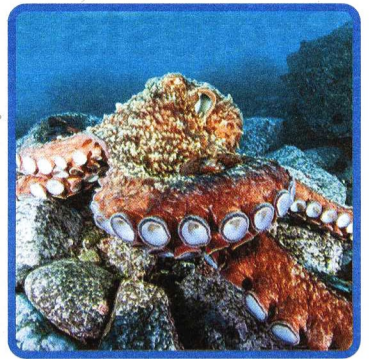


W MAINICHI WEEKLY

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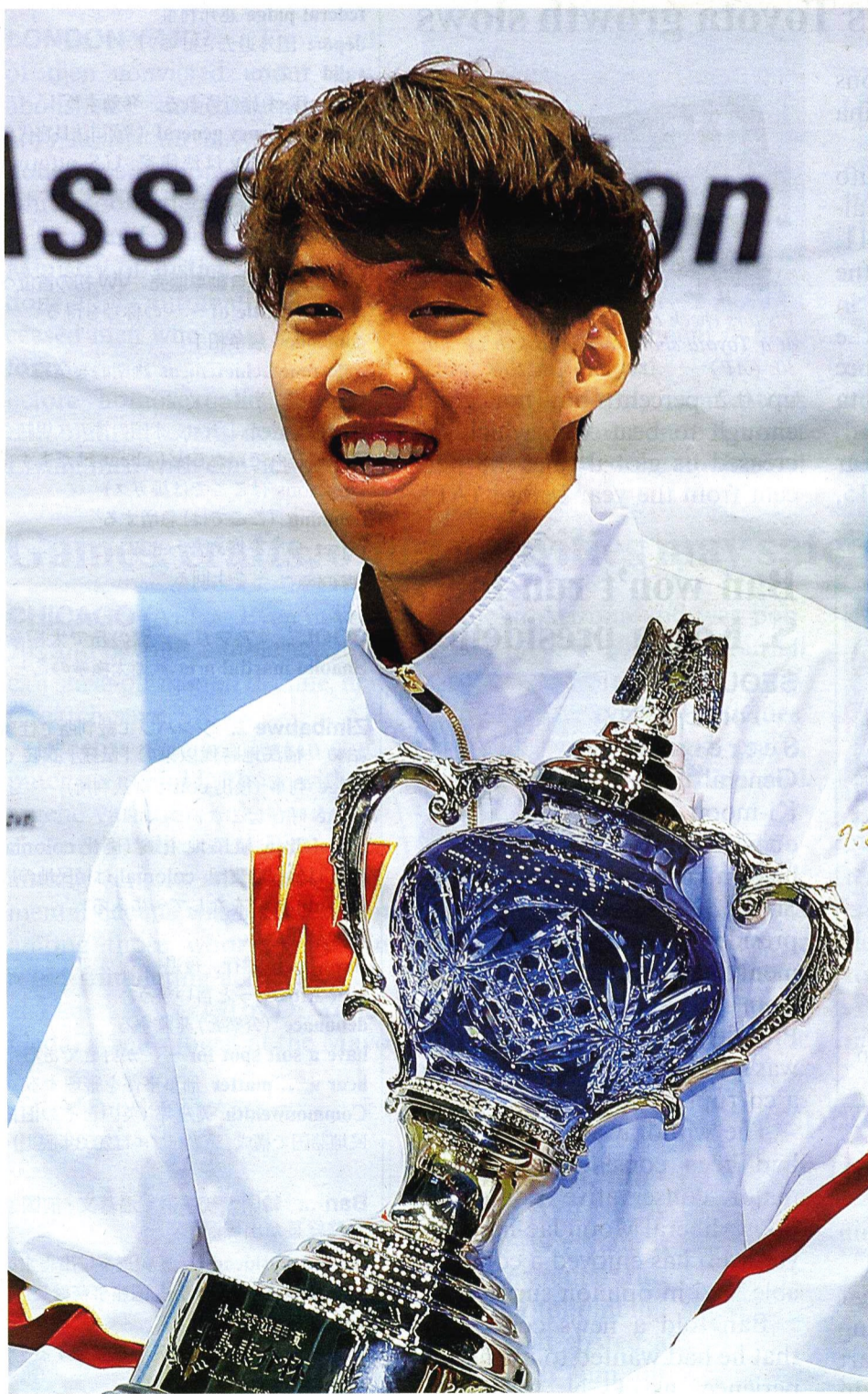
音声でも
楽しめる ▶

