

# Running for peace and love



Thanks so much.

It seems like

you've become a stronger runner, seeing you run today.



Hey, Mr. Abraham!

1



... because "I love my country and I yearn for peace."

### Guem Abraham

A track and field athlete representing the Republic of South Sudan at the Tokyo Olympics



You've come to Japan from "the newest country in the world," South Sudan,

What does running mean to you?

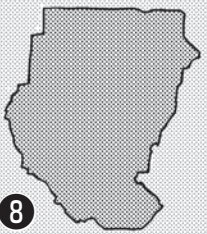


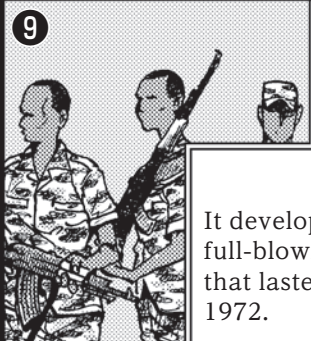

When I first met track and fields, I got great results. From that moment,

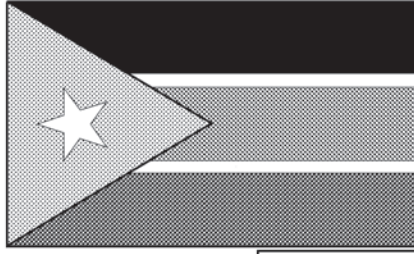
I began to think how I could use my power for the good of my country

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7 South Sudan's history has been one of endless civil war.


8  The First Sudanese Civil War broke out in 1955 in the Republic of the Sudan, before South Sudan became independent.


9  The conflict erupted due to racial and religious divisions between the southern and northern parts of the country. It developed into a full-blown civil war that lasted until 1972. 

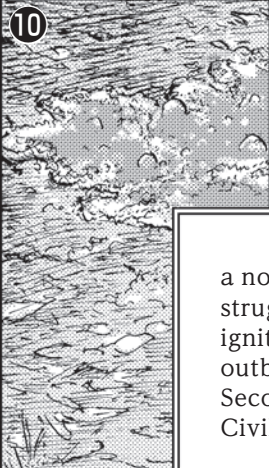

6  The Republic of South Sudan

“The newest country in the world” in East Africa that gained independence in 2011.

More than 12 million people live in a land 1.7 times the size of Japan.

and resulted in more than 2.5 million deaths and 4 million refugees.  The second civil war continued on for more than 20 years

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10  Then in 1983, when an oil field was discovered in the southern region, a north-south struggle was ignited again; the outbreak of the Second Sudanese Civil War. 

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In 2005, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was established.

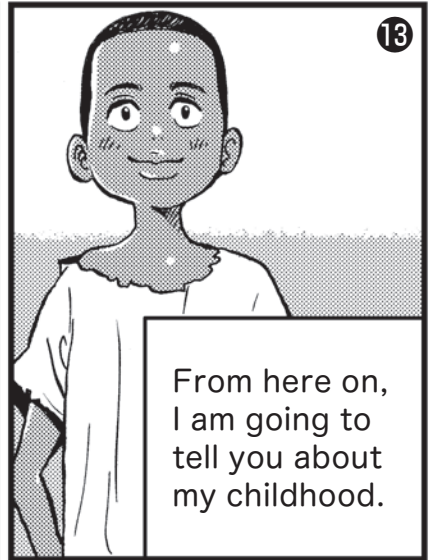
Many people desired to make progress toward peace.



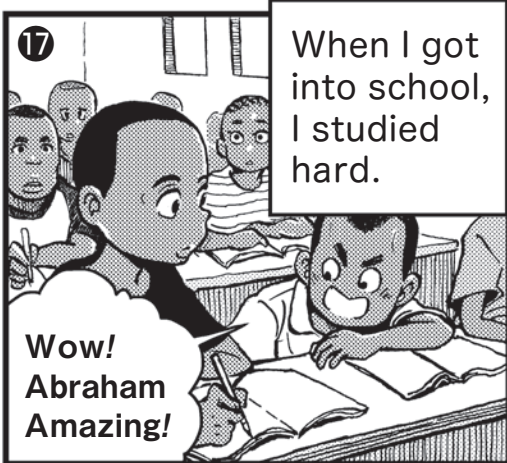


When I was a little boy, my job was to take care of farm animals.

Come here!



From here on, I am going to tell you about my childhood.

