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MAY 3, 1963



Cormorant Fishing

Cormorant Fishing is an Age-Old Art



BIRDS ARE GROUNDED BY CLIPPING THEIR WINGS

Cormorant fishing, which began in Japan during the 10th century, is now both a business and a major tourist attraction. No method of catching fish is so novel and fascinating as that of using trained cormorants on a dark night by the light of a bonfire hung out over the water.

Cormorant fishing in this area usually begins early in June and ends toward the middle of August. During this season of the year, warm currents

from the Inland Sea come to the Nishiki River, drawing the ayu, a sweet fresh water trout, down from the mountains. This fish spawns in salt water and is comparable in taste to caviar.

Training of these birds takes about two years, so it is necessary to keep the training school open the year round. Grounding the cormorant is accomplished by clipping its wings. The trainer also files the bird's beak

and talons to prevent mutilation of the fish it catches. A fiber ring is placed around the cormorant's neck. The ring allows the bird to swallow small fish, but prevents the eating of large fish which will be retrieved by the fishermen.

During their training period, the birds learn about twenty different tricks. They are rewarded with a fish for each new trick learned. Like many wild creatures, the cormorants do not breed in captivity. The working lifetime of these birds is from eight to ten years, so it is necessary to train more wild cormorants each year. They are purchased annually by the local Nishiki River Cormorant Promotion Association.

The fishermen are skilled in the art, and have trained for more than five years to acquire the dexterity required to handle the birds. It takes three men to run one of the boats. One man steers, while another tends a large basket of fire extending over the bow, which is used to lure fish near the surface. The third man, called "usho", is the man who controls the cormorants. He must have his eyes everywhere and his hands following his eyes. He manipulates the strings with remarkable skill. Each string is attached to a bird, and the birds rush back and forth after the fish.



THE USHO TRAINS HIS BIRDS IN THE NISHIKI RIVER



PLACING RING AROUND CORMORANT'S NECK

When a bird has filled its pouch, it is drawn alongside the boat, where the usho uses his right hand to gently squeeze the fish up to the bird's beak. Once the pouch is empty, the bird is sent back to catch more fish.

During this period, cormorant fishing, or, as the Japanese call it, the



TEACHING THE BIRD TO EJECT FISH



THE CORMORANT'S BEAK IS KEPT DULL

ugai, starts with a volley of noise; chanters urge the cormorants to greater efforts from excursion boats which carry sightseers close to the fishermen. Noise helps this type of fishing, so oarsmen beat the sides of the boats and cormorant masters utter shrill cries. Gaily colored lanterns are strung along Kintai Bridge, and bursting flares illuminate the area under the bridge where the pelican-like birds set to their work. They dive and duck swiftly, as the aston-

ished fish come flocking toward the blaze of light. Silhouetted in the background is the cormorant boat master, who manipulates the 12 fiber lines, each line connected to one of the birds in his flock.

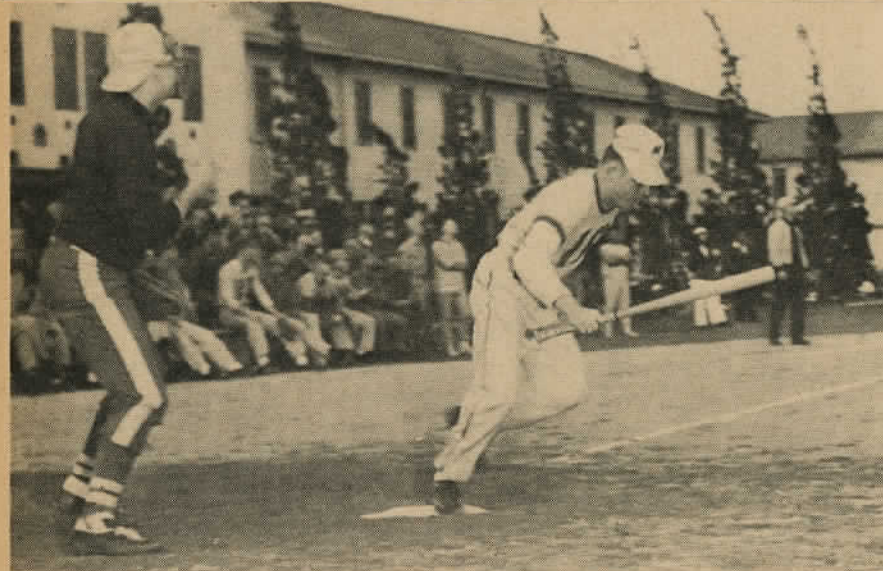
A dark night is better than a moonlit night for this type of fishing.

Picturesque from a distance, the dark mantle of night obliterates everything but the fishermen in the boats, moving in the light of their bonfires.



TOURISTS WATCH THE FISHING FROM EXCURSION BOATS

Sports



OPENING GAME OF SEASON
Ellis blasts an early hit for MARS-17

Softball Begins

The Station intramural softball season finally got under way last Friday after almost a week of delays because of rain.