左記のサイトから
無料で聴けます。

ポッドキャストで無料で聴けます。
毎日新聞ポッドキャストで検索。

別売りのCDに
収録しています。

Prince of the Pool



Watanabe Ipeei smiles and holds a trophy after breaking the world record in the men's 200-meter breaststroke at Tokyo Tatsumi International Swimming Center on Jan. 29. (Mainichi)

Nineteen-year-old Watanabe Ipeei set a world record in the men's 200-meter breaststroke with a time of 2 minutes, 06.67 seconds at the Tokyo metropolitan championships on Jan. 29.

The Waseda University student improved on the previous record of 2:07.01 set by then high school student Yamaguchi Akihiro in 2012. The men's 200-meter breaststroke is the only swimming event in which a Japanese swimmer holds the world record.

After turning round at the 150-meter mark, spectators cheered him on, expecting that he would break the world record. He repeatedly punched the air with joy, and stated afterward, "I was determined to lead right from the start. I am absolutely delighted."

Watanabe started swimming while he was in second grade at elementary school in Oita Prefecture. He continued to improve, with the objective of one day becoming like Kitajima Kosuke, 34, who won two breaststroke gold medals at the 2004 and 2008 Olympics. Watanabe quickly came to the fore, making full use of his 193 centimeter frame, winning the 200-meter breaststroke gold medal at the 2014 Youth Olympics.

In his first Olympic appearance at the 2016 Rio Games, Watanabe broke the Olympic record for the men's 200-meter breaststroke during the semifinal, but finished sixth in the final. Other Japanese swimmers also failed, and Japan's streak of winning men's breaststroke medals in four consecutive Olympic Games fell short. After losing out in Rio, Watanabe was very disappointed and simply said, "I am sorry."

Already equipped with impressive arm strokes, what Watanabe needed was a stronger kick. Following the Rio Games, he set about strengthening the lower half of his body while working on race strategy, where he swims with great speed from the beginning.

Kitajima acclaimed Watanabe's Jan. 29 race, saying, "That was exciting. I think he can become even stronger."

"I want to become a swimmer who can keep breaking records at the world stage," said Watanabe. With the Tokyo Olympics three years away, Watanabe's next stage is the World Championships in July.

KEYWORDS

渡辺選手、200メートル平泳ぎで世界新記録

set a record 記録を樹立する
(後出 break a record は記録を破る)

breaststroke 平泳ぎ

Tokyo ... championships 東京都選手権(北島康介杯)のこと(後出 World Championships は世界選手権)



improve on ~ ~を上回る

then ~ 当時の~

spectator 観客

cheer ~ on ~に声援を送る

punch the air ガッツポーズをとる

(be) determined to ~ ~する

ことを決心している

absolutely ものすごく

with the objective of ~ ~を目標として

come to the fore 頭角を現す

frame 体格(ここでは長身)

fail 敗れる、失敗する(後出)

lose out も同意

streak ... Games 男子平泳ぎ

での五輪4大会連続メダル獲得(streak of ~は連続での~、

consecutive は連続の)

fall short (目標に)及ばない

(be) equipped with ~ ~を備

えている

impressive 素晴らしい

arm stroke (水泳の)腕かき

set about ~ ~に着手する

strategy 戦略

acclaim 高く評価する

[本文 - 331 words]

多読チャレンジ

読み物ページをたくさん読んで、自然な英語を身につけましょう。ページ下の「多読チャレンジ」問題を解いて応募すると、抽選でプレゼントも！(詳しくは15面)