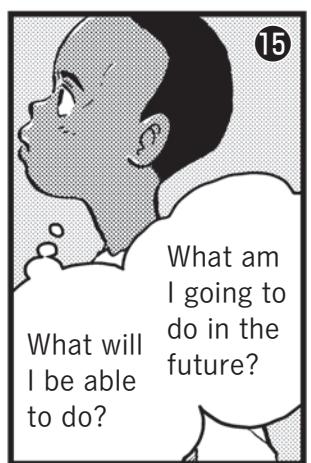


When I got into school, I studied hard.

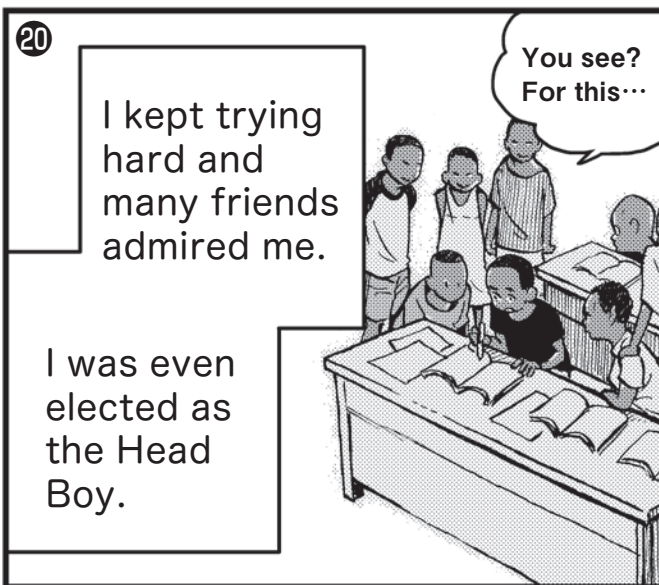
Wow!  
Abraham  
Amazing!



I wish the conflict would just end.



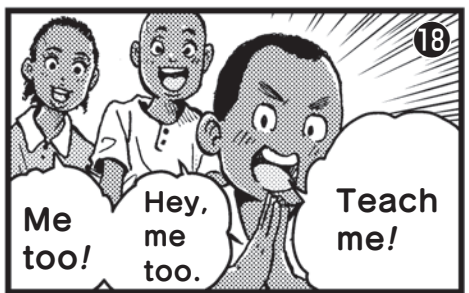
What am I going to do in the future?  
What will I be able to do?



I kept trying hard and many friends admired me.

I was even elected as the Head Boy.

You see?  
For this...



Me too!  
Hey, me too.  
Teach me!



Sure, no problem!



First place, Abraham!!

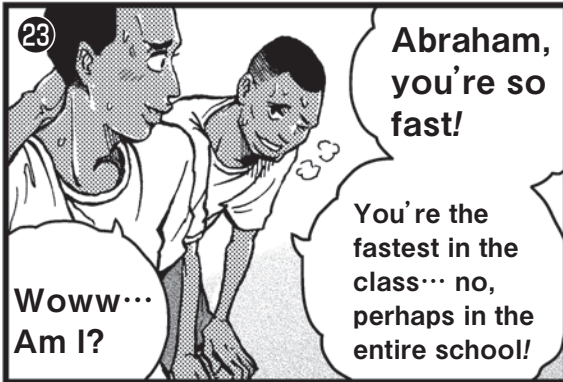
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My first encounter with track and field was

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at a class in my high school.

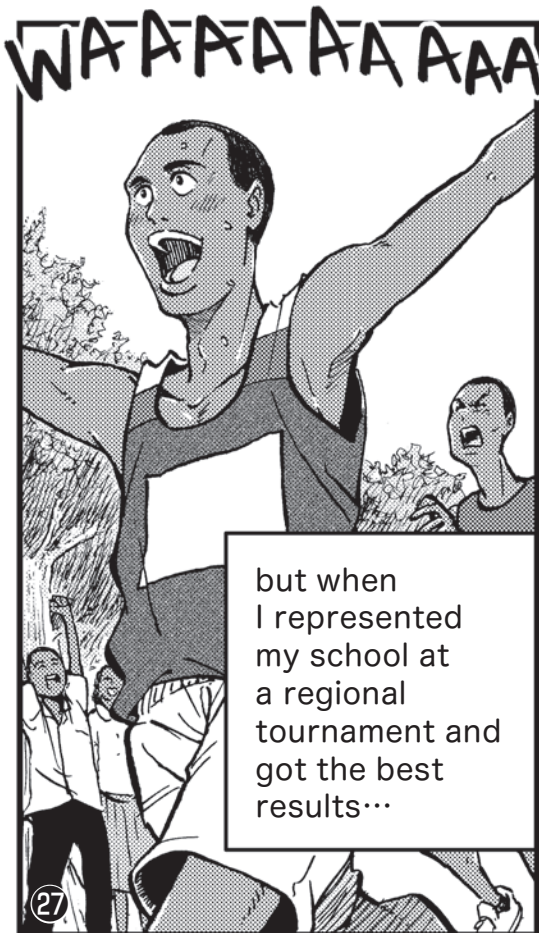


Abraham, you're so fast!

