



BADMINTON JAPAN  
75th Commemorative Project

# Considering the History of Badminton

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## Considering the History of Badminton.

### Introduction

Talking about history is always an intriguing mix of fun and challenges. When I met badminton, I was also interested in its history. I wanted to play good badminton and tell good badminton to others. Since then, I have been endlessly curious about how people have encountered, accepted, and nurtured badminton into something we can enjoy, visualize, and share feelings.

I have been a man of curiosity and an insect collector too. I have tried to collect everything I was interested in many fields. Looking back at the past when I spent most of my time with badminton, I felt the urge to put my collection together under a certain theme, hoping that one day, I could open at least one little museum of some sort as a badminton collector. But I am still unable to find even the right place to store my book collections in my late years. The best I could do has been to make **a Collage** using some of my display boxes to showcase the history of badminton with themes attached to it.

Collage (collargé) is a French word that means **pasting**. It is one of the modern art technics initiated by artists like Pablo Picasso, and Georges Braque during the Cubist era in art history. Pieces of printed materials such as newspapers and magazines (letters and photos), colored or decorated papers like packages, wallpapers, wood chips, films, etc. were pasted or pinned on a paper mount. Such works were called **Papier Collé**.

Once I started making a Collage, I found it extremely difficult to neatly organize the collection in a tiny box and select the right theme for each item, the related collections seemed to keep increasing endlessly as I tried to organize them.

### 1. Considering the early days of badminton history

Let's talk about the meaning of the word 「to begin」. According to the Japanese dictionary **JITOU** by Shizuka Shirakawa, the Chinese letter for 「to begin」 (始 shi) is derived from (妣 shi) and the right-side portion of this letter means a plow to start farming using farmers' power. The farming tools were used for sacred local rituals and were thoroughly cleaned to prevent blight or other plant diseases. The letter(妣 shi) is also a family name and the left side of this letter means a woman or the family who performs the ritual.

Everyone has a desire to find a clear and clean-cut beginning to all affairs. But this wishful desire may sometimes distort history. When we consider the early days of badminton, we also tend to assume the beginning of badminton history must be clear and clean-cut. Thus, we need to be extra cautious and take a tough stance when trying to find the true beginning of history. It seems that the beginning of badminton gets more and more ambiguous as we research further, in this essay, I would like to talk about two 「Not-So-Clear」 history topics. One is about the birth of badminton and the other is about the beginning of badminton activities in Japan.

The reason why the birth of badminton was not so clear is that there had been dozens of different Shuttlecock Games in various parts of the world since ancient times, and whenever those games were discovered, people propagated each ancient story as the origin of badminton. Badminton did not just suddenly appear out of nowhere but the birth came after the long history of development and succession of those Shuttlecock Games over the centuries.

We must watch out for how to define the meaning of the word 「the birth」. Badminton's birth differs from the birth of something like badminton, but there may be some connection between them. Judging if they are connected or not is a very difficult decision to make. **Fig1**

**Fig1** This is an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century promotional card #39 by a coffee company in the U.S. The beautiful print designs must have enticed consumers to collect all series of lovely cards like this. Once a shuttlecock game is found in Tibet, a sudden conclusion can be made that the origin of badminton was in Tibet. This is a series of 50 cards with the illustrated history of sports and pastimes of all nations. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the spread of multicolor printing technology, small novelty cards were attached to various products as promotional goods to attract consumers to buy their products.



Given the above reasons, let's first consider the prerequisites for the game of badminton, not merely a Shuttlecock Game. First, we need to have

- ① A shuttlecock
- ② Rackets
- ③ A standard for the court and the net

Some old records show that those 3 elements could have existed in ancient times, but would it be enough to call it Badminton?

- ④ Certain playing rules. It should be a must for badminton.
- However, those alone are not enough for the formation of badminton.
- ⑤ A club with members and an activity space
  - ⑥ An association
  - ⑦ Some kind of commercial activities to keep providing equipment, or even before that,
  - ⑧ Any competitions? and so on.

Various conditions must be met to distinguish the game of badminton from Shuttlecock Games just tossing a shuttlecock.

Under the variability of the above conditions, how can we possibly define the birth of badminton? Difficult questions keep arising because this is how the history of badminton has slowly progressed with all those variabilities. A vast amount of academic study is necessary to understand the details of history. In other words, the previous study of badminton has not been fully developed for lack of enough evidence, and a historical survey of this sort is arguably a challenging job to complete.

To showcase the history of badminton, Monika Krucker used the technique of **Papier Collé** which gently embraces the ambiguity of history in the form of an art piece, just like arranging historical traces in tiny specimen boxes. Let's start looking into the details of her artwork and the concepts behind it.

## 2. Collaging the history of shuttlecocks

In the **National Badminton Centre** (MK8 9LA Milton Keynes, Loughton Lodge, Bradwell Road, UK) which has the National Badminton Club and a Museum, there is a large meeting room with walls and pillars on which a huge collage of **The History Of Shuttlecocks And People Who Played With It** is exhibited to catch the eyes of all visitors.

The collage was created by **Monika Krucker**, a student at the Higher School for Creation and Art in Zurich, in her 1997 graduation work **Chinese Picture Roll**. She was later invited to exhibit her work at the Swiss Open Badminton Championships in Basel and added some new precision drawings called **1250 years** based on her original work. **Fig2**

Badminton England (formerly Badminton Association of England) purchased this painting to commemorate the completion of the National Badminton Centre to display on the wall in the meeting room and published a fascinating book called **The Shuttlecock And The People Who Used to Play With It** consisting of 32 pages (15.6×33.4×0.84cm) in 1999. Monika's approach to her work was outstanding and the collage successfully conveyed the message of the historical development of badminton to the viewers.



**Fig2** A storyboard drawing Monika Krucker drew shown on the first page of the book.

Her remarkable approach is fully expressed even in the title itself. She precisely depicted the image of shuttlecocks in each era and placed them in the historical context. By doing this, she vividly showcased the lives of the people and how they interacted with badminton in the corresponding era. This art piece sends graphical messages of the history of badminton to the viewers by having shuttlecocks as focal points of each era to depict the activities of people. **Fig3**

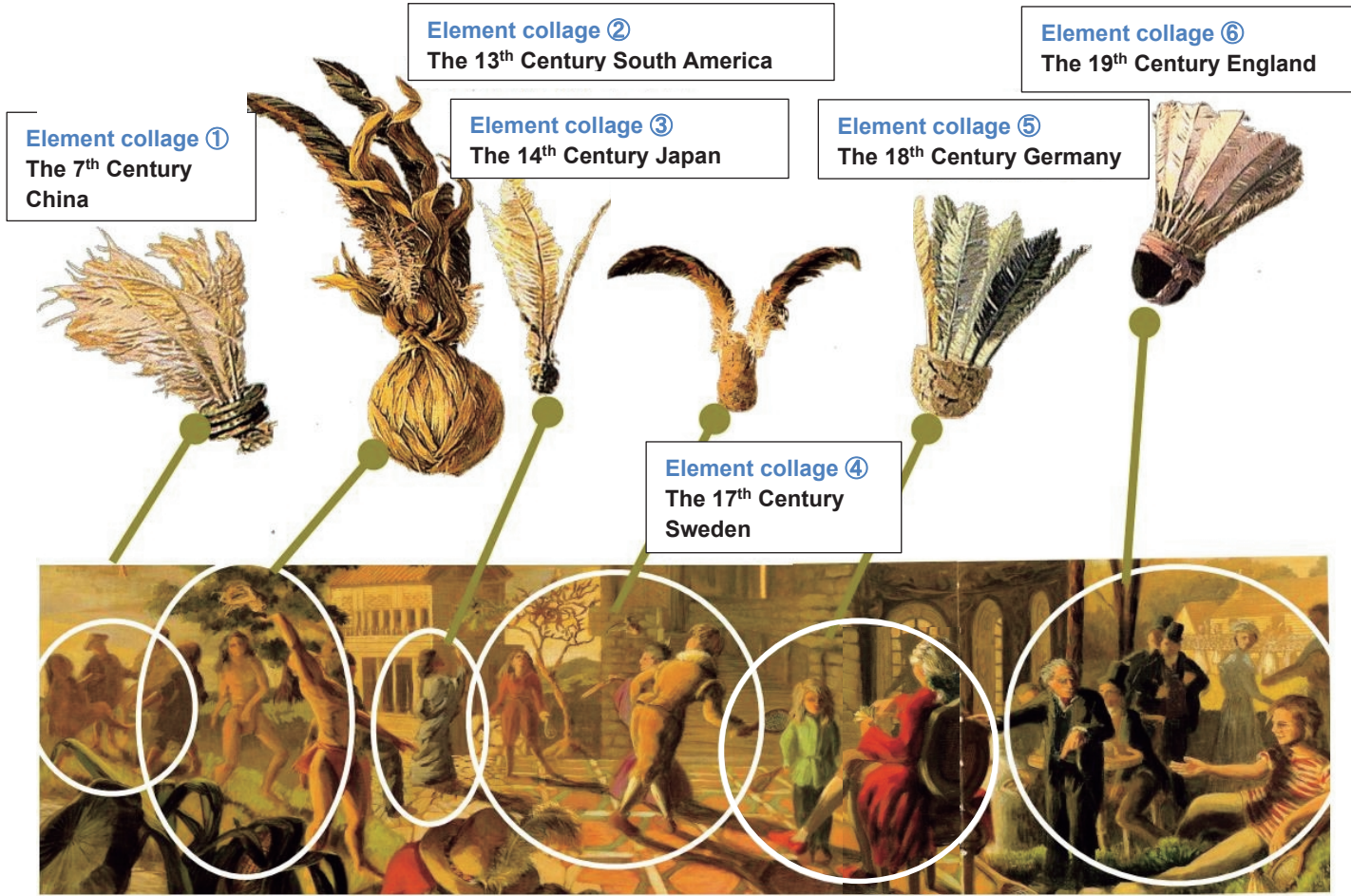
Her original work was a 6m-long drawing in a Chinese Picture Roll style. Monika studied the Inca and Japanese historical documents and referred to **Historical Development of the Shuttlecock** written by Isolde Schmidt-Mollhöff who wrote this dissertation in 1957/58 to be a sports instructor. Monika added to the collection her second work, called **1250 years** which examines the the appreciation of this picture roll and for making it possible to publicize this intellectual art piece to the world.



