

# Policy Making of a Football Stadium Construction in Japan after the 2002 FIFA World Cup : The Case of the Fukuda Denshi Arena

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## 1. Introduction

In order to hold the 2002 FIFA World Cup, ten local governments in Japan constructed new stadiums (or reconstructed their existing stadiums). They cost from 23 billion yen (Kobe, Home's Stadium Kobe) to 60 billion yen (Yokohama, Nissan Stadium). Five prefectures (Miyagi, Niigata, Saitama, Shizuoka, and Oita) and three cities (Sapporo, Yokohama, and Kobe) built new stadiums. Ibaraki prefecture and Osaka city renovated their stadiums. It is still a major problem for every local government to manage their stadium's running costs after the World Cup.

Given this situation, the negative image of sports stadium construction has been spreading throughout every local government. Consequently, in recent years, we do not often hear about local governments starting construction on new stadiums. Bucking this trend, however, Chiba city (population 940,000) constructed and opened a new, 20 000 seat, stadium in 2005. It was called the Fukuda Denshi Arena.

This stadium is different in various points from the stadiums that have been previously constructed. Here, I examine what kind of dynamism worked for this policy making and as a result what kinds of features the stadium had, interviewing some key persons, checking the proceedings, and referencing various related documents, *et cetera*. This work will become very important for reconsidering the policy-making myths of large sports facility construction, and the meaning of sport stadiums and arenas in local governments.

## 2. Outline of the Fukuda Denshi Arena

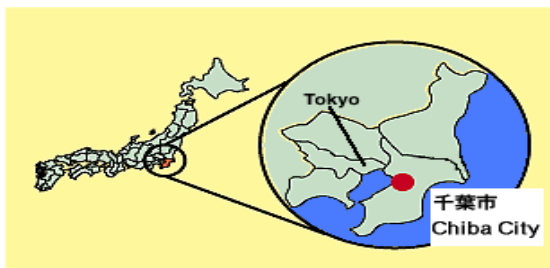


Figure 1. Location of the Fukuda Denshi Arena



Figure 2. Fukuda Denshi Arena



Figure 3. Fukuda Denshi Arena at night

The Fukuda Denshi Arena (originally named Chiba City Soga Football Stadium = *Chiba-shi Soga Kyūgijō*), known as “*FUKU-ARI*,” was constructed in Chuo-Ku Chiba –city(Figure 1), Chiba prefecture. JEF United Ichihara Chiba football club (nickname: JEF Chiba, or JEF) of J. League uses it as a home stadium at the moment. The facility is owned by Chiba city and operated by Shimizu-group & Toyo Green. It has 18 500 seats, and space for 1 281 people to stand. Thus, its full capacity is 19 781. Fukuda Denshi, a medical electric instrument manufacturer, won the naming rights outbidding several other candidates. The location is a former Kawasaki Steel factory site. It takes 45 minutes from Tokyo Station to Soga station which is the nearest for “*FUKU-ARI*” (ten minutes on foot) by JR Keiyo line. Construction cost is 8,000 million yen.

The Fukuda Denshi Arena opened in 2005, and it was the first (and still the latest) stadium in Japan that was built after the 2002 FIFA World Cup.

### 3. Social background (context)

JEF’s home was originally Ichihara Seaside Stadium (*Ichihara Rinkai Kyōgi-jō*), located in Ichihara city in Chiba prefecture, where there was lots of criticism such as “the stands are too far away from the pitch,” “poor facilities,” and “terrible access”. JEF, which has been heavily financially supported by JR Higashi-Nihon as well as Furukawa Denko, and has managed to maintain its club every year, was looking for drastic measures to improve the situation. Increasing income by increasing attendance was viewed as the single most important issue.

There had been a discussion about a new home stadium instead of Ichihara Seaside stadium among fans of JEF every year, with one about moving the home town or delocalization from the opening year of the J. League. Chiba prefecture had a plan to construct a prefectural stadium of 50 000-seat scale for holding World Cup games. This

plan, however, derailed with the slimming down of host cities after the decision for both Korea and Japan to co-host the 2002 World Cup was finalized. As a result, JEF's groping for a new stadium was right back to where it started. On the other hand, as Japan's bubble economy burst, Kawasaki Steel (now JFE Steel) had a plan to cut down its factories in the Soga seaside area of Chiba city from the early 1990s, and began to discuss use of the site with the city government. Then "Soga's Specially Designated District's Development Plan" (2001, Oct.) was drawn up.

