

Joylife Yusuhara : 2. Ryoma Dappan Marathon

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Interestingly enough, one of the first things I learned about Yusuhara when I was doing my research was that the town hosted an annual marathon event called the Ryoma Dappan Marathon. This made me very happy because I loved taking part in such events back at home. The day of the Ryoma Dappan Marathon has now been and gone and so I can honestly say that it was one of my favourite days in Japan so far.

As I expected, the day itself was exciting and fun. Together with junior high school students, Miss Matsuda and Amifuji Kyoto Sensei I spent the day helping out at the food and drinks station. This was an enjoyable experience not only because spending time with the students and colleagues gave me feelings of acceptance and belonging, it was very nice. I was fortunate enough to be assigned to the duty of handing out food and sports drinks to runners at the 20km mark of



Hard working competitors are having a moment break at our food station. *Otsukaresamadesu!*

the full marathon course. This was the highest point of the course which marathon runners had to reach before turning around and descending back to Yusuhara town. This made for an interesting day as the runners coming through were giving it their best, battling against fatigue, muscle cramp and gravity in order to receive a finisher's medal for completing what is one of the toughest marathon courses I have ever seen. The dedication and fight shown by the runners inspired me and so I hope I can also participate next year. I'm already looking forward to this big day in 2018.