Col. Martin E. W. Oelrich officially opened the season as he pitched the traditional first ball to Lt. Col. S. F. Leis, CO, MARS-17. The MARSmen were matched with the Navymen of VP-50 in the opening game and blasted out a couple of quick runs for an early lead. The softballers from VP-50 bounced back, however, and slugged their way to within two points of the Marines' total. The final score was a close 9 - 7 to give the MARS team its first win.

In other American League play, Supply and Fiscal slipped past VP-28 with a 4-3 score. In Saturday's games Station Hospital blasted H&HS-17 with a staggering 12-3, and MABS-17 tallied 17 runs to down the VMGR-152 men, who had a total of 15.

The National League teams haven't seen action yet. Rains have caused postponement of all scheduled games.

Karate Club

The Japan Karate Association has promoted seven members of the Station Karate Club to the next higher rank.

Shodan, or black belt, degrees were awarded to Cpls. Kenneth Rogers and Mike Donovan, H&HS-1, and LCpl. Donald McWatt, H&HS-17. The Association promoted SSgt. Ronald Akins, H&MS-12; Cpl. John Gonseca, MABS-12; Cpl. William Lane, MARS-17, and D. H. Gerschutz, YN3, VP-50, to the third degree brown belt, or sankyu.

The Station club presently has 31 members, and those interested in

karate are invited to attend club meetings. Hitoshi Akiyama is the club instructor. Mr. Akiyama holds the rokudan degree, which is the highest belt that can be won under the Japan Karate Association rules. There is a 2000 yen entrance fee for joining the Station club. This is the initiation fee of the Karate Association.

Club meeting schedules and information may be obtained from LCpl. Donald McWatt at Extension 3533.

Bowling Wins

A last minute change of plans proved worthwhile for PFC Bill Gallagher, H&HS-17, in the ComNavForJapan All-Navy Bowling Tournament. He rolled his way to three second place victories in the tournament held April 23 - 25 at Atsugi.

Gallagher was originally scheduled to be a member of the 1st MAW Bowling Team, but he was switched to the Navy team just before it left for the Atsugi tournament.

He returned to Iwakuni with three trophies for second place wins in all classes of competition; singles, doubles and all-events. He dropped a series total of 1166 pins to win the singles event. In the doubles competition, his winning high series was 1208. His partner in the doubles events was Jim Mason, YN1, VP-28. Gallagher's high game in the tournament was a 243, and his overall average was 191 for second place in all-events competition.

Gallagher was selected as a member of the All-Navy Bowling team which is to represent the Navy in the Interservice Bowling Tournament. This tournament begins today at Itazuke AFB.

Second Win

The FAW-6 officers' golf team proved that last month's victory wasn't an accident as they again hosted the VP-28 team and won for the second time.

The FAW officers downed the VP-28 "Hawaiian Warriors" 14½ - 9½ in match play. The rounds were played on the Station Golf Course last Sunday. Scoring was on the three point Nassau basis. FAW-6 won the first match, which was played last month, with a score of 12½ - 11½.

Softball Schedule

The National and American League intramural softball schedules for next week are:

National

May 4.....VMA-223 vs VMA-224

H&MS-12 vs VMCJ-1

May 5.....VMA-224 vs H&HS-1

MABS-12 vs MACS-9

May 6.....H&HS-1 vs MACS-9

VMA-223 vs MABS-12

May 7.....VMA-224 vs H&MS-12

MABS-12 vs H&HS-1

May 8.....H&MS-12 vs VMA-223

MACS-9 vs VMCJ-1

May 9.....VMA-223 vs VMCJ-1

VMA-224 vs MACS-9

American

May 4.....VP-50 vs VP-28

VMGR-152 vs MARS-17

May 5.....VP-28 vs VMGR-152

Sup&Fis vs VP-50

May 6.....StaHosp vs MABS-17

MARS-17 vs H&HS-17

May 7.....StaHosp vs VP-50

Sup&Fis vs VMGR-152

May 8.....VP-28 vs H&HS-17

MARS-17 vs MABS-17

May 9.....H&HS-17 vs VMGR-152

VP-28 vs StaHosp



BILL GALLAGHER
Armful of kegling awards



SHIGENORI TAJIMA
Boys' Day honors

Notes on Japan

In Japan, more than six centuries ago, the people set aside two special days to stress the importance of the guidance of their youth and to promote their health and happiness. These two days are known as Girls' Day, or Hinamatsuri, celebrated on March 3, and Boys' Day, or Tango-no-Sakku, celebrated on May 5.

These are also the days when children express their gratitude for the care they receive from their parents.

In recent years these two holidays have been combined and observed as one national holiday, "Children's Day", on May 5th.

Although the trend is to celebrate only once for both boys' and girls' days, many families continue to observe them separately.

The Boys' Festival begins with a display of miniature helmets, suits of armor, swords, and bows and arrows which are beautifully finished with gold lacquer.