**Fig3** Monika's Wall collage Chinese Picture Roll and 1250 years in the National Badminton Center meeting room.

3. Analyzing the wall collage

Let's analyze each page of the book and find out what fragments the wall collage is composed of and what historical documents the components of the collage originated from as much as we can. The wall collage depicts **6 shuttlecocks and shuttlecock games** from different eras and locations. Each element collage corresponds with the shuttlecock used in each era. **Fig4**

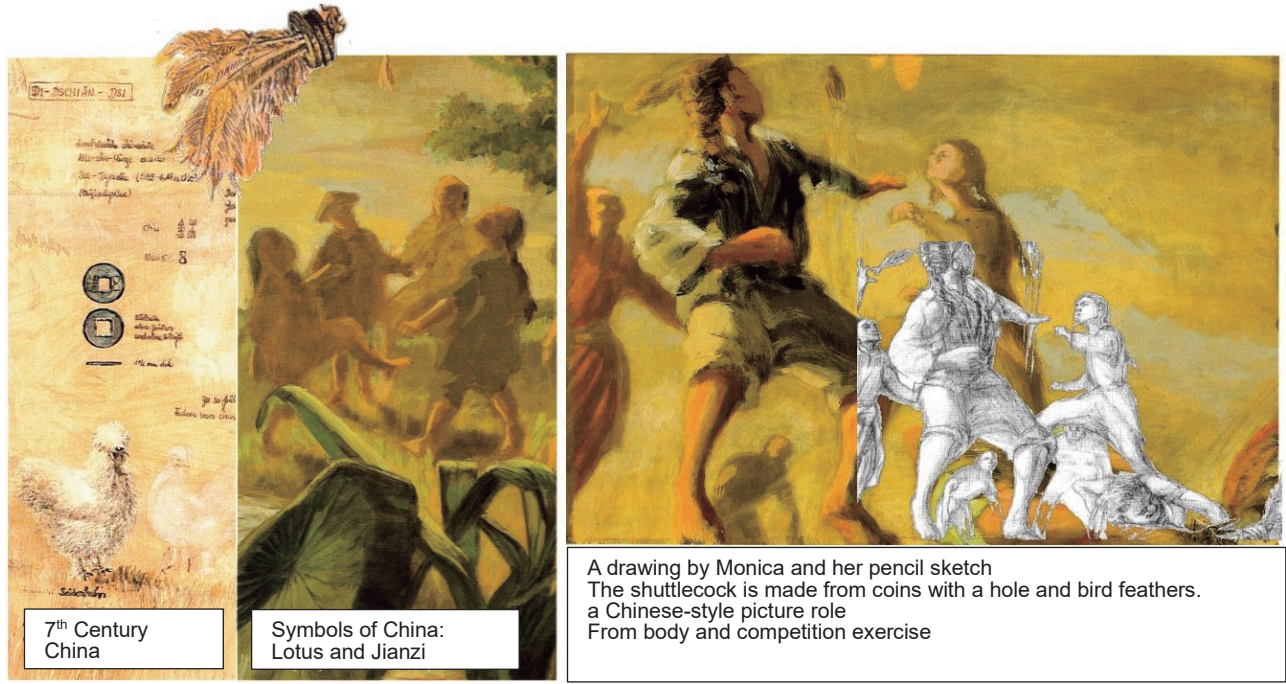


**Fig4** The wall collage consists of 6 Element collages ①②③④⑤⑥  
Each element collage corresponds with the shuttlecock used in each era.

- There are from 6 different eras and locations as below:
- The Element Collage ① The 7<sup>th</sup> century China
  - The Element Collage ② The 13<sup>th</sup> century South America
  - The Element Collage ③ The 14<sup>th</sup> century Japan
  - The Element Collage ④ The 17<sup>th</sup> century Sweden
  - The Element Collage ⑤ The 18<sup>th</sup> century Germany
  - The Element Collage ⑥ The 19<sup>th</sup> century England

The Element Collage ① The 7<sup>th</sup> century China

The Element Collage ① depicts lotus leaves as the symbol of China where the original idea of the picture roll came from, and the main focal object of the story is a shuttlecock called **Jianzi** (毽子). Jianzi is made from copper round coins with a square hole. The sources of the drawing are from the images in the 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries but Monika described the origin of this Chinese shuttlecock game as in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, this may be because copper coins started to be used for the first time during this period. **Fig5**



**Fig5** Jianzi and the game scenery are introduced on pages 6-7 of Monika's book.  
Jianzi is made from coins and Chinese Silkie feathers

Tianyuan-Difang style coins (round coins with a square hole) were first minted during the reign of the first emperor of the Qin Dynasty (259 B.C. - 210 B.C.). The First Emperor decided the shape of the coin and set out the rule that the coin inscription should be consistent with the value of the coins.

The 7<sup>th</sup> century is the period when King **Gao Zu** unified the country and founded the **Tang Dynasty** (618~907). Gao Zu minted the copper coin called Kaiyuan-Tongbao as the Tang Dynasty's standard coin. The inscriptions of the coin consist of four Chinese characters selected and written by the eminent Tang scholar Ouyang Xun (also known as a famous calligrapher). This Kaiyuan-Tongbao was widely spread and well-known by people worldwide. Monika or Schmidt dated the origin of Jianzi as the 7<sup>th</sup> century may be because of the connection with the establishment of the Tang Dynasty. As a side note, the ancient Japanese coin Wado-Kaichin was produced at about the same time (708A.D.) following the footsteps of the Tang dynasty's Kaiyuan-Tongbao. **Fig6**



**Fig6** Jianzi using the Tienyuan-Difang coin (round shape square hole)



**Fig7** Natives of Cochin-China, Playing at Shittlecock with their Feet by J. Landseer & J. Shirt 1796. \*Note the difference in spelling from shuttlecock commonly used today. According to the dictionary by Samuel Johnson, the spelling 「shittle」 is older than 「shuttle」 .

The playgrounds depicted in the Element collage ① show that the images were taken from **Natives of Cochin-China, Playing at Shittlecock with their Feet** by J. Landseer & J. Shirt 1796 **Fig7** and the shuttlecock game in Landseer and Allom's pictures **Fig8**.  
 \*Note the difference in spelling from the shuttlecock commonly used today. According to the dictionary by Samuel Johnson, the spelling 「shittle」 is older than 「shuttle」



**Fig8** Playing at shuttlecock with the feet 1843 Allom, Thomas (1804-1872) Bernard Adams wrote and published 「The Badminton Story」 from the BBC with this photo in 1980, adding a modern styled caption 「Playing at shuttlecock with the feet - a Victorian engraving hinting at badminton's oriental origins」



**Fig9** Siamese shuttlecock game, source unknown.

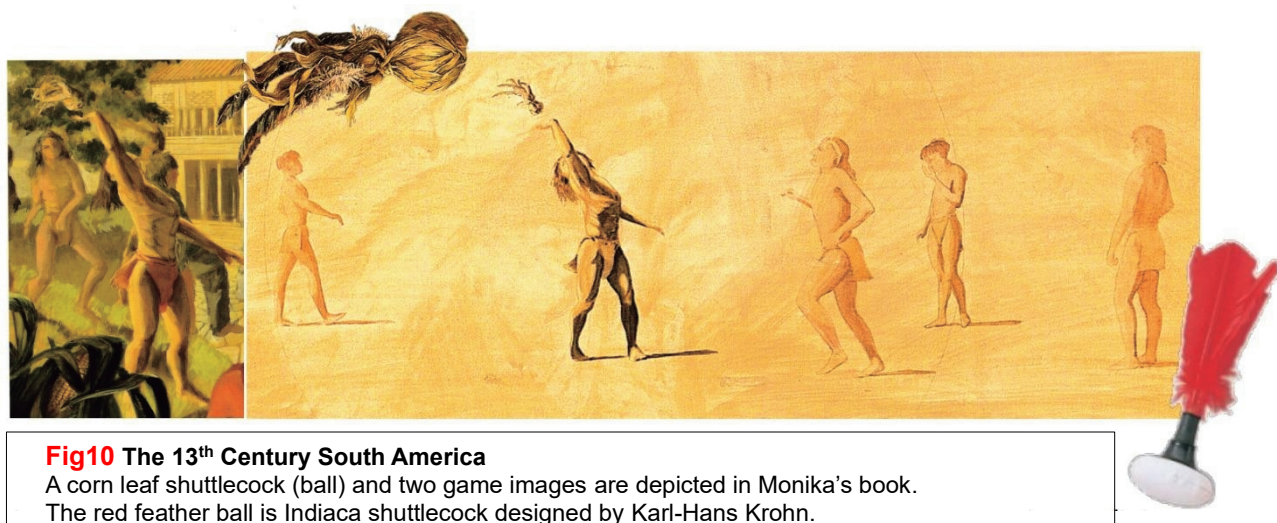
Drawings of Asian sceneries may imply some contempt for Asians that had developed during Western domination since the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In 1555, Antonio Scaino (Italian scholar) classified sports into two categories in his book 「Ball Games」 that 「handling a ball with a bat or equipment is an elegant sport, and directly handling it with hands or feet is a vulgar sport」. **Fig9** In 「Nagasaki and the Western Settlements」 which is said to have been painted by Toseki Watanabe and other artists in the late Edo period (the 19<sup>th</sup> century), a Dutchman in the picture is wearing shoes on a tatami mat in the room while other Asians are depicted in barefoot hitting a Volant (a shuttlecock) with a racket, a Japanese man with a topknot is also depicted walking barefoot in front of the pavilion with a pair of Zori Japanese traditional sandals in their hands. Asian people living barefoot may have appeared uncultivated in the western value in those times.

## The Element Collage ② The 13<sup>th</sup> century South America

A shuttlecock used in the Inca era is depicted and the scene is titled as **To mythological symbolism** in the book. The origin of this game is described as in the 13<sup>th</sup> century may be because the Kingdom of Cuzco was established at this time before the Inca Empire. More historical information would be needed to verify this origin.

Monika briefly explained it in her book. "The Incas' economy was based mostly on agriculture, and therefore fruits, plants, and also corn were highly honored and often depicted in art."

It should be noted that the rich South American agricultural products which supported the Inca civilization especially potatoes, corn, peanuts, pumpkins, etc. were brought to Europe after the Spanish and Portuguese occupation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and they had become a major source of dietary support for the previously impoverished Western Europeans.



