

## Joylife Yusuhara : 8. A Perfect Day – Ryoma *Dappan* Marathon

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There was a threat that Dappan Marathon would never take place because of late typhoons that were threatening Yusuhara. Lucky for us mother nature was kind, the typhoon was diverted and she allowed the event to take place on what ended up being a perfect day. This made me very happy because I enjoyed volunteering at the marathon the previous year. Together with the cheerful junior high school students and some teachers, the day was spent joking around with each other in both English and Japanese and most importantly cheering on the runners as they approached the last few hundred meters of their race.

The job on the day of the marathon was simple, make as much noise in hope of pushing the runners those last few hundred meters towards their ultimate goal. Students and I were located near the finish line of the course. It was inspiring to see approaching runners. The looks on their faces showing a range of emotions; weariness, pain, happiness, relief. Some runners displayed unrelenting focus, many others cheerfully ran along the side of the road exchanging high fives and big smiles with the onlookers. All



Mr. Sakamoto was ready for the Marathon as well!

runners shared one particular thing though, the realization that they were less than a minute away from crossing the finish line and thus reaching the ultimate goal they have spent months and even years preparing for. It was beautiful to witness.

While I was not able to participate this year in the marathon I had a great time nevertheless, once again doing my best to support the participants. The day was made all the better by being able to hang out with the teachers and students of Yusuhara Gakuen. To me it was a perfect day and one I will cherish forever.