

Asians in American sports • Asian Americans in world sports

Three major career firsts for Asian athletes

By Mike Street
Special to The Asian Reporter

August was packed to the brim with Asian-American sports news, with three different athletes accomplishing significant career goals for the first time. Two came in golf—women's and men's—and the third in baseball, both sports in which Asian athletes have made great gains in the last decade. As talent from the east continues to pour westward, expect more firsts in the years to come.

Inbee Park

Inbee Park established August's initial career first by winning the Women's British Open for the first time; it was her fourth different major tournament victory. This gives her a career grand slam, according to the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA), but others disagree.

Park, one of many top women's golfers from South Korea, has won three other major tournaments: the Women's LPGA Championship, the ANA Inspiration, and the U.S. Women's Open. On the men's side, the Professional Golfers' Association (PGA) calls winning all four major tournaments a "grand slam." But ever since the Evian Championship was elevated to major status in 2013, the LPGA has five major tournaments. (Park won the Evian in 2012, before it was a major tournament, so it doesn't count as a major victory.)

The LPGA says that four major victories equals a career grand slam, since they have had anywhere from two to five major tournaments in their history. The Golf Channel and The Associated Press disagree, saying Park needs to win all active major tournaments to qualify for the honor.

Even the Golf Channel and The AP agree that Park is a dominant force on the tour right now, and among the best golfers ever. Park joins six other women as winners of a career Grand Slam, and she has also won six of the last 14 major tournaments.

With seven total major victories, she ranks seventh all time among LPGA golfers. Only Tiger Woods and Mickey Wright (who played on the LPGA in the 1950s and '60s) had as many victories as Park at her age. However her latest major victory is categorized, Park seems poised to win many more.

Jason Day

The PGA has seen a dominant year from 22-year-old Jordan Spieth, who rose to the top ranking on the tour and in the world.

Inside Boise's battle with the Japanese beetle

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eradication program, he said. All other insect surveys, including for gypsy moth and apple maggot, cost about \$40,000 per year.

Castroville talks to property owners about how the pesticide program works. Some are hesitant to give permission to treat their yards, saying they dislike the idea of chemicals in their soil and around pets, children, and other plants. Castroville explains that the two chemicals his team uses, Acelepryn and Imidacloprid, kill immature grass-eating insects such as Japanese beetles and billbugs but are not toxic enough to affect larger humans, pets, or insects. Yards are treated with granules of the chemical rather than a spray to avoid wind carrying the treatment onto other properties.

The goal, Castroville said, is to wipe out Japanese beetles over seven years, the same time it took to eradicate a similar population in Orem, Utah, a few years ago. If successful, the program would avoid a beetle population that would lead to residents applying their own, less-selective



(Jonathan Hayward/The Canadian Press via AP)



(AP Photo/Adam Hunger)

Right on his heels, ranked second on the tour and third in the world, was another young star, 28-year-old Jason Day, an Australian with Filipino heritage.

Day has been on the tour since 2006 but won only twice before this season. Forever in contention but rarely atop the tournament leaderboard after the last round, Day finally started to put things together this year—and especially in August.

In February, Day won the Farmer's Insurance Open in a dramatic four-way playoff. At the end of July, he won the RBC Canadian Open, birdieing the last three holes to steal victory from David Hearn the way victory had often been stolen from him.

Last month, Day led the PGA Championship going into the final day, just two strokes ahead of Spieth, who has made a name for himself with comeback victories in similar spots. Instead of allowing Spieth to pull ahead, Day shot a 67, notching a 20-under par for the

pesticides in perpetuity.

"I'm sure you know neighbors who think if spraying once is good, three times a year is even better," he said. "That's turned some people who didn't want chemicals on their yard to turn to our side."

The first 95 properties where owners consented to treatments in 2013 have seen the number of Japanese beetles collected fall from 1,930 to 91 in 2014, a reduction of 95 percent. Eight department employees balance working on the eradication program with other tasks, and four part-time employees work seasonally. More than 2,000 Boise properties were treated in the last year.

Even if the program decimates the Japanese beetle population in Boise, a single hitchhiking bug could spread the problem to crop fields or cities elsewhere, Castroville said.

"We believe it came from nursery stock from the east, probably in a truck," Castroville said. "If it can survive the drive from Minnesota to Idaho, it can survive the drive from Boise to Moscow or Twin Falls a lot easier."

tournament, an all-time scoring record for any major.

Day proved that his streak was no fluke

TRIFECTA OF TALENT. August was packed to the brim with Asian-American sports news, with three different athletes accomplishing significant career goals for the first time. Pictured in the top photo is Inbee Park of South Korea hitting from a bunker on the eighth hole during the first round of the Canadian Pacific Women's Open golf tournament at Vancouver Golf Club in Coquitlam, British Columbia. In the bottom photo is Jason Day of Australia teeing off on the fifth hole of the second round of play at The Barclays golf tournament in Edison, New Jersey.

by winning again, his fourth victory this year. At The Barclays, he and South Korean Sangmoon Bae were tied heading into the final round. Bae faltered by shooting a 72 on Sunday, while Day shot a 62 to finish at 19-under to win. Though he is currently third in the world rankings, Day is possibly hot enough to reach the top spot by the end of the season.

Hisashi Iwakuma

Although Hisashi Iwakuma was not the first Asia-born pitcher to throw a no-hitter in the major leagues, he was the first since Hideo Nomo and just the second ever. Iwakuma's August no-hitter served as sweet redemption after the Oakland Athletics cast him off.

After a dazzling career in Japan, Iwakuma was posted in 2010, and Oakland won the bidding to negotiate with him. But the two sides could never see eye to eye, and they didn't reach a deal, marking the first time a Japanese player made it through the posting system but failed to secure a contract. It was the wrong kind of first for Iwakuma, who has become the best Asia-born starting pitcher in the majors.

The following season, Iwakuma signed

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Arriving soon: Better service!

We're making some big changes this fall: From the highly-anticipated MAX Orange Line and Tilikum Crossing opening on September 12, to more frequent buses on Sundays, we're investing in better service to make your trips on transit easier and more convenient.

AUGUST 30 MAX schedule changes

MAX schedules will change—by several minutes in some cases—to accommodate the addition of the Orange Line to the MAX system.

SEPTEMBER 13 Better bus service in Southeast Portland and Milwaukie

Several bus routes will change, and we're adding more frequency and earlier/later service—for better connections and an easier ride.

9 17 19 26 31 32 33 34 99 154

15-minute Frequent Service on Sundays

Frequent Service is back! Frequent Service bus lines will run every 15 minutes or better most of the day on Sundays, effective September 13.

4 6 8 9 12 14 15 33 54 56 57 75

Other bus service improvements

We're also making changes on 12 bus lines to improve connections and better match traffic conditions.

15 18 29 30 63 67 70 79 83 93 155 156

Catch the SEPTEMBER 12 MAX Orange Line Grand Opening Celebration

Come see, ride free! Join us for a day of adventure and fun with activities and entertainment at many of the newly opened MAX Orange Line stations. Plus, all rides on MAX, TriMet buses, Portland Streetcar and the Aerial Tram will be free!

SEPTEMBER 13 MAX Orange Line regular service begins

The Orange Line is our fifth MAX line, traveling 7.3 miles between PSU, inner Southeast Portland, Milwaukie and Oak Grove in north Clackamas County. Trains will run about every 15 minutes or better most of the day, every day.

Details at catchtheorange.com

Check the new schedules to see if your trips are affected:
trimet.org/servicechanges