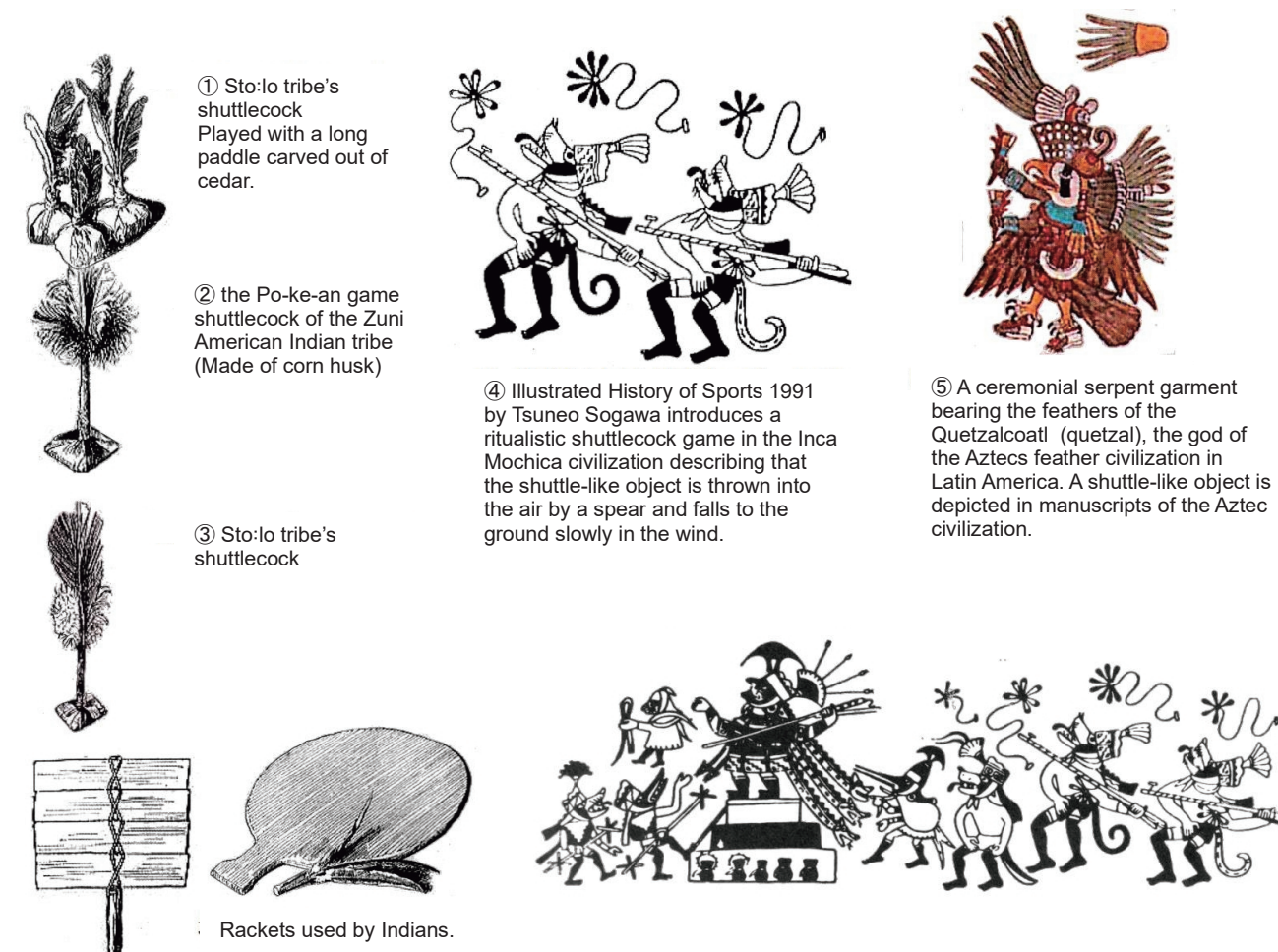
**Fig10 The 13<sup>th</sup> Century South America**  
A corn leaf shuttlecock (ball) and two game images are depicted in Monika's book.  
The red feather ball is Indiaca shuttlecock designed by Karl-Hans Krohn.

The ball in this picture was made with pebbles wrapped with several corn leaves stacked on top of each other. The Taino people of Puerto Rico called this game BATEY and built a triangular or U-shaped playground in the center of their village where they made two teams battle against each other. Players competed to keep this ball in motion by using their heads, elbows, shoulders, and knees. When it stops, the team loses a point. The score was marked on the ground, and it seems that the winner was decided when the mistakes reached a certain number. The winner was treated like a hero, but the loser had to be sacrificed in a ritual. Monika drew a shuttlecock-like corn leaf ball on the image of this game.

Recently, the game called **Indiaca** has gained popularity even in Japan and was adopted as an official event at the National Athletic Meeting. When a German physical education teacher Karl-Hans Krohn was walking on Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, he happened to come across a game called **Peteca** then he brought the game back to his hometown and introduced it to the people in 1936. Peteca is said to be a game of the South American Indio, and the name Indiaca is derived its name from the combination of the two words **Indio** and **Peteca**. Krohn introduced this game initially as a recreational game, but it became popular mainly because of the promotional activities by YMCA Germany and the Sports Federation that developed the game into a competitive sport. Monika's imagination must have been inspired by this Indio game. **Fig10**

In 2004, **The illustrated history of Badminton** was published by French Football association official Jean-Yves Guillain and then translated into English by P. Herrudge and H. Nielsen. The English version of this publication was brought to my office by my students Hideo and Chikako Ikarugi who just finished their studies in England.

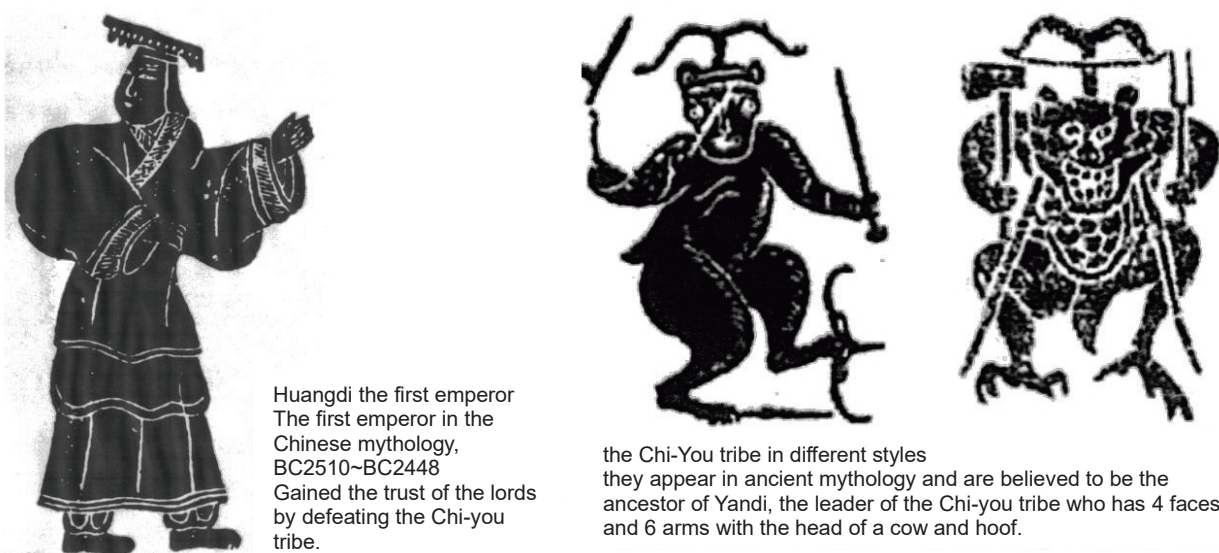
The picture that looks like an Indio shaman is from the religious painting collection of the National Museum of France. A shuttlecock-like object is observed in the colored picture that Jean-Yves Guillain introduced in his book. **Fig11**



**Fig11 The illustrated history of Badminton** was published by French Football association official Jean-Yves Guillain and then translated into English by P. Herrudge and H. Nielsen.

Chapter 1 of the book, **The ancient origin, spread into the world**, interestingly introduces the origin of Jianzi as below.

**The truth and myth surrounding the shuttlecock game in China:** Legendary Huang dynasty practiced a Kicking ball game called Cuju, aiming to improve soldiers' skills to battle against the Chi-You tribe in B.C.2500. People made a round black leather ball and played for the whole night. We can imagine the ball was later gradually replaced with a shuttlecock called Jianzi. **Fig 12**



Huangdi the first emperor  
The first emperor in the Chinese mythology, BC2510~BC2448  
Gained the trust of the lords by defeating the Chi-you tribe.

the Chi-You tribe in different styles they appear in ancient mythology and are believed to be the ancestor of Yandi, the leader of the Chi-you tribe who has 4 faces and 6 arms with the head of a cow and hoof.

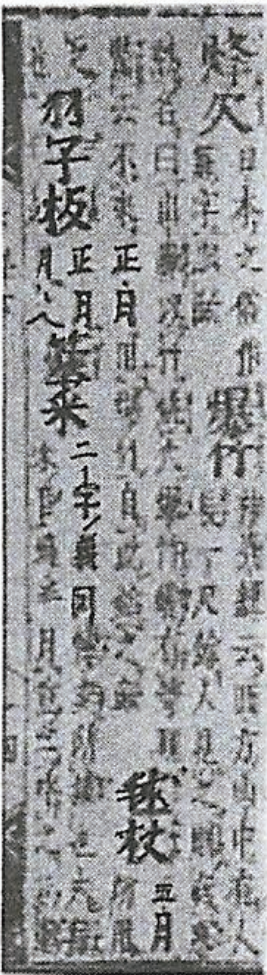
**Fig 12** Shuttle-kicking games of China and the South-east Asia introduced in Guillain's book.



**Shuttlecock game in China**  
The black and white engraving was introduced in a French Journal in 1875.  
Journal de la Jeunesse, France. 1875  
One of the intaglio printing technics called Burin engraving drawing fine lines on a cooper plate using a tool that has a thin, pointed blade to etch or cut.  
It is characterized by fine sharp lines.



**"Shuttle kick game" in Vietnam silk watercolor painting by Le Chuon**  
The sound of flute from the palace gave us a vibrant vibe,  
The drum of the watchtower hastens the blooming of flowers. Merchants are energized. Streets strive for beauty. Young men pull up their sleeves and some even take off their shirts while playing shuttlecock games.  
Spring of the Kingdom 1508



**The Element Collage ③ The 14<sup>th</sup> century Japan**

The Element Collage③ depicts the Japanese shuttlecock game of **Hanetsuki**. Hane means a feather or a wing and Tsuki means to hit or toss. We can see two players in Monika's drawing playing a game called **Oibane** while there is another game called **Tsukihane** played only by one player.