You're the fastest in the class... no, perhaps in the entire school!

Woww... Am I?

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but when I represented my school at a regional tournament and got the best results...

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I was hooked on track and field.

OK!

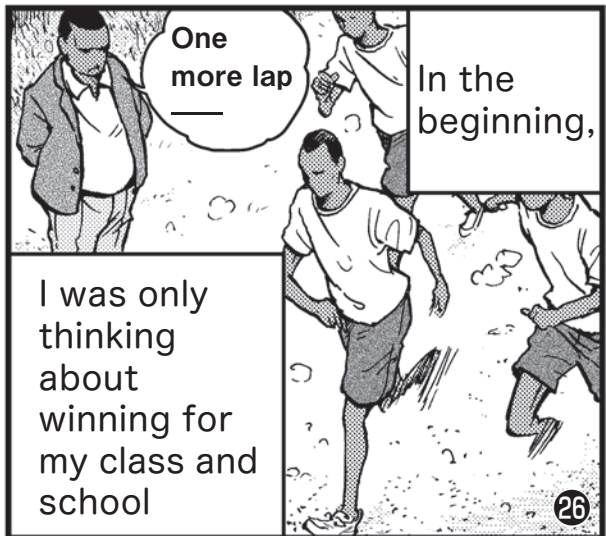
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Well...

I guess I can run pretty fast

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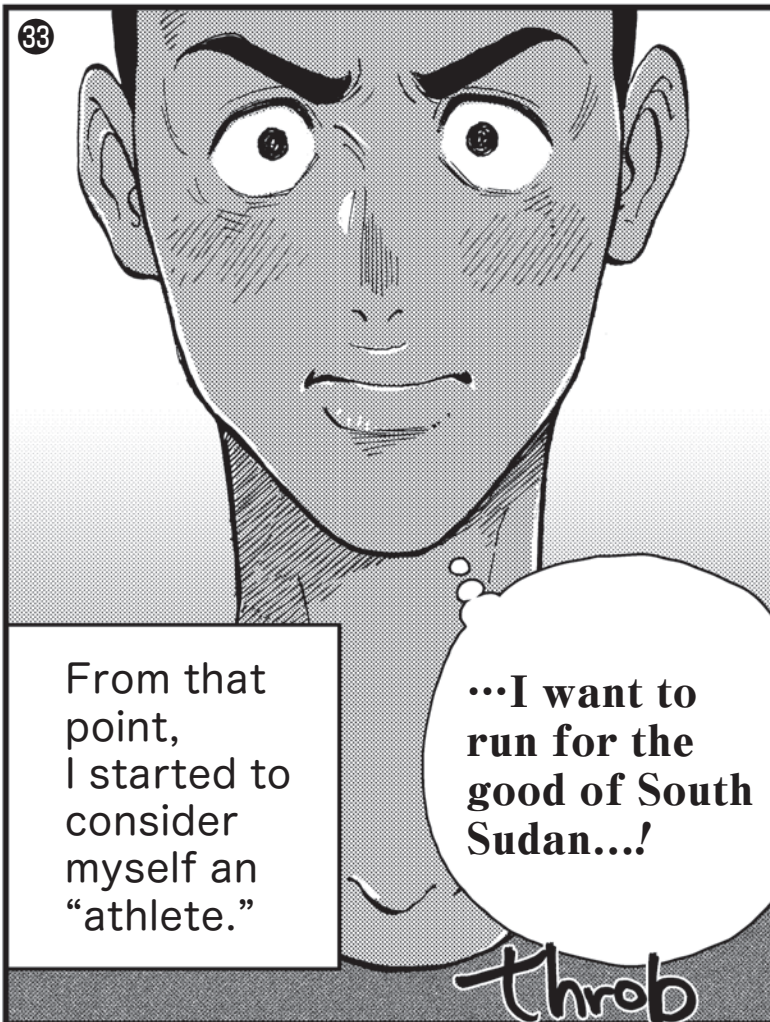
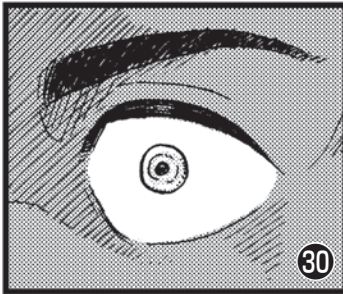
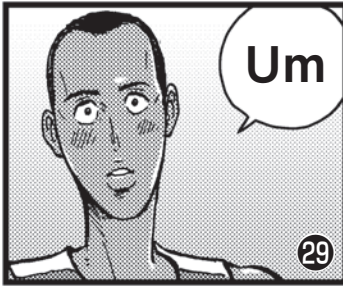
One more lap