Several days before the festival begins, long streamers, shaped like carp, are flown on bamboo poles along with red and white banners. The carp streamers are made of cloth or paper, some of them as much as 30 feet in length.

In Japan, the carp is considered the most spirited of fish, so spirited that it may even swim up waterfalls. The flying of the symbolic carp represents the hope of the parents that their sons will grow healthy and strong.

As part of the celebration, the adults and children alike take baths in hot water containing "shobu", or Japanese iris. This ancient custom came about with the belief that the

iris leaf has the power to drive out evil spirits with its pleasant scent.

This holiday is truly a children's festival and much is done to make it pleasing for them.

Odds 'n Ends

Tea Ceremony

Those interested in Japanese cultural events should enjoy the Grand Tea Ceremony scheduled for Sunday, May 19.

The headmaster of the Ura Senge School in Kyoto will demonstrate the tea ceremony from 10:30 am at the Iwakuni Senior High School auditorium in Yokoyama, the area on the far side of Kintai Bridge. A film entitled "Visiting the Ura Senge School" will be shown at 11:40 am.

From noon to 6 pm, usu-cha, or weak powdered tea, will be served at the Kanko Hotel; koi-cha, or strong powdered tea, will be served at Mr. Kagawa's mansion in Yokoyama; and kosen, blended tea, will be served in front of the Koko-kan Museum in Kikko Park. Tea ceremony utensils which have been handed down through generations of the Kikkawa family will be on display in the museum.

Participation fee is 600 yen, and those who desire to attend are requested to call Extension 2412 for reservations. Directions to the areas where the ceremonies are to be held will be issued at the time reservations are made.

Mother's Day Mass

Mass and Holy Communion will be held at 9 am, May 12, in honor of Mother's Day.

The Mass will be held in the Wing

Chapel, and a communion breakfast will be held afterward in the Wing Enlisted Club. This breakfast is sponsored by the Station Holy Name Society. The speaker will be Father R. Schaulos, a missionary from the Hiroshima Gakuin. His topic will be "Mother."

The fee for the breakfast is nominal, and further information or reservations may be obtained from CWO H. A. Herrero, H&HS-17, Ext. 2476.

JACFA Classes

Basic and advanced classes in Japanese conversation, sponsored by the Japanese-American Cultural Friendship Association (JACFA), will start on May 7. The classes will be held every Tuesday and Thursday at 6:30 pm at Perry School. Classes will be held weekly for three months, and all Station servicemen and dependents are eligible for enrollment. The cost is 1200 yen for the basic course and 1500 yen for the advanced course. Enrollments may be made by calling the JACFA office at Extension 2701.

MATS Travel

Travelers utilizing MATS transportation for travel on a space available basis are warned to have sufficient funds to defray commercial travel expenses if this space is not available.

A large backlog of travel requests exists, and is expected to increase and remain high throughout the summer season.

The government is under no obligation to furnish transportation of this type, and there is no guarantee under the present crowded conditions that a traveler will reach his destination or be returned to his point of origin by government transportation.

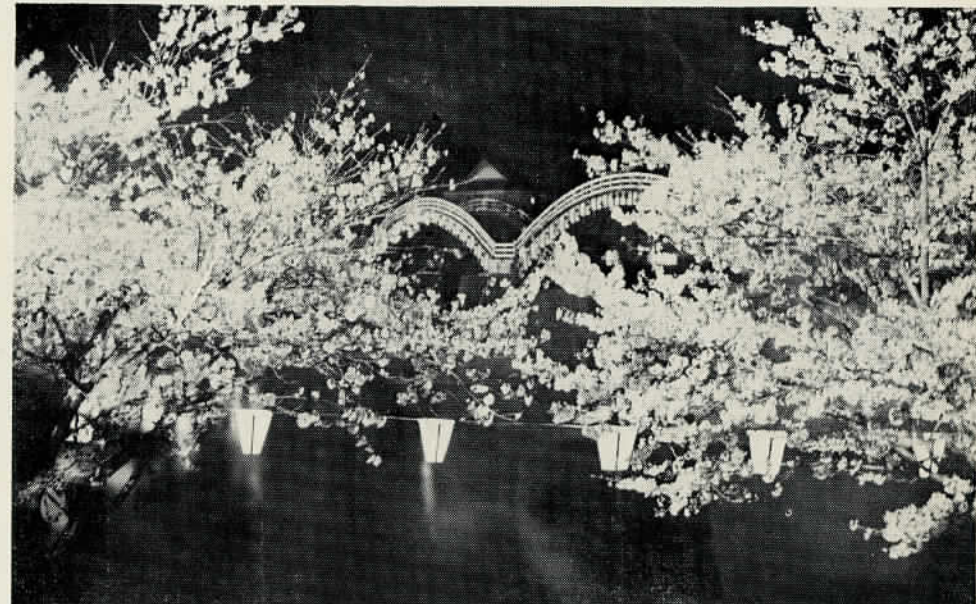


PHOTO OF THE WEEK
By Cpl. George R. Beauchamp, H&HS-1