

# Osaka charms Japan with her manners — and broken Japanese

By Stephen Wade and Mari Yamaguchi  
The Associated Press

**T**OKYO — Naomi Osaka's halting Japanese, her manners — she bowed and apologized after beating Serena Williams in the U.S. Open final — and her simple charm have swelled national pride in Japan and eclipsed many questions about her mixed-race parentage in a famously insular country.

Two days after becoming the first Japanese player to win a Grand Slam tennis title, Osaka was still filling the front pages of the country's three major daily newspapers and led discussions on talk shows.

The perspective from Japan a day after her win: Osaka is being embraced as Japanese despite her mixed background. National pride — at least for now — is overriding questions of cultural identity and what it means to be Japanese.

Williams' dramatic behavior during a chaotic final, a hot topic in the United States and around the world, has been largely brushed aside in Japan with the focus on Osaka's poise under pressure.

Japan's largest newspaper, *Yomiuri*, called Osaka a "new heroine that Japan is proud of" and characterized her appeal as "the contrast between her strength on the court and her innocent character off the court."

*Yomiuri* centered Osaka's photograph holding the U.S. Open trophy at the top of its front page — as did the two other large dailies. In a headline inside the paper, *Yomiuri* called her an "Overnight Queen — Powerful and Stable."

The *Asahi* newspaper also called her the "New Queen," picking up on her mix of "strength and gentleness."

None of the main-line newspapers dwelled too much on her background, which has been well reported. She was born in Japan to a Japanese mother and Haitian father, moved to the United States when she was three years old, and now lives in Florida where she has trained for more than a decade.

In an interview from New York on Japan's TBS television, she was asked what she wants to do now. She replied in Japanese: "Have curried rice topped with a



pork cutlet." Then she slipped into English and said: "I am very honored. I don't know how to say that in Japanese."

She gave some of the same answers in a similar interview with Japan's NTV television.

"She is such a lovable character," said Seiji Miyane, the NTV talk show host.

She smiled through the media pressure, which several newspapers have called a Japanese trait. Her broken Japanese works as an asset, apologizing occasionally for getting the wrong word — or not knowing the Japanese word at all.

"She is not the type of person who asserts herself boldly, but she is shy and humble and that makes her look more like a Japanese," Junko Okamoto, a communications specialist, wrote in the weekly magazine *Toyokeizai*.

Okamoto also said Osaka could become a face of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, leading to big sponsorship deals.

*Forbes* magazine has reported that Williams is the highest earning female athlete with an income of \$18 million per year, almost all from endorsements. The *Evening Fuji* tabloid newspaper, citing *Forbes*, speculated wildly about Osaka's potential lifetime earnings. Its headline suggested she could earn \$100 million.

The *Mainichi*, one of the top three general circulation newspapers, noted

that Osaka was wearing a dress at a victory celebration from a well-known Japanese designer.

Osaka's 73-year-old grandfather, Tetsuo Osaka, surfaced in several interviews from Japan's northern island of Hokkaido, where he heads a fishing cooperative.

Their relationship seems solid now, but

## As temperatures rise, farmers plant crops in S. Korean

Continued from page 2

each vertical layer measure variables such as temperature, humidity, light, carbon dioxide, and micro-dust levels to maintain an optimized environment for each crop.

The crops will cost less than conventionally grown organic vegetables, Suh said.

The farm will begin supplying vegetables to a major food retailer and a leading bakery chain soon, NextOn said.

Next up: more tiers of crops in the remaining two-thirds of the tunnel to grow high-value fruits and medicinal herbs.

Suh said the medicinal

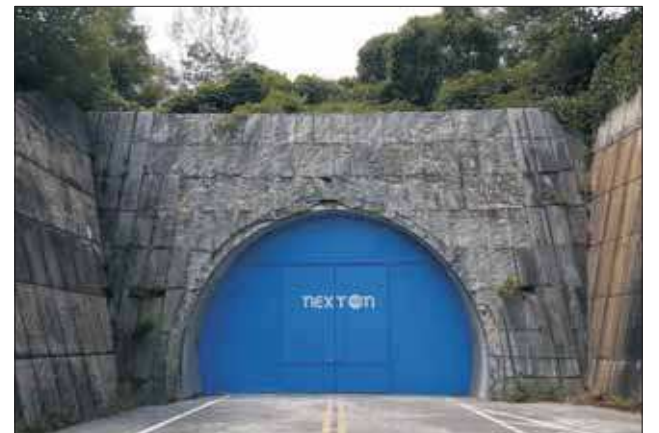
**EARNING ACCEPTANCE.** Sports and tabloid newspapers reporting on Naomi Osaka's victory in the U.S. Open tennis finals are seen at a newsstand in Tokyo. Two days after becoming the first Japanese player to win a Grand Slam tennis title, Osaka was still filling the front pages of the country's three major daily newspapers. Her halting Japanese, her manners — she bowed and apologized after beating Serena Williams in the U.S. Open final — and her simple charm have swelled national pride in Japan and eclipsed many questions about her mixed-race parentage in a famously insular country. (AP Photo/Koji Sasahara)

*The New York Times* reported that for more than a decade, Naomi's mother, Tamaki, had little contact with her family in Japan.

Roland Kirishima, a photographer who is half Japanese and Scottish, criticized some internet comments questioning if Osaka is really Japanese, because of her darker skin color.

"Look at the French soccer team that won the World Cup," he wrote on Twitter. "Half of the players are immigrants' sons or multiracial. I'm surprised many people in Japan are still obsessed with racial purity. It's 21st century already. Please overcome this type of insular prejudice."

It looks like Japan has taken at least a first step.



**TUNNEL VISION.** Bright blue doors cover the entrance of the tunnel that holds the NextOn farm in Okcheon, South Korea. Operators of the high-tech facility say it is the world's first indoor vertical farm built in a tunnel. It's also the largest such farm in the country and one of the biggest in the world, with a floor area of 25,000 square feet, nearly half the size of an American football field. (AP Photo/Han Myung Oh)

plant market is currently dominated by a few countries and regions. "Our goal is to achieve disruptive innovation of this market by realizing stable mass production of such premium crops," he said.

If you smell  
**ROTTEN EGGS**  
it could be a gas leak.

And the best thing to do is leave your home and call  
NW Natural. We'll be out to make sure everything is safe.

Unsure of what to do? Just take a look at our tips to the right.

Smell. Go. Let Us Know.  
**800-882-3377**



### How to identify a possible gas leak.

If you smell a rotten egg or sulfur odor, you hear a blowing or hissing sound, or you see blowing dirt, it could be a gas leak.

### What to do.

Leave your home and the area immediately. Don't use any electrical device such as a light switch, telephone, appliance or garage door opener. And don't try to find the leak yourself.

### Who to call.

Go outside and use your cell phone, or a neighbor's phone, and call **NW Natural at 800-882-3377.**



**NW Natural®**