A commercial site, a residential site, a park site and a sporting facility site were all planned. However, a J. League standard stadium was not part of the original plan. But, the Chiba Mayor had had a mind to own the stadium that could receive audiences as a home of a J. League professional club. And, he asked "if our city constructs the stadium, can we have JEF use it?" to JEF and Ichihara city. Actually, JEF had been discussing moving its home town (delocalization) since the end of the 2000 J. League season, so this proposal was eagerly received by JEF. However for Ichihara city this included the possibility (or risk) that JEF's home would move.

Up to this point, JEF's fans had been critical of Ichihara city for its stadium plan, so these fans strongly embraced the idea of moving to Soga.

#### **4. "Soga's Specially Designated District's Development Plan" as a link in the chain of National Urban Renaissance Project**

The Urban Renaissance Comprehensive Development Project is a kind of subsidy policy of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT). Chiba city's seaside area was designated for The Initial Project (Trigger Project) as "Soga's Specially Designated District" by MLIT and Chiba city in the year 2000. The Main purpose of this project was to convert a demolished factory site into business and commercial land. More specifically, Soga's Specially Designated District's development objectives are:

- Developing the urban and industrial areas into a suitable city sub-center
- A gathering of new industries aiming for the creation of a recycling and environmentally friendly society
- Developing a waterfront where citizens can live in harmony with the environment.
- Creating roads and parks to encourage use

In 2001, Keiichi Tsuruoka was inaugurated as the Chiba Mayor. He added the idea of the stadium in Soga, promoting the project. It was called Chiba City's Athletic Park Development. The basic features were:

- To promote interest in sports
- A facility to meet the needs of individuals wishing to participate in recreational activities.

- The Athletic Park can also be used for emergency evacuations.

The key points of this development include:

- To promote multi-stage development as a large park
- To give function of disaster prevention the highest priority
- To consider universal design
- To aim to develop the convenient park to produce sport communities

## **5. Delocalization of home town and setting up “Preparatory Office for the ball game stadium”**

After the announcement of “Soga’s Specially Designated District’s Development Plan” in 2001, JEF held a series of meetings about the delocalization of its home base with the relevant persons in Chiba city. Early in 2002, some media began to report the issue, and then in February, Kenntaro Oka (JEF’s Owner) and Kouji Nishiyama (Ichihara city’s deputy mayor) visited the Chiba Mayor to establish the “Council for promoting delocalization of home town” with these three official agencies. In May, the “Preparatory office for the ball game stadium” was formally set up by the Chiba Mayor. MN who had been involved in the “Urban Renaissance Comprehensive Development Project” was nominated as the general manager of the “Preparatory Office.”

## **6. Nomination of the designer and advertising for the idea**

Mr. MN head held the design competition for the new ball game stadium in June. Eight major architectural companies, including Azusa Sekkei- who designed the “Saitama Stadium 2002,” took part in it. Nihon Sekkei (Japan Architect) won this competition. The key points of win-or-lose of this competition were: □ Cost performance, □ To suit JEF’s image, □ To suit Chiba city’s (especially Soga’s) image. Mr. MM of Nihon Sekkei gave a presentation with the four following viewpoints of the design concept at the competition:

a.) Viewpoint One [Citizen’s Viewpoint]: *beautiful and beloved*

As a symbol of an athletic park, □ a sleek arc stand

□ a roof with winding slabs

□ decrease in the whole volume

□ practical use as a disaster prevention base

b.) Viewpoint Two [The User’s Viewpoint]: *easy to operate and come gather*

□ good arrangement for the operation and necessary/ sufficient space

□ security of the open space (plaza)

- compact facilities and proper passages
- safe and clear concourse

c.) Viewpoint Three [The Audience's Viewpoint] *easy to see and enjoyable*

- Stands that audience can concentrate attention on a game easily and can easily produce a good atmosphere, too
- stands that you never slur over a goal scene

d.) Viewpoint Four [The Owner (Chiba city)'s Viewpoint] *economical and easy to build*

- ① decrease cost and term of construction work by pursuing industrialization
- ② standardization of plane
- ③ decrease dressings
- ④ labor-saving for maintenance and decrease running cost
  - a) use of rainwater for flushing for toilets
  - b) high pressure washing equipment on the roof
  - c) natural light and wind for the turf

These four viewpoints were proposed and emphasized. Especially, as can be seen in Viewpoint One, it is rather different and unique compared to the 2002 World Cup stadiums in Japan, given that the design features a decrease in volume. Until then, an important symbolic element of stadiums was thought to be lots of volume as a landmark (or presence). And, as Viewpoint Four shows, decreasing construction and maintenance costs was clearly emphasized.