Monika misspelled Oibane as Cibane maybe because she read her own handwriting wrong. Hanetsuki is commonly believed to have originated in the Heian period (794~1192). Monika described the origin as in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, which is around Japan's Kamakura-Muromachi period (1192~1568).

In a renowned historical document **Kagaku-Shu** written in the Bun 'an era (1444~1449) of the Muromachi period, there is a description of a ball stick and battledore, and we can find a few passages that imply that Hanetsuki may have originated from a New Year's auspicious event called **Sagicho court ceremony**. **Fig13**

**Fig13 Kagaku-Shu**  
written in the Bun 'an era 1444-1449  
A Japanese hand-written dictionary consists of 2 volumes that contain about 3000 words in 18 categories. It reads that Hagoita-boards (battledore) are used in the new year ceremony and mentions about the Gitchou-sticks.

**There are two possible origins of Hanetsuki.**  
One is the Gitchou game in the Sagicho court ceremony, in which people strike a ball to ward off evils with a stick called Gitchou, the stick seems to have a relation with the origin of the battledore racket called Hagoita.

Another possible origin is from the Heian period (794-1185), people made a shuttlecock called Kogi-no-ko using a **soapberry seed** attached with some feathers and hit the shuttlecock back and forth around the body to wish for good health. People saw it as a flying dragonfly that could eat mosquitos that spread the febrile disease in Kyoto during the Heian period.

**Fig14, Fig15, Fig16**



**Fig14 Hane-Tsuki**  
Hane-Tsuki has 2 styles.  
① Oibane played by two players  
② Agebane (Tsukihane) played by one player

The rackets were called Kogi-Ita, and the shuttlecock was called Kogi-noko, made from a soapberry seed.  
A soapberry seed in Chinese writes as a seed without illness and thus used as a fortune item. Kogi-noko was also called Tsuku-bane, which means tossing a shuttlecock.

The game's origin even traces back to the ancient Shinto rituals called the Gitchou game, in which female participants used a flattened wooden stick to strike a ball.  
Later, believed to have transformed into the game called **Hane-Tsuki**, using a soapberry shuttlecock to distinguish the game from rituals of the shrine Gichou game.

Gitchou Game



**Fig15 Gitchou Game**

The origin of the game of Hago-Ita game "Hane-Tuki" is said to be "Gitchou Game" drawn in the "Nenchu Gyouji Picture Roll". The Japanese Shinto ritual games have their origin in the Nara century, Kemari kickball game was for men, Gichou game was for women in which players used a flattened stick to strike a ball. During the Heian period, the game is believed to have transformed into Hane-Tsuki game using a shuttlecock wishing for children's health because it looks like a flying dragonfly that eats harmful mosquitos.

14<sup>th</sup> century Japan

Japanese shuttlecock game appeared as a ceremonial game of art



**Fig16 The Shuttlecock And The People Who Used To Play With It**

Monika's images came from the late Edo period Japanese culture seen in Bigot or Wirgman, mainly illustrating the people and culture of the end of the Edo period to the Meiji Restoration than the 14<sup>th</sup> century Japan.

Monika introduced six pictures including Hago, Hagoita, Oibane, and the Japanese Atmosphere in the book titled **The 14<sup>th</sup> Century Japan, From the Ceremonial Art of Game.**

She was trying to indicate how Japanese women attach importance to traditional customs even when playing Hanetsuki in her work **1250 years.** She also noted that even now, clothes, shoes, and rackets are elegant and not sporty, as is the case with "leisure" badminton. **Fig17**



**Fig17 Battledore & Shuttlecock drawn by Charles Wirgman 1832-1891**

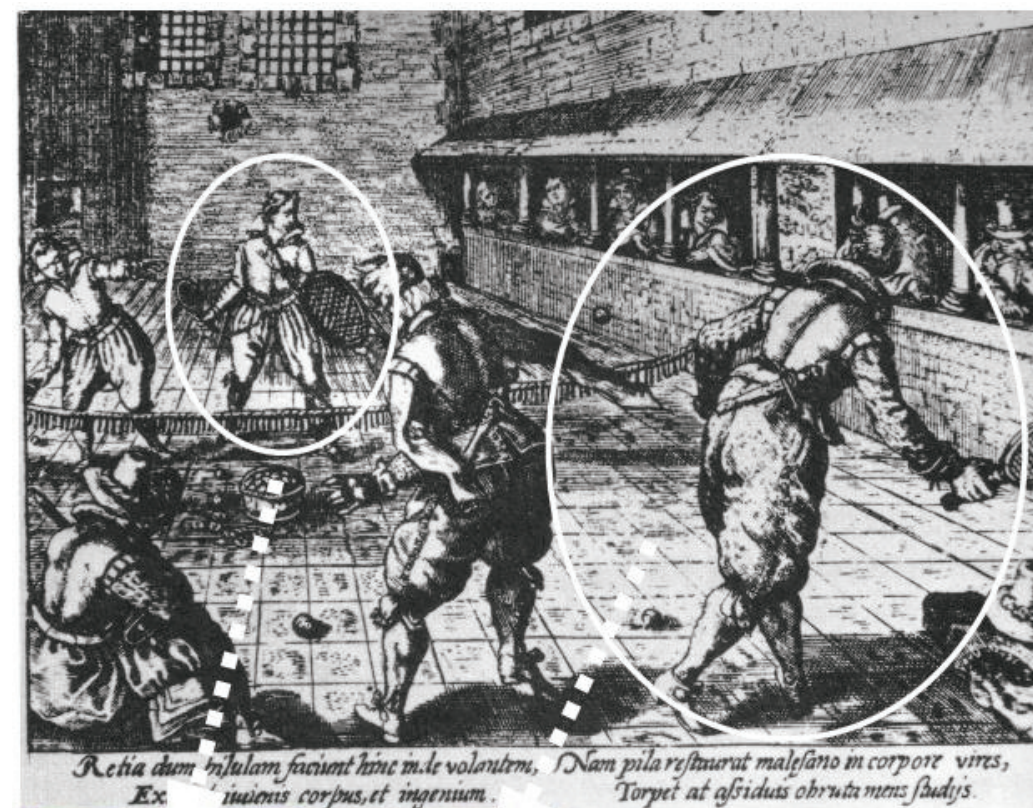
From Wirgman Japan sketch collection, artist correspondent's eyes, p128-129 edited by Isao Shimizu. Charles Wirgman is a British cartoonist and correspondent who came at the end of the Edo period. He is the founder of the illustrated magazine **Japan Punch.** And tutored Yoshimatsu Goseda and Yuichi Takahashi and others.

#### The Element Collage ④ The 17<sup>th</sup> century Sweden

The Element Collage ④ is from the illustration of **Students playing a game in one of Strasburg's ballgame halls** (1618 Strasburg) by Jacob von der Heyden, which shows a scene of the medieval tennis game. **Fig18**

The background depicted in this picture is not directly related to shuttlecock games but Monika modified and used the figures to create a scene of the 17<sup>th</sup> century in her work.

In her Chinese Picture Roll displayed at the National Badminton Center and in her book, the scene was titled **17<sup>th</sup> Century Sweden** and featured **Queen Christina.** This story of the shuttlecock game and Queen Christina is routinely and fragmentarily introduced in several books about the history of badminton.



**Fig18 Students playing a game in one of Strasburg's ballgame halls**

From Kulturgeschichte des TENNIS Heiner Gillmeister 1993. translated by Masahiro Inagaki, Shigeyuki Nara, Hironori Funai, Taishu-kan book. It seems there were two ballgame stadiums in Strasburg at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Monika carefully depicted even the outside scenery visible through the gallery doors.

Two books on the story of the queen are available in Japanese.

① **Christina, Queen of Sweden; A Portrait of Baroque Spiritual History** 1975 Chuo-Kouron by Torataro Shimomura.

② **Descartes, Corneille, Christina, Queen of Sweden** 2000 Kousaku-Sha by Ernst Cassirer, translated by Takeshi Asakura and Kenji Haga.

Monika must have gotten inspired by the portrait of Christina **Fig19** and drawn an image of the quick-witted Queen playing the shuttlecock game. Her episode of the shuttlecock game is described in a 19th-century French book **Sports and Games of Skill** (Sports et Jeux d'Adresse) by Henri René. (date unknown)

In this book, the shuttlecock game is introduced in its French name Jeu de Volant.

To the game of the aristocracy (The 17<sup>th</sup> Century)



**Fig19** Christina on horseback by Sebastian Bourdon      Swedish Queen's Jeu de Volant drawn by Monika

Regarding this topic, the record in this 17th-century book is the most precise. The famous Queen Christina of Sweden was so enthusiastic about this game that she demanded the highest-ranking officials to play the game with her. The same was true for even the well-known scientist and theologian Samuel Bochart. He thought her invitation was a royal command, and he could not refuse the demand. People in the palace teased him for being too submissive to the Queen, but it was not only for him. The Queen even obliged other nobles to remove their cloaks and wigs regardless of court etiquette. She was not satisfied unless not only all nobles were ready to play, but also the Volant (Shuttlecock) started going back and forth between the rackets.

The Element Collage ⑤ The 18<sup>th</sup> century Germany

The Element Collage ⑤ is from the episode of Prussia's Frederic in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Monika painted this episode as in **Fig20**. The story's origin is described in **le Journal de Bouillon**, which happened when Little Frederick of Prussia was playing with a volant (shuttlecock) in the reading room of his great-uncle King Frederick II in 1787.

When Little Frederick's volant fell on the King's desk while playing. The King kindly gave it back first, but a few moments later, he dropped it again on the document on which the king was working. The King strictly cautioned him and returned the toy to the young child. He was playing well for a while, but then dropped it again on the King's finely lettered papers for the third time.

Frederick II took it away and hid it in his pocket this time. The child asked for the toy back, but the King refused. The child asked several times only to get the King's refusals. Finally, he shouted, **"Does your Majesty deign to give me back my shuttlecock? Answer Yes or No!"**

The King was charmed by the language of his little nephew, who was supposed to become the heir to his throne. The King returned the volant (Shuttlecock) and said, **"Take your shuttlecock. I can see that you are a brave young man and that the Germans will not be able to take Silesia away from you again!"**



**Fig20** The 18<sup>th</sup> century Germany  
We should be thankful for a story like this. It informs us a shuttlecock game was being played even in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.  
From 1250 years

Henry René Allemagne, who introduced this episode in his **Sports and Games of Skill** (Sports et Jeux d'Adresse) (undated), wrote "The shuttlecock game is an excellent training tool for the youth, it gives them calm and determination because players must run through to the end of the game while patiently wait for the right chance to win."

