



MAEBASHI FOCUS

Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) Newsletter

Although I played tennis for about 10 years in Hawaii, I first experienced tennis in Japan after coming to Maebashi. I was most surprised by the lack of hard courts in the city. In Hawaii, there are mostly hard courts, and I had never played on clay or omni surfaces before. With clay, irregular bounces happen easily, and the ball can go different places or come at speeds faster than expected. Having to adjust instantaneously to the ball's speed and changing direction is fun but can also feel inconvenient at times. In addition, clay is slippery and dangerous if one were to stop suddenly, so the feeling of not being able to run all-out is a drawback.



I officially joined the Maebashi City Hall Tennis Club this April, but I've been regularly attending Wednesday practices since last October. I occasionally play matches, and I also participated in a two-day tennis camp last month. I played tennis with the kids, lit fireworks with everyone, and spent precious time with the local community. I enjoyed fireworks a lot as a kid, but because they were banned in Hawaii since 2011, playing with them again felt very nostalgic. A year has passed since arriving in Japan, and the Maebashi Fireworks Festival came around again. Last year, I watched the fireworks from the area inside Shoda Shoyu Stadium Gunma, but I was able to enjoy them from the riverside this year. For both the fireworks and Japan, I definitely feel a difference in viewing them from close-up versus far away.