

2010 Japan Open Set to Take Center Stage



For the nearly two hundred players, volunteers, and fans traveling to the majestic Nasu Highlands Golf Club in Tochigi prefecture Japan, their bags are packed, their 150-class discs are chosen, and their hopes are high for one of the most renowned disc golf tournaments held in our sport. The 2010 Japan Open is once again poised to take center stage in the disc golf community, as an international contingent of players from North America, Europe and Asia converge on the island nation to enjoy the top-shelf amenities offered by their hosts, Hero Disc and Innova Champion.

Hall-of-Famers Kozo Shimbo and Sam Ferrans have been working diligently to provide a potent pallet of possibilities for their guests to create their own personal, once-in-a-lifetime experience in the mythic mountains of Nasu Shiobara. The competition will feature many of the most familiar names in the disc golf universe; defending Japan Open Champion, David Feldberg, reigning PDGA World Champions Avery and Valarie Jenkins, "The Champ" Ken Climo, as well as Des and Jay Reading, Nate Doss and a host of talented others who punctuate the line up of over 120 registered disc golfers.

While this competition will surely raise the excitement level in Japan, it is the cultural exchange that provides the lasting impressions to all who visit this mountain resort, that is also frequented by the likes of the Emperor of Japan, high level executives from Sony, Toshiba, Panasonic, and others. The Nasu Highlands Golf Club is a treat for our disc golf community, as the Robert Trent Jones, Jr.-designed course provides an incredible tableau upon which Japan Open course designers have constructed two championship 18-hole courses with a combined distance of over 15,700 feet.

Sanctioned as a "150-class" PDGA Major, players can throw only discs that weigh-in at less than 159.9 grams. This is a legacy from where the event originated in the highly populated Tokyo city park courses three decades ago. This lighter class of discs requires a steep learning curve for our players under the best conditions, but can also be a huge liability with the winds that are known to course down the Nasu Highlands mountainside during this beginning of the annual rainy season in Japan.

Regardless of the challenges, the weather, or the competitive dynamics of the 2010 Japan Open, all who may the pilgrimage to this incredible event will bring home with them a disc golf experience like no other.