The Element Collage ⑥ The 19<sup>th</sup> century England

To competitive sport  
The 17<sup>th</sup> century England



The Duke of Beaufort invites guests to the garden party and explains the new sport of Badminton while playing games with a shuttlecock. The game was played with a net and the rules of the game have been modified to the present badminton since then.

From the Chinese picture roll

The pictures in Fig21 depict the images suggesting the birth of badminton. The background is taken from the picture of a party scene in the front yard of the **Badminton House** which had become the origin of the name of the sport Badminton. What appears to be the Badminton House is in the background.

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a net was added to the shuttlecock game called **battledore** in England, court lines were drawn, certain game rules were written, and eventually, a set of equipment for the game named **Badminton** appeared on the market. There is a record of the product on the order sheet of a stationary shop in London dated 1860. (Introduced in Bernard Adams' **the Badminton Story** 1980 BBC)

Monika's collage work does not describe these stories in detail, but it does help us visualize how the shuttlecock games evolved into a competitive sport. In other words, she does not describe the history of badminton in words but successfully presents the flow of the history by cutting out the sceneries while maintaining their original ambiguity. This kind of wisdom is truly admirable. The biggest mystery in the history of the birth of badminton is when, why, where, and by whom the name of Badminton House came together with the Shuttlecock Game. Various birth myths surrounding this question have been passed down by many people.



**Fig21** The 17<sup>th</sup> century England  
Monika's book page 16-17 consists of 3 pictures of the 17<sup>th</sup> century England

In March 2005, my students led me by hand to visit the Badminton House in England, coincidentally with the president of Badminton England Mr. and Mrs. Bill Rodger. It is Lord Beaufort's country house, believed to be one of the wealthiest descendants of the British patrician family. Unfortunately, the walls of the legendary entrance room had several large cracks running across them, and the house looked quite dilapidated. Moreover, just to show that this was the birthplace of badminton, a piece of modern shuttlecock was perfunctorily placed on the bench by the window. The battledore on which Miss. Somerset had written **2,117 continuous strokes on Saturday, January 12, 1830**, as her record, was so exposed to the air and people that the letters in the record were almost no longer legible. The significance of this place where we can meet the history of badminton remained heavily in my mind and my heart was crying. 「This room and the treasures must be protected. Right now!」 But I am yet to find the answer or the destination of my thought.

**Fig22, Fig23**



**Fig22** Players dream, of visiting the Badminton House once in a lifetime.  
①The exhibition hall introduced on page 21 of the Badminton Story by B.Adams. ②③ taken from other angles.  
④The ladies' doubles winner of the all-England Championships in 1972, 1973, and 1975 Ms.Etsuko Toganoo, was invited to the hall by the International Badminton Federation. Fortunately, her photo taken with the record and signature of Miss. Summerset has been kept as a precious memory of time. On this occasion, because of the special exhibition, an exception was made to permit photography in the hall.



**Fig23** Just to note, my trip to England was attentively arranged by my students, Hideo and Chikako Ikarugi who were studying in England, and Akira and Kazumi Ohta in Germany. Kozue Miyama an assistant professor at Amherst University in the USA joined to help me translate in major visiting places, along with Kazuhiro Suda (Assistant professor at Tokyo Institute of Technology), Chika Tanifuji (Chiba University Instructor), Hiromi Takahashi (Iwate University Instructor), Michiko Sasaki (Assistant Tsukuba University)



**Fig24** Monica's Chinese picture roll spread on pages 18-19 and a hand sketch of the pictorial development of 1250 years on page 23 of the book.

I wish that many badminton enthusiasts would also show a fraction of their interest in our history and passionately remember the sceneries of history when they count their victories just like in Monika's Collage artwork.  
A Full Picture of the History of Badminton Monika spread on the book's front cover. What a beautiful artwork it is. **Fig24**

#### 4. History of the beginning of badminton activities in Japan

When did badminton come to Japan? When did competitive badminton begin in Japan? These are two different questions. The distinction between Shuttlecock Games and Competitive Badminton makes this issue even more complicated because both are generally called Badminton. I would like to point out two widely believed misunderstandings in Japan.

**The first mistake** is that recognition 「Badminton was introduced to Dejima Island in Nagasaki at the end of the Edo period for the first time.」 The basis for this is the existence of the pictures of the shuttlecock game played by foreigners depicted in Nagasaki Dejima Island drawings but unfortunately, badminton had not yet been born at this time. Several Dejima Island drawings have been confirmed including copied versions. **Fig26-1~6**

**The second mistake** is the recognition that 「competitive badminton in Japan began in Yokohama」.

Let's consider the first mistake. It is known that a Dejima Island drawing was drawn and duplicated to some copied versions in the 1780s, it doesn't make sense if badminton came to Nagasaki before the birth of badminton which is believed to be at the end of the 1800s. Therefore, the game played in Holland and other parts of Europe as well as in Dejima island in those days was merely Shuttlecock Game, not badminton. The origin of the shuttlecock game in Dejima Island can be seen in the following picture.



**Fig25** Johan Niehof 1618~1672  
A world traveler from Holland  
A view of the Orphanage

The image on the left is an interesting landscape painting of an orphanage in Batavia drawn in the illustrated travel journal 1682 by Johan Nieuhof, a member of the East India Company mission in 1655~1658. **Fig25**

The rackets and a shuttle in children's hands in the picture resemble those we see in Dejima Island drawings. They must be local orphans because it is the scenery of the orphanage.

Elements in the picture:

- Holland
- Batavia
- a Shuttlecock game
- foreign residents

all seem to be related to the Dejima Island drawings shown on the following pages.

We can learn more about the Dejima Island drawings in the gorgeous commemorative publication **Dejima: Its Landscape and Transition** 1987 edited by the **Nagasaki City Dejima Historic Site Improvement Council**.

Some detailed descriptions are written by Jiro Numata and Yoshiko Morioka, and others after page 237 in this book. Morioka states that there are five almost identical pieces depicting Dejima Island and the life of Dutch people of the time handed down in different places, but none of them seem to be the original.



**Fig26-1** Dejima Island Picture Scroll 32.5x 472.1cm British Museum



**Fig26-2** Nagasaki Touran-Kan City picture roll (Ran-Annex) Paintings on paper 36.0 x 64.0 cm, Amsterdam National Museum

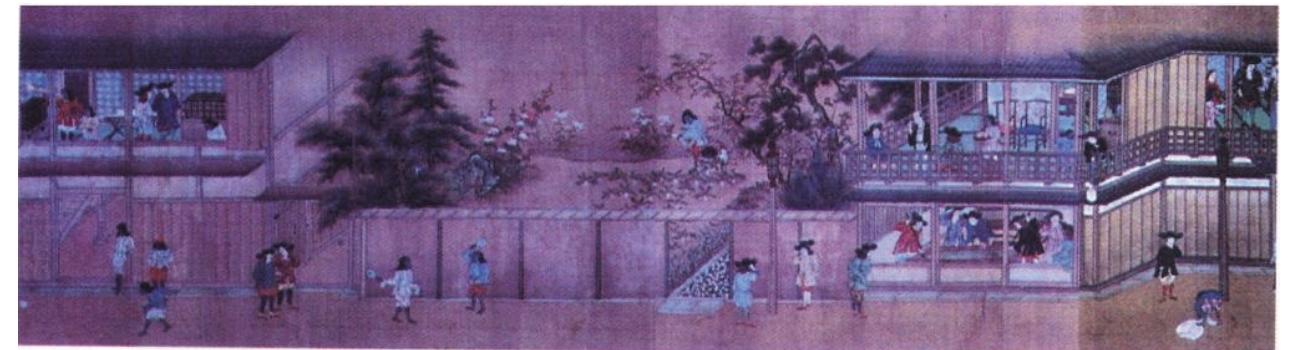
According to the description of **Dejima-Zu Island** published by Fukuoka City Museum, Dejima Island was built to prevent Christianity's spread and to house the Portuguese living in the city. The fan-shaped island with an area of 1,300 sqm was completed over a period of two years from 1634. After the Portuguese were expelled in 1639, the Dutch East India Company trading house in Hirado city was invited to the island, and the chief of the trading house (Kapitan) and about 10 to 15 other merchants as well as their servants and personnel were stationed there. The staff was not allowed to be accompanied by their wives from the home country. The head of the trading post was allowed to go out from Dejima Island only with permission and under the guardianship of shogunate officials. The chief of the trading house had to go to Edo once a year on New Year's Day to visit the Tokugawa Shogun. Under Japan's national isolation policy, the Shogunate authorized only Dutch and Chinese merchants to trade in Nagasaki. Until 1857 when the trading gates in Japan finally opened, Dejima Island had been Japan's only gateway to Western culture.  
Reference: Fukuoka City Museum Masterpieces Catalogue.