Chiba city announced in its PR brochure “*Shiseidayori*” on July 19 that its “Preparatory Office” invited suggestions for new stadium by internet, fax, and mail.

## **7. “Eleven Kondankai” on Chiba city’s ball game stadium and the master design**

a.) Setting up the “Eleven Kondankai” and their membership

Chiba city set up the “Eleven Kondankai” which was a kind of public hearing, three times from August 21, 2002 to January 23, 2003. Although the preparatory office was opened, the staff were not familiar with ball game stadium actually. Then, they had to have citizen’s opinions about what kind of stadium should be built. The members of these “Eleven Kondankai” were as follows:

- Vice chairman of Chiba city’s football association (CCFA)

=Chairman of this Kondankai

Mr. NK

•Male football player (CCFA)	Mr. KK
•Female football player (CCFA)	Ms. NY
•High school football player (CCFA)	Mr. NM
•Director of Chiba prefecture’s football association	Mr. KY
•Delegate of JEF Ichihara	Mr. HH
•Delegate of JEF’s fan club “Halleluiah”	Mr. MR
•Secretary general of consortium of women’s group	Ms. SK
•Manager of the management section of the J. League	Mr. KH
•Delegate of the common men (advertised)	Mr. OY
•Delegate of the common woman (advertised)	Ms. IH

In addition to the above members, the *Kondankai* meetings were held with MN general manager of the preparatory office, 5~6 officers of the preparatory office, an officer of the Urban Renaissance Agency (a public corporation), an officer of the Urban Green Planting Agency (a public corporation), Mr. MM of Nihon Sekkei, Inc., and Ms. TK of JEF Ichihara. This was the very first time for the construction of a sports stadium in Japan to set up public hearings, such as these Eleven *Kondankai*. The Mayor’s and the preparatory office’s intention was firmly behind this, so that they could avoid criticism or opposition to the policy.

b.) The First of the Eleven *Kondankai* ( Aug. 21, 2002)

At first, there was an explanation of the context and the reasons for setting up the Eleven *Kondankai* by MN of the Preparatory Office (PO). In particular MN mentioned the details of “Soga’s Specially Designated District’s Development” and its “Chiba City’s Athletic Park Development” where the ball game stadium with an alternate function of disaster prevention would be expected.

Next, the PO introduced opinions and input on the stadium from members of the public. MN mentioned that most of these suggestions were:

- A stadium exclusively dedicated to football
- A 20 000-seat scale
- All seats should be covered with a roof

In addition, some of these suggestions from the public were about the numbers of rest rooms, the facilities for disabled persons, distance between the pitch and the stands, and the inclination of the stands. Then, he asked this *Kondankai* to discuss those issues. IM who is a officer of the Urban Green Planting Agency (a public corporation) explained that this stadium would have to play a role of disaster prevention park and requested that it would become a stadium full of green without the inorganic image of concrete.

MM of Nihon Sekkei introduced Ichihara Seaside Stadium, Sendai stadium, and Tokyo Stadium using video pictures, and then NK, Chairman of the *Kondankai*, commented on the advantages of an exclusive stadium for football. He also asked each member what kind of stadium, mainly on hardware, they expected. Most of the members just expected not to neglect their individual requests at that time.

Here, it is notable that the fan's delegate, MR, made seven specific requests:

- 20,000~30,000-seat scale stadium,
- all seats covered with a roof,
- big inclination of stands,
- all seats should be separated (not bench style),
- sufficient numbers of rest room,
- sufficient numbers of parking, and
- stand's shape should be boxy (not curved).

HH from JEF requested the following nine particulars:

- Presence of game,
- Roof of stands,
- Big electronic screen,
- Facilities for disabled persons,
- Sufficient numbers of rest room (especially for women),
- Sufficient numbers of concession stand,
- Sufficient numbers of entrance gate,
- facilities for the media, and
- convenient layout of operation facilities.

