed home runs which you knew it's a home run right after they hit the ball. They were all great batters.

There were 5,500 audiences including those who are related to City Light Okayama, the former Vice Mayor of Okayama, Mr. Sasaki and his family, and others who are associated with Okayama. They kept cheering for the team so I never felt like we would lose.

The result was 4 to 3. They won the first game at the national series. They fought against Nihonseimei at the 2nd match on the 17th. After they kept even until the 6th, City Light Okayama was defeated at the 7th with the opponent's fierce hits. But I think the citizens were able to become one through baseball.

For the players of City Light Okayama baseball team and the related people, thank you very much for the excitement.