**Fig26-3** Rankan-Zu from Nagasaki Kanyo Kyoryu Zu, Rankan-zu 36.0x400.3 cm, paper, Kobe City Museum



**Fig26-4** Kanyo Nagasaki Kyoryu Zu picture roll, Nagasaki Prefectural Art Museum,



**Fig26-5** Dejima-Zu Nagasaki drawings Kano Shunko 1639 - 1707 Shokokan Suifu Meitokukai Mito City



**Fig26-6** Koui-jin Ryokan-Zu (scroll) 1782 copied in 1931, the Tokyo University Archives

Several documents from that time indicate that the word **Racket** was already used in Holland in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and then it was introduced to Nagasaki in later days. The word **Racket** was derived from the Arabic word **Raha** meaning a palm from which the derivative **Rahat** (palm-shaped) spread throughout the Mediterranean region, eventually giving rise to words like the English word **Racquets** in various regions. We can see that there were words such as Raketspel (Racket games) and Raquette (Racket) even in my collections below. **Fig27**



A tinted Dutch Delft tile named Children's Games, mid-17th century

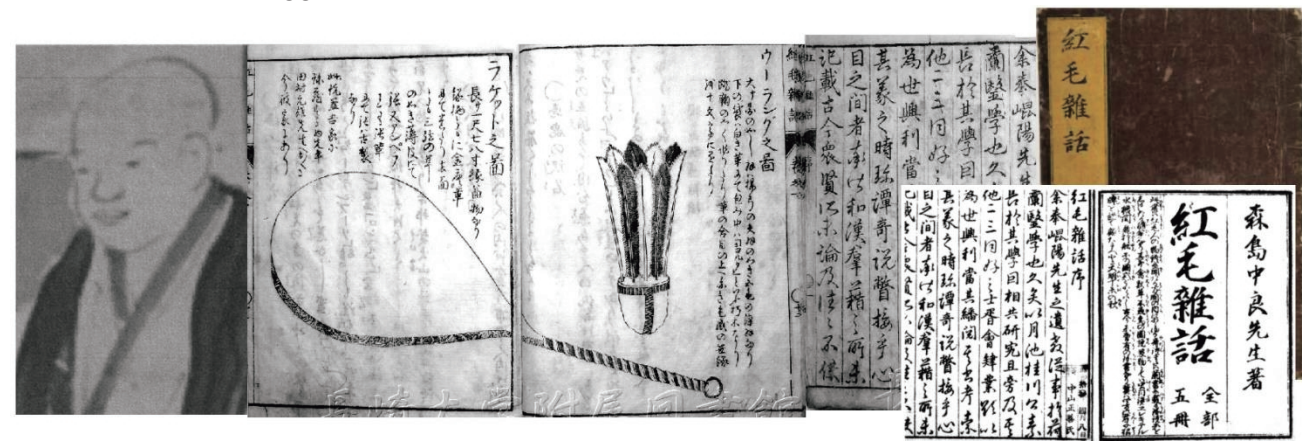
Caricature of a 19th-century Dutch-Flemish print with the German and Italian names **Rakettspel Raquette**, with an inscription of the owner Jan Pluis, kinder spelen op tegels

19th century Dutch-Flemish caricature marked **SPELEN MET TRAKET**. All From the author's collection

**Fig27** Some shuttlecock game materials of those days in the Netherland (17th-19th century)

This can also be seen in the book **Komou-zatsuwa** (1787 Nakayoshi Morishima) which introduces some foreign games of that time. **Fig28** In this book from the Edo period, the shuttlecock was described as **Woolang**, the Feather in French was called **Volant** at that time, and V was sometimes pronounced as U, thus we can assume that Volant was pronounced as Woolang in Dutch. At any rate, it was not badminton that came to Nagasaki, but rather just a Shuttlecock Game.

The author of the book **Komou-zatsuwa** Nakayoshi Morishima (1765-1810) was the younger brother of Hoshu Katsuragawa (a famous doctor in the Edo period), the author of Kaitai Shinsho. He also helped his brother write the book "Hokusa-Bunryaku" which introduces the story of Koudayu Daikokuya who got shipwrecked and landed in Russia in 1782. He was said to be so eccentric that he would not wash his lice-covered kimono, and when his family tried to wash it, he begged them to leave one louse on it so that he could breed more.



**Fig28** Churyou Morishima and his book **Koumou-Zatsuwa**

Morishima explains this game played in Dejima Island: Leisurely Foreigners' game played with a shuttlecock, the bat is called a racket, and the shuttlecock is called Woolang as illustrated in the drawing. Tsukuba University Library

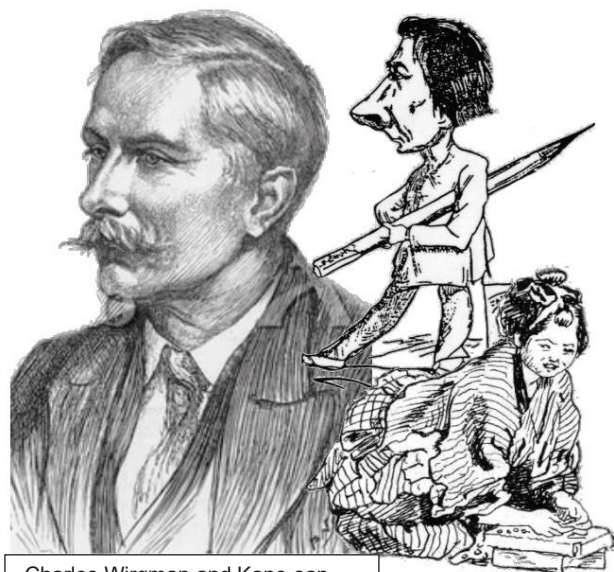
Furthermore, it was not until the establishment of foreign settlements in places like Yokohama that those Shuttlecock Games known as **Battledore and Shuttlecock** in English came to our country. An English textbook called **The First Reader** was used at the Soukou-juku school of the Kaibara clan at the end of the Edo period and there was an illustrated description of **Battledore and Shuttlecock** as a recreational game. **Fig29** Kaibara clan was founded in the present Hyogo Prefecture by Nobukane Oda, who was a younger brother of the famous feudal lord Nobunaga Oda who attempted to unify the country at the end of the Warring States period.



**Fig29** The front-gate of Oda family's old residence, Soukou-Juku family school, **Battledore and Shuttlecock** appeared in the English textbook 「The First Reader」 Provided by Hideo and Chikako Ikarugi

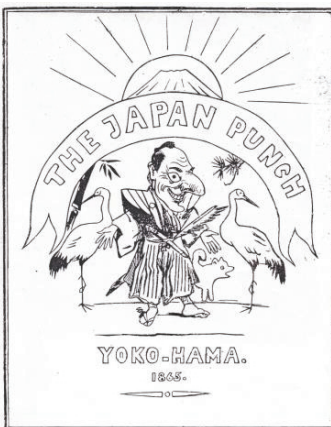
At the end of the Edo period, the gateway to Japan moved from Dejima Island, which had been the only gateway to foreign trades, to places like Yokohama, and the foreigners began to live in the new settlements. Shuttlecock games then began to appear in the newspapers, magazines, and books along with records of people's daily activity, sketches, and even in the form of caricatures. The writers of those records were shifting from Dutchmen to Englishmen or others, then the people started to call this sport **Battledore and Shuttlecock** in English.

In 1862 **THE JAPAN PUNCH, YOKO-HAMA** was published, and many caricatures were drawn to depict Japan's attempts to move out from the Edo era toward the Meiji Restoration. These caricatures are called **Ponchi-e** drawings, illustrations drawn with humor and sometimes irony to depict the lives of people of the time. **Fig30**



Charles Wirgman and Kane-san

**Charles Wirgman 1832-1891**  
English illustrator, cartoonist  
He vividly drew incidents and culture of Japan at the end of the Edo era in the illustration called Ponchi-e and launched Japan Punch Magazine. Western style drawing technic was introduced to the Japanese illustrators for the first time. Married to Kane Ozawa in 1863, rests in peace in Yokohama.



The first issue of The Japan Punch 1865



1866 Game of Battle cock and Shuttle door, instead of Battledore and Shuttlecock, ironically depicts a chaotic political conference



1872 The Japan Punch, Kobe's ardent petition was dismissed outright just like a return of a shuttlecock.



1881 The joy of children, So childish!  
(Depicting their infantile nature)



1884 The Tokyo Recreation Club, other boys are in the Billiard room

**Fig30** Battledore and Shuttlecock caricatures illustrated in **Japan Punch** by Charles Wirgman, correspondent of the **Illustrated London News** (all of them are filled with gags and ironies).

In addition to the above foreign records, there are some records drawn by Japanese artists, but the games introduced in those records still have not reached the standard to be called badminton. The following are some examples. **Fig31~33**



**Fig31** Inside the foreign residence (Ijin Shoukan Naibu no Zu) (1865 Gountei Sadahide)  
Kicking a shuttlecock was also practiced in Yokohama. Author's collection

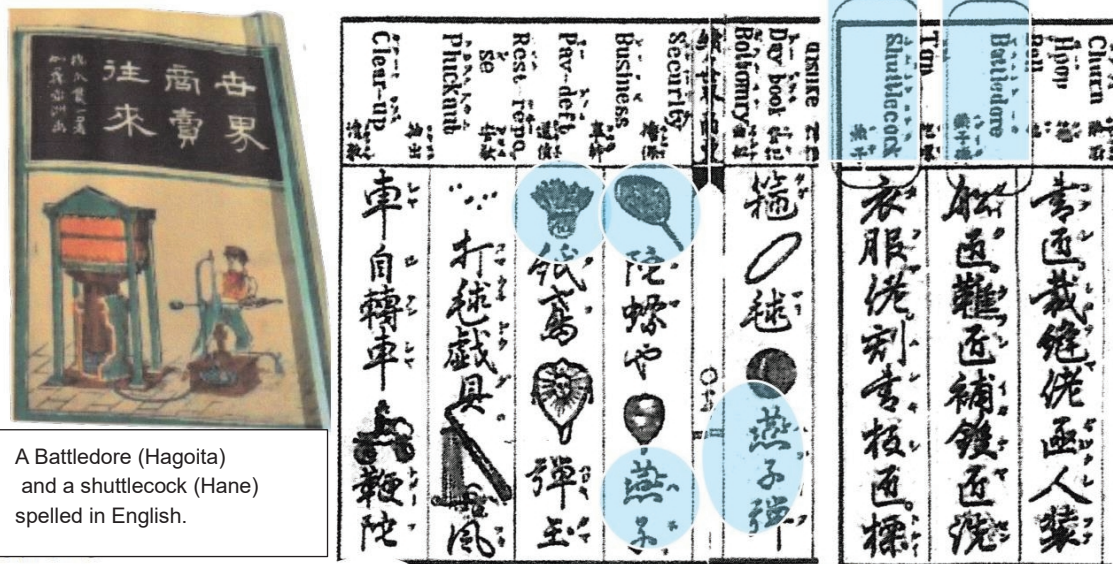


**Illustrated Dictionary of the Western Culture**  
Taisei Kunmou Zukai  
Recreation section 1871

**Yoshio Tanaka** 1838-1916 a natural historian born in Iida city who translated **Taisei Kunmou Zukai** (Illustrated Dictionary of the Western Culture)  
A disciple of Siebold.  
Battledore was translated to Hogoita and he added it was not made of wood but strung by the strings.

**Fig32**





A Battledore (Hagoita) and a shuttlecock (Hane) spelled in English.

The Commerce of the world written by Kan-ichi Hashizume 1873? in Tokyo city  
Sekai Shobai Ora continued edition, introducing Battledore and Shuttlecock Fig33

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a net was added to the shuttlecock game called battledore in England, court lines were drawn, certain game rules were written, and eventually, a set of equipment for the game named **Badminton** appeared on the market. There is a record of the product named **Badminton Battledore** on the order sheet of a stationary shop in London dated 1860. (Introduced in Bernard Adams' **the Badminton Story** 1980 BBC) But on what occasion the name got abbreviated to **Badminton** is uncertain.

