

## Run for my second Sakuramichi

No. 86 Ogawa Naoya

I finally could come back here, that is what I felt.

I also participated in this race 6 years ago. At that time I had never given it a thought that I got qualified for this race. It was such a crazy challenge. I managed to complete 250km with tremendous pain and exhaustion as the knee and the ankle got swollen to twice bigger than usual. This damage was so huge that I could not run properly about half a year after the race.

Looking back now, it was one of the turning points of my running career. I opened the door to the new world and got to know the joy of that thanks to this race.

I deeply appreciated the committee who choose me.

It has been 6years since then. I am qualified to take part in this race. I have had some experiences and it gave me confidence.

However, I felt something wrong on the left knee 2 months before the race. Then I struggled how to keep training, keep motivation because I needed much rest not to harm it too much.

Though, I was eager to run it this year. This is the last year that I can be qualified with my record. If I miss this year, I had to get a record of another 200km over race. Above that Odani who applied this race together 6 years ago would join.

I also would like to enjoy the race, which I could not do the last time and would like to show my thankfulness to who helped me the last time especially a doctor who forced me to keep running after I fell down to the ground.

On the day of the race, the knee did not hurt. On the other hand the stomach went bad about 140km. It was very tough to drink anything but warm water. At the same time I started walking. The stronger wind got, the more difficult to hold on the road. Once I was even about to fell off from the cliff. Maybe I exaggerate at some extent these since I afforded running under this condition somehow. I was sure I had been progressed this 6 years.

Once I see the behind of this fact, it means I spoil myself. I did not do my best. To be honest I think I have known that I managed to complete the race somewhere on my mind but I set this clearly achievable object.

At 230km, the race was canceled due to the violent wind. Everyone says it was a reasonable cancel. I felt I still had some power to run for the last spurt 20km. No. Actually this power remains because I spoiled my self through the whole race.

I believe I can do better as if myself 6 years ago. I get back the heart to try something more. This race may become my 2<sup>nd</sup> turning point of the life.

Though I was not satisfied with my performance, I really enjoyed running. I felt as if there is nothing better than this 4days. With old members and new friends, the runners coming from all over the world such as France, Finland, Swiss, Tahiti, Brazil, Korea and Taiwan.. I hope they feel the same way.

In my opinion this is the feeling Sato Ryoji tried to prevail with planting cherry blossom trees along the way from one side of Japan to the other. Sakuramichi concept is based on his will by the way. As he tried, we must be supposed to prevail it with running.

3 years ago, I was sent to DK. At the beginning when I was not good at communication, Sakuramichi that I have run 250km saved me. I could only talk about this running story though my language was poor. Then many people got interested in me with saying you are crazy. One of them even tried ultra marathon. Run could carry the heart without words.

As Sato Ryoji tried to connect two coast with cherry blossoms, as runners over the world share the joy of running through this race, I would love to prevail and share this feeling and time of running.

A lot of things have changed this 6 years. There was no smart phone. It was before Fukushima disaster. UTMF did not exist. Among those there are things which have not changed. Warmness, the course, nature, strong heart, primitive activity as 250km just run. Sakuramichi tells us that something will not change and gives us the feeling of safety and strictness because of that.

I would like to come back to this race again in the future to review this and share the joy of running with people who related to this wonderful race. Then I would like to appreciate it.

Before anything, I have to get back the strong heart for challenge.