KH from the J. League pointed out the following:

- Turf in good condition,
- Good hospitality to audience,
- Good access to the stadium,
- 20,000~30,000-seat scale,
- The pitch should be close to the seats.

Finally, MN of the PO closed the meeting with the comment "For the most part, exclusive stadium for football is the best choice", and "I hope the supporter's concrete requests will be regarded in this *Kondankai*'s discussion".

c.) The Second of the Eleven *Kondankai* (Oct. 10, 2002)

Firstly, MN of the PO announced that master design of the stadium, which should have been shown this day, could not be presented because of a work delay.

And then "Citizen's use of stadium" "Development of community sport" became to be the *Kondankai*'s topics. But OY who is familiar with architecture and is also a passionate fan of JEF expressed the importance of the existence of the exclusive stadium for football and of holding most home games there.

d.) The announcement of the outline of the master design of the stadium (Nov. 11, 2002) and a signature-collecting campaign.

The master design was released to the media on the Nov. 11th. The emphasized points were the exclusive stadium for football with 20 000 capacity (15 000 seats plus space for 5 000 standing patrons), the stands with roof (not only for main stands but for back stands, which means for 40% of the stands), the short distance between the stands and the pitch, the stands with steep slope and the convenient layout of operation facilities. Here, however, the design only did clear the J. League's minimum requirements on the area of roof and the numbers of seats. And then, an

informed JEF's fan expressed the following complaints:

- ① Each stand behind the goal has no roof.
- ② Lots of standing room remain.
- ③ The distance between the stands and the pitch is still long.
- ④ There is no big electronic screen

After setting up the Preparatory Office until the third of the Eleven *Kondankai* TK of JEF had quite many meetings with MN of the PO to arrange the design (in particular about operating space) and to work out the strategy that let the fan's wishes be realized. MN also contacted the Chairman of J. League and confirmed the justice on having the roof which covers all stands and a big electronic screen.

TK and MN contacted some cheer groups of JEF and "Club for enjoying sport culture" as well and suggested them to start a collecting-signature campaign for □All stands covered with roof, □All seated stands, □Shorter distance between the pitch and the stands, and □a big electronic screen. Fortunately, they were able to successfully collect 20 000 signatures by Jan. 23, 2003.

e.) The Third of the Eleven *Kondankai* (Jan.23, 2003) and the big electronic screen

Firstly, MM of Nihon Sekkei explained the details of the stadium design that was announced in November. Against it MR of fan's delegate criticized that fan's requests hardly were reflected to the design and that the master design was announced before discussing it in this *Kondankai*. Secondly, OY also critically requested that a part of the concourse's cost should have transferred to the cost for the roof by downsizing the concourse, making good use of his experience.

The 20 000 signatures that claim changing the master design were presented here. So, the chairman NK asked the PO to try to change the design accepting the signatures sincerely.

Finally, general manager MN stated concretely that the design would be changed within the budget of eight billion yen with the following:

- ① The stands become 18 000 all-seated, with no room for standing patrons.
- ② The each roof behind the goal will be added.
- ③ The distance between the stands and the pitch will get shorter.
- ④ However the big electronic screen will not be set up.

You could say that this is actually the statement of the recognition of ①~③. And then, this modified design was officially announced on the 14<sup>th</sup> of April. In March of the following year (2004) it was announced that a large electronic screen would be donated by JEF Steel. As a result, all of the fan's requests were realized.



## 8. Reading the history and the powers at work

### a.) Social *conjuncture* around 2002

To every event the analysis of the social *conjuncture* is important (Hall, 1999). At the beginning of the 1990's, the bubble economy of Japan burst and Japan started a new period of depression/low growth. Every local government that hosted the 2002 World Cup expected some economic effect. However, investing in 333.8 billion yen for constructing and reconstructing the World Cup stadiums did not trigger a significant rise in business. Far from it, after the World Cup the media and the people began to pay attention to the deficit finances for maintaining those stadiums. Bribery scandals involving the construction industries came to a head. And, in lots of criticism for big project of constructions such as museums, theaters and arenas, *et cetera* (so called *Hakomono Gyosei*) there was a head wind against new stadium constructions in local government.