Shuttlecock games imported in the 1870s appear to have been mainly English games of Battledore and Shuttlecock. The first encounter with Badminton rackets in Japan is believed to be a **Badminton Set with a made-in-Paris inscription** brought back from Europe as a souvenir in 1902 by photographer Kinsaku Asakura, the father of Ryoza Asakura who served as the president of the Niigata Prefecture Badminton Association in the 1950s.

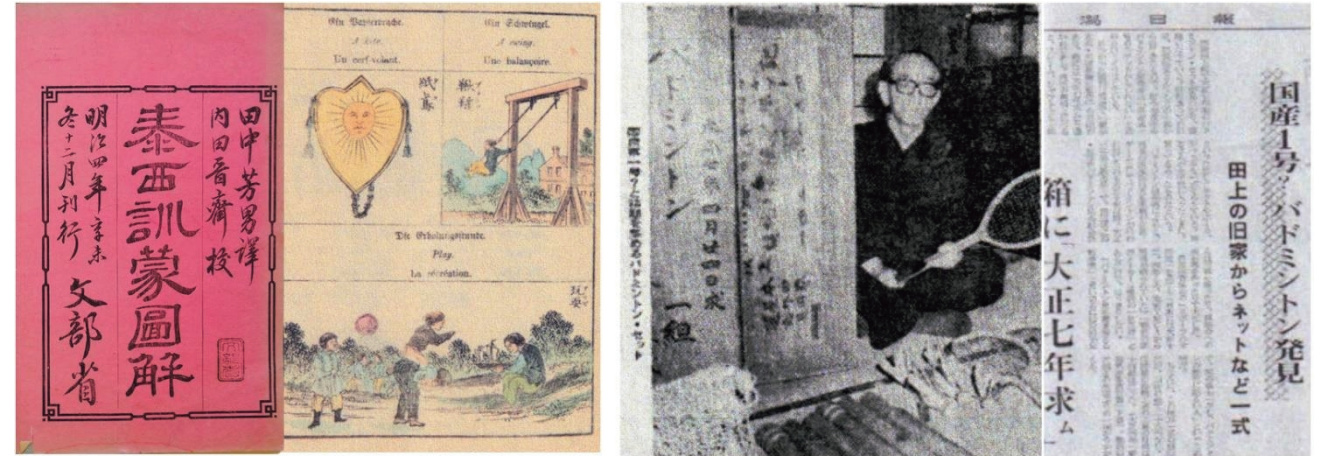
The second oldest record of the badminton set appeared in **the Niigata Nippo Daily News** on **December 16<sup>th</sup>, 1979**. This set has the inscription **A set of Badminton purchased in 1918, made by Mimitsu Shoten, Hongo, Tokyo** on the box found at the home of Tsunehiko Tamaki, an old family in Niigata Prefecture. The price of this badminton set was 25 yen (about 30 cents) at that time. Fig34

Before the discovery of those new records, our widely recognized encounter with badminton and its equipment in Japan had been limited only to the stories surrounding Yokohama. According to the Badminton Section of **the 80-Years History of Sports** 1966 edited by the Japan Sports Association, North American YMCA brought badminton equipment to YMCA Yokohama, Tokyo, and other cities sometime around 1924-1925. And it was just a leisurely activity hitting a birdie (note: American word for a shuttlecock) without complicated rules and techniques in the beginning.

The book says some official matches were organized for the first time in the Inter-ports Exchange Games with certain playing rules and played by foreign residents from both Yokohama and Kobe in the spring of around 1929. And it was around 1935 that YMCA Yokohama officially introduced this game in their program. After Kanetoshi Hirota who studied badminton at the Danish School of Gymnastics returned to Japan in the fall of 1937, an extensive technical study began and the game rapidly transformed into a competitive sport.

The book also mentions Tohkichi Oka, the only manufacturer of badminton equipment in Yokohama at that time exporting large quantities to South East Asia and making a great contribution to the history of badminton in Japan. There had been a common recognition that the first domestic

badminton racket was produced by Tohkichi Oka, the Naruto Sports company factory manager founded by his brother Zenshichi Oka in 1933. All we knew about the beginning of badminton in Japan was from **the 80-Years History of Sports** before the discovery of a complete set of badminton equipment in Niigata, therefore the finding of the rackets manufactured in 1918 was truly astonishing.



Taisei Kunmou Zukai (Illustrated Dictionary of the Western Culture) 1871 The first illustrated dictionary by the education ministry in English, German, French, and Japanese. Kunmou means to teach and mentor kids or beginners.

A set of Badminton equipment with a box inscribed a set of **Badminton purchased in 1918, made by Mimitsu Shoten, Hongo, Tokyo** found at the home of Tsunehiko Tamaki, an old family in Minami-Kambaragun Tagamimachi, Niigata Prefecture, published in **NiigataNippo Daily News** December 16, 1979.

Fig34 A discovery of an old Badminton set in Niigata and Taisei Kunmou Zukai Illustrated Dictionary of the Western Culture) Yoshio Tanaka

There is another document that seems to be even older. It is a **General Products Catalog of Nihon Taiiku Shoukai Company** located in Kanda Sudacho, Tokyo. The date of issue is not specified on the catalog, but according to this catalog, a top-quality set including seven items was priced at 14 yen (about 17 cents). Based on this price, we can assume this record could have possibly been issued before 1918. (Note that whether they were made in Japan or not was uncertain) Fig35

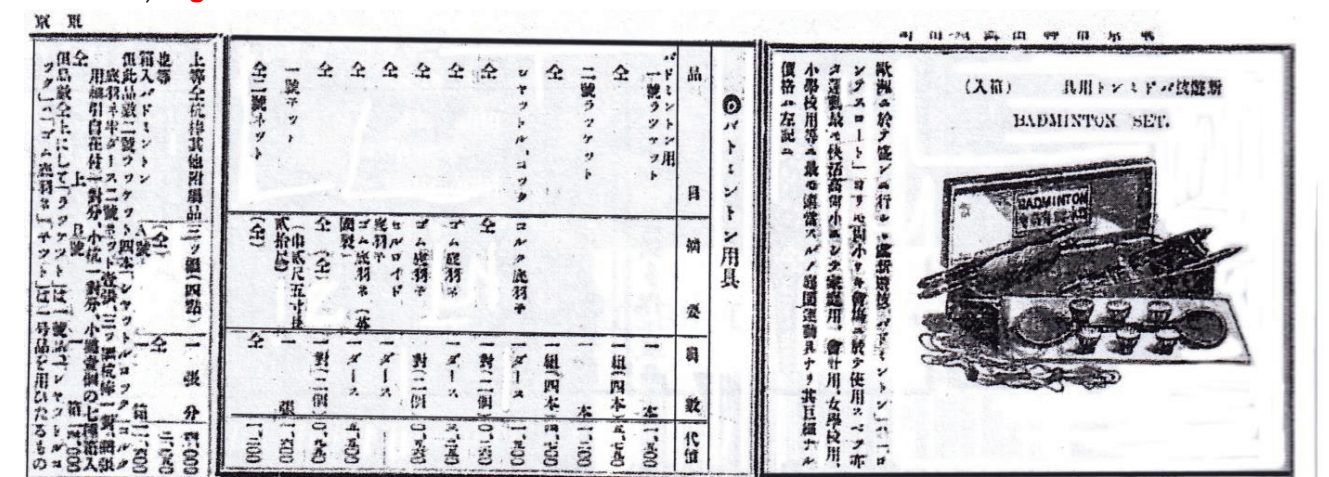


Fig35 A General Products Catalog of Nihon Taiiku Shoukai Company

The date of the issue can be roughly estimated by the following chronological analysis. The catalog has descriptions of mainland Japan, the Taiwan quarter, and the Korean peninsula, so it should be around or after 1910. The address is in "Tokyo City", so the date must be after 1889. The advertisement for the hammock mentions the Russo-Japanese War, so it should be after 1904-1905. The new style beam wood advertisement indicates the 5<sup>th</sup> National Industrial Exhibition Show, so it should be after 1902. It has an ad for the 22<sup>nd</sup> Murata-style gun, so it should be after 1889. If

we consider the beginning of the unified school drill, it should be after 1925 when the Order for Assignment of the Army Officers was issued. If we consider the military-style exercise, it should be after 1886. It is safe to assume that the catalog was made and distributed by the end of the Taisho period (1912-1926 CE). In any case, A complete set of badminton equipment had certainly appeared in the Japanese sports market before 1933 when the Naruto Sports company was founded by Oka.

### 5. The beginning of organized badminton activities in Japan

There must have been quite a few people interested in badminton, purchased rackets, and enjoyed playing it already in the Meiji period (1868~1912). But there was no organized activity then yet. If the following three prerequisites are required, when were the first organized badminton activities in Japan?

- ① continuous organized activities
- ② regularly scheduled tournaments
- ③ authorized game rules

Let's look at the early days of sports in Japan, physical education and recreation activities began in 1886 when YMCA Osaka organized a physical education activity group. The group was steadily growing up with YMCA Tokyo and contributed to the development of modern sports activities in Japan.


In 1913, North American YMCA sports director J.H. Brown (USA) came to serve as the sports director of Japan YMCA. He was working to develop and foster sports activities in Japan as a leading force for 17 years. He not only introduced basketball and volleyball to Japan but also guided and assisted our national athletic teams to participate in international competitions like the Far East Games and the Olympics. In the same year that Brown came to Japan, the general meeting of the Japan YMCA Union approved the promotion of physical education and resolved to improve physical education facilities, especially the construction of gymnasiums.

YMCA Tokyo gymnasium was completed in 1917. W. Scott Ryan came to Japan to teach indoor exercises and started teaching physical education to the instructors. **The first Physical Education Instructors' Seminar was organized by the Japan YMCA Union in 1918. Badminton appeared in the second program in this event held at YMCA Nagoya in 1919.** The chief instructor was J.H. Brown who had already established an activity base in YMCA Tokyo, so some badminton activities could have been already organized at the YMCA Tokyo gymnasium even before that event.

In YMCA Nagoya, a plan to build a new stadium was launched immediately after the seminar and tried to raise funds, but **the Great Kanto Earthquake hit central Japan in 1923**, and the Tokyo-Yokohama area was devastated. YMCA Nagoya needed to help with the reconstruction of Yokohama and other cities using their funds. Their staff was dispatched to help with the support. **The construction of the Nagoya Gymnasium and the start of badminton activity had been thus delayed until 1927.** In **The 60 years history of YMCA Nagoya**, Kinji Yoshimura wrote a story about the Mizuno Sports Company which had to purchase made-in-England equipment from Shanghai to make the domestic badminton products to support starting this kick-off event in Nagoya.