Meanwhile, the necessity of having facilities and parks for disaster prevention (in metropolitan cities) was a topic picked up by the mass media after the Hanshin-Awaji earthquake in 1995. The revitalization of declining urban factory areas, and the shrinking output of sustainable towns, were now emphasized as a national problem.

In other words, examining social *conjuncture* on the construction of the new stadium in Chiba, there were a few positive factors such as disaster prevention development, urban renaissance and negative factors such as criticism for a negative legacy of the World Cup, criticism to *Hakomono Gyosei* and criticism to *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1989) of dependence on major construction industries at the same time.

### b.) Political power

In the *conjuncture* discussed above, Chiba city started parking the Soga seaside district, using the Urban Renaissance Comprehensive Development Project in national (MLIT's) policy. Although a ground without stands would be enough for this parking project, after Mr. Turuoka, whose pastime was to attend professional sports games, got into office as a mayor the policy for the construction of exclusive stadium for football developed rapidly, using this national project. He displayed quite a lot of clout (power) when he negotiated with Ichihara city and set up the Preparation Office and the the Eleven *Kondankai*. To turn toward the politics "within" the Preparation Office, making inspections of other stadiums, the introduction of inviting tenders for the design and setting up the Eleven *Kondankai* by the general manager's competence, as a things turned out, lead to the construction of a stadium that was easy to operate, easy to watch, low cost, and excellent in design. In the politics "within" the *Kondankai*, JEF's Ms. TK, passionate supporter Mr. MR and Mr. OY who was a representative of "the common man" were very influential.

#### c.) Economic power

To construct the stadium the mayor had been told the general manager to make it low-cost, not splendid and rapid at any rate. The construction budget of eight billion yen always had a power as a strong restriction. Mr. MM of Nihon Sekkei stated that he had been asked to decrease by 20% on the cost and the period of the construction compared with standard constructions. The reason why fan's requests were respected to make the stadium comfortable and easy to see could be that it leads to income from the admission fee.

Using the economical method of construction in various parts is regarded as effort to increase profitability. The reduction in the numbers of seats (to less than 20,000) and the narrowing of the concourse were the outcomes of compromise between the economical pressure (power) and fan's requests (power). The influence of the average annual deficit of the Japanese 2002 World Cup stadiums (250 million yen) led to the reduction of the estimate of annual deficit (180 million yen).

#### d.) Cultural power

The culture of the stadium's architecture should be discussed first. The Nihon Sekkei's chief designer is responsible for this. Until that time, it was popular for Japanese stadiums to feature an overbearing landscape, with masculine and volumed concrete lumps. However, the design of this stadium had the curved and soft image, considering decrease of dominating/oppressive feeling and creating an intimate landscape. It symbolizes a recent culture of stadiums in Japan that the design introduced an ecologically-oriented one, such as use of rain water for flush toilets.

The cultural power of football in Chiba city was sufficient to block the power of criticizing the policy in the *conjuncture* of the head wind. An example highlighting this, the camping of the Irish national team in Chiba and its outstanding activities were the successful events for generalizing the idea of "Football culture makes the people happy". Accounting for an absolute majority with football-related members (except the representative of women's groups and a Nihon Sekkei's staff) in the constitution of members of the Eleven *Kondankai* and existing just an interpellation on the stadium construction, which was about the annual maintenance cost, reveals the power of football culture in this city.

### 9. Conclusion

In the head wind after the 2002 FIFA World Cup what the ideal (in a sense) stadium for both of the audience and the operator was constructed depended on the collaboration of some enthusiastic people. Actually, although this is the sixth year since

the 2002 World Cup, the Fukuda Denshi Arena is still the first and the last new football stadium in Japan. As has been seen here, the development process was characterized by the unique *conjuncture* and conflict of powers, and the “FUKU-ARI” stadium was the innovative result. Although this power analysis was done by dividing the power into three parts for the sake of convenience, we must remember those powers partly overlap each other in substance and they cannot be exercised independently.

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Some websites have been accessed for the research:

<<http://www.g-mark.org/search/Detail?id=33721&sheet=outline>>

<[http://www.city.hiroshima.jp/shimin/kokusai/summit/session3/01chiba\\_e.pdf](http://www.city.hiroshima.jp/shimin/kokusai/summit/session3/01chiba_e.pdf)>

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