There is a record written by a participant of the Badminton program in YMCA Nagoya Tokusaburou Matsuba who later started to promote badminton in Osaka YMCA, he wrote that the promotional activities were not as successful as he wanted to be in the letter addressed to his friend Awoki.

Fig36



**Tokusaburo Matsuba 1903-1981**  
Graduated from Tokyo Koshi High School, and observed the Los Angeles Olympics in 1932 as the Director of Athletics of the Osaka YMCA.

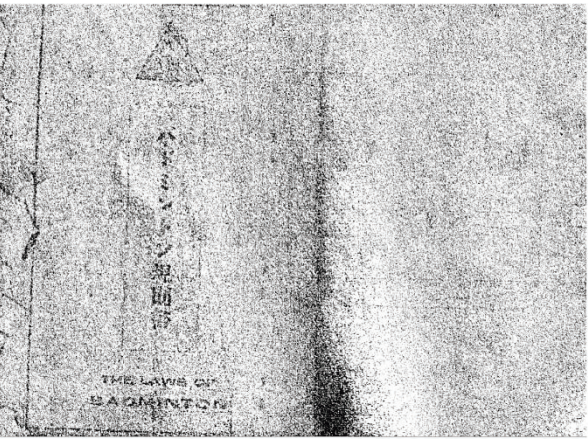
Visited the University of Southern California and Stanford University where he was exposed to football. In 1934 he organized a team at Kansai University. and started activities. In 1941, he became the president of the Kansai Federation. This is a copy of the letter from Matsuba to Awoki, protesting against Hirota in Yokohama who publicly claimed to have coached Matsuba as the founder of badminton.



Tokusaburo Matsuba and his handwriting letter provided by Shoji Awoki Fig36

Tokusaburo Matsuba visited the United States in 1932 and was followed by Shunichi Ishiwata of YMCA Kobe, who later finished his studies in the U.S. succeeding Matsuba to support the development and promotion of badminton in the Osaka-Kobe region. Their initiatives grew up to the regular programs organized by YMCA Kobe in 1937. With the participation of Sakumi Kawasaki and others who had learned badminton through exchange with the Kobe Foreigner's Club, organized and continuous badminton development activities started.

According to **The Yokohama Youth Journal**, Kanetoshi Hirota started badminton club activities at YMCA Yokohama on two different occasions, The Start of Badminton Games in 1933 and the Badminton Club in 1937. Students at **Keio University** and other players joined the programs and started to play in different locations apart from YMCA activities. Tohkichi Oka of Naruto sports published Badminton Rulebook in 1934 and helped promote this sport even further to other regions and groups of players. Fig37



The 「Badminton Rulebook」 by Tohkichi Oka published in 1934, is almost illegible due to its deterioration. The figures on the left have finally become legible after digitally reproducing the image. The words Badminton Rulebook can barely be read below the logo mark of the kangaroo in the triangle, which is the trademark of the Naruto company. Hajime Imai retouched the original copy in 1992 after thorough verification and made a reprinted edition. **Badminton Rule book edited by Naruto Sports Fig37**

Given the above historical information, we can assume that the beginning of organized badminton program activities in Japan began in 1927 for the first time at YMCA Nagoya followed by activities at YMCA Tokyo.

Badminton activities in Yokohama, centering on YMCA Yokohama and Naruto Sports, and badminton activities by Japanese residents in Shanghai and Indonesia during the same period played a central role in developing badminton in Japan after World War II. However, it is also true that sprouting badminton activities centered in Kobe, Osaka, and Nagoya around 1935 also played

an important role in developing the full-fledged postwar badminton movements. We mustn't forget that the development was launched by the second program of the Physical Education Instructors' Seminar in Nagoya organized by J.H. Brown in 1919.

We don't even have any badminton rackets made by Naruto Sports or Sambata company yet in the collection as a source to talk about the history of badminton. However, I believe that the history of badminton in Japan will become livelier if we continue assembling records and the documents of the forerunners of each era just like creating a collage piece by piece with our hands.

Badminton in Japan has been developed since then by the forerunners of the time including Tokusaburo Matsuba, 松葉徳三郎  
Sakumi Kawasaki, 川崎策実  
Kiyoshi Kawaguchi, 川口清  
Sojiro Fukuda, 福田宗次郎  
Shunichi Ishiwata, 石渡俊一  
Kanetoshi Hirota, 廣田兼 敏  
Hiroyuki Miyazawa, 宮澤宏之  
Mitsuyasu Yawata, 八幡満胖  
Hajime Imai, 今井先  
Tokubei Moritomo, 森友徳兵衛  
Chuji Murakami, 村上忠治  
Masao Imamura, 今村正雄  
Sen Ikeda, 池田鮮  
Fumio Yamada, 山田文雄  
Kenzo Tsunoda, 角田賢三  
Masahiko Hyodo, 兵藤昌彦  
Tamotsu Sato, 佐藤保  
Kenzo Naraoka, 奈良岡健三  
TohruYanagida, 柳田享  
Ryouzou Hiranuma, 平沼亮三  
and others.

The history of badminton has been stepping into the world after our great pioneers' footsteps. I'd like to introduce the new chapter in the next opportunity to come.  
The 7<sup>th</sup> of August, 2022 (End)

Postscripts

Badminton Japan celebrates its 75th anniversary this year. I want to add a personal note of heartfelt thanks to Chika Tanifuji at Chiba University, who worked with me to collect, organize, and edit the historical records for this publication.

Professor Chika Tanifuji notes,

I never used to enjoy reading history in my younger years because it was hard to sort out and understand multiple layered historical incidents. However, after working on this project, I rediscovered all the challenging processes that have made our history move step by step while touching on the efforts of the early pioneers who developed badminton in our country. The more unexpected historical records I encountered, the bigger my desire became to convey the messages more precisely to the readers. I would be grateful if this essay helps readers get a step closer to those messages. It was a small but meaningful project. Last but not least, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for giving me this brilliant opportunity. I wish you all a bright new future in our badminton journey.

August 2022

Kazuyoshi Abe  
Chika Tanifuji

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## Profile Kazuyoshi Abe

Born in Niigata City in 1940. He attended Minato Municipal Elementary School (where he won an award for his bee research and served as chairman of the Niigata City Elementary School Student Council), Futaba Junior High School, Niigata High School, and Niigata University's Department of Science, Chemistry Section. He lost his father in the first year of high school and had to support his family by running a candy shop while coaching the badminton team at Niigata Prefectural Commercial High School, which won victories over the inter-high school championships and the National Athletic Meetings.



After graduating from university, he became a chemistry teacher at Niigata Women's Polytechnic High School (later renamed Niigata Seiryō High School) and began a life focused on teaching badminton. With the expansion of the junior college at Niigata Seiryō High School, he started a badminton club in the college section and coached later All-England champions Ms. Aizawa, Ms. Takenaka (Toganoo), and other outstanding players, paving the way for world-class players. He then moved to Tokyo to study badminton coaching under Professor Hajime Imai and moved his base of work to Abiko-Nikaido High School to coach players including Yamada, Hirano, and Seo, fostered by Makiko Watanabe of Osaka Hananoi Junior High School. He studied human anatomy as a research student at the Keio University School of Medicine with the support of Dr. Seiju and Kenju Nikaido and learned the basics of kinesiology.

There was a surprise visit by the head of the British badminton team, R. Mills, who came to Japan after visiting Mao Zi Dong's China. They went to the Japan Women's Athletic College to meet Mr. Imai, the head coach of renowned national players at the time, including Takagi, Amano, Hiroe Yuki, and others. These two pioneer coaches opened Abe's eyes and sparked his interest in the world. He encountered Mr. Hata, the president of Shin-Taiikusha Company and publisher of the magazine "New Physical Education," and became the editor-in-chief of the magazine, introducing the "New Practical Skills Lecture Series" and other publications. In the process of reforming physical education, he became acquainted with Mr. Iwanosuke Yamakawa, an official of the National Physical Education Bureau.

Meanwhile, he became acquainted with Professor Asada Takao, the director of the Physical Education Center at the University of Tsukuba, who invited him to Tsukuba to further extend his theoretical thinking on sports coaching at the University of Tsukuba Department of Physical Education Science. His life dramatically changed, and he finally obtained a place to fully open up his activities towards badminton. Incidentally, Mr. Zensaku Sakumichi, President of Metro Leisure Co., Ltd., presented him with two books by Pat Davis, The Badminton Complete and The Badminton Coach. He formulated physical education systems with a new coaching concept inspired by these books.

He refocused his training theory from exercise physiology and anatomy to biomechanics and kinesiology. Function and wisdom are inseparable. He found this theory in Nicolai A. Bernstein's concept of dexterity. This concept was brought to fruition in a meeting with Dr. Takao Asada, his former teacher at Tsukuba University, and resulted in the books **"Badminton: A Practical Course for Modern Sports Coaches"** by Gyosei and **"Modern Physical Education and Sports System Volume 27, Tennis, Table Tennis, and Badminton"** Kodansha, co-authored by Toshio Asami, Mitsumasa Miyashita, Toru Watanabe, Kazuyoshi Abe, and 16 others. His first book, **"Basic Lessons in Sports Graphics Badminton"** co-written with Masahiro Watanabe, was published in 16 editions.

**Specialty:** Badminton Coaching Theory  
University of Tsukuba honorary professor, University of Tsukuba physical education professor, Shobi Gakuen University professor.  
**Publications:**  
1) "Badminton: A Practical Course for Modern Sports Coaches Vol. 12" Gyosei1985. , co-authored with Susumu Okamoto  
2) "Tennis, Table Tennis, and Badminton: A System of Contemporary Physical Education and Sports, Vol. 27" Kodansha1987  
3) "SPORTS GRAPHICS Basic Lessons; Badminton" Taishukan-shoten1985 co-authored with Masahiro Watanabe  
4) "My Badminton Book" Shin-Taiiku-sha1994, co-authored with Tomoko Abe  
5) "For Players and Coaches; Practical Training for Badminton" Baseball Magazine1988 Jake Downey and David Brodie (co-authors), co-translator Kazuyoshi Abe and two others, etc.



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Please scan here to watch a video  
of a special 75th anniversary interview.