In the beginning,

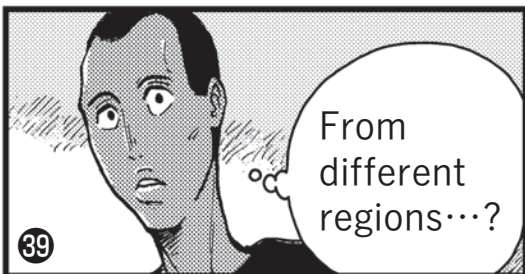
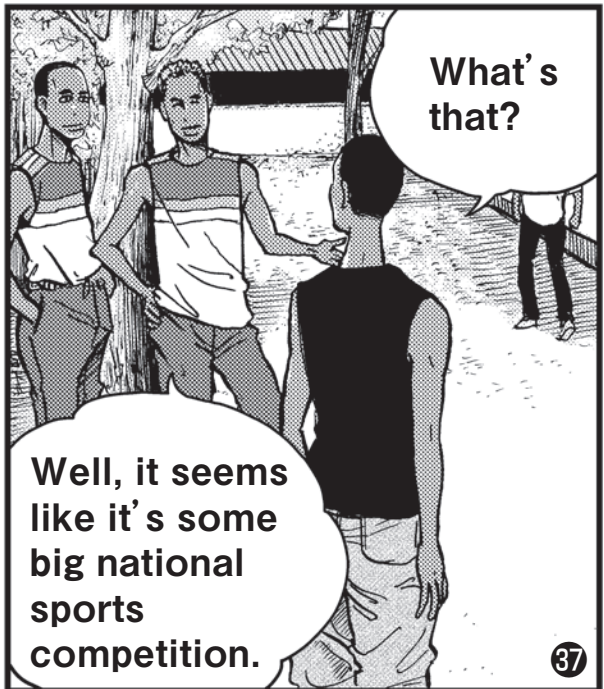
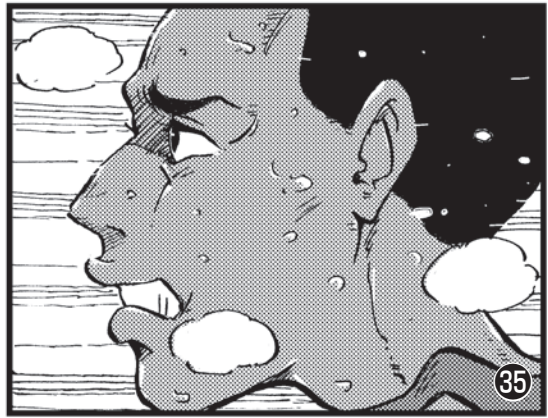
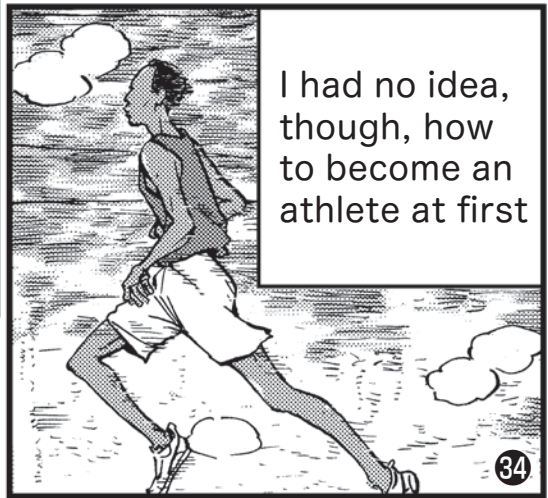
I was only thinking about winning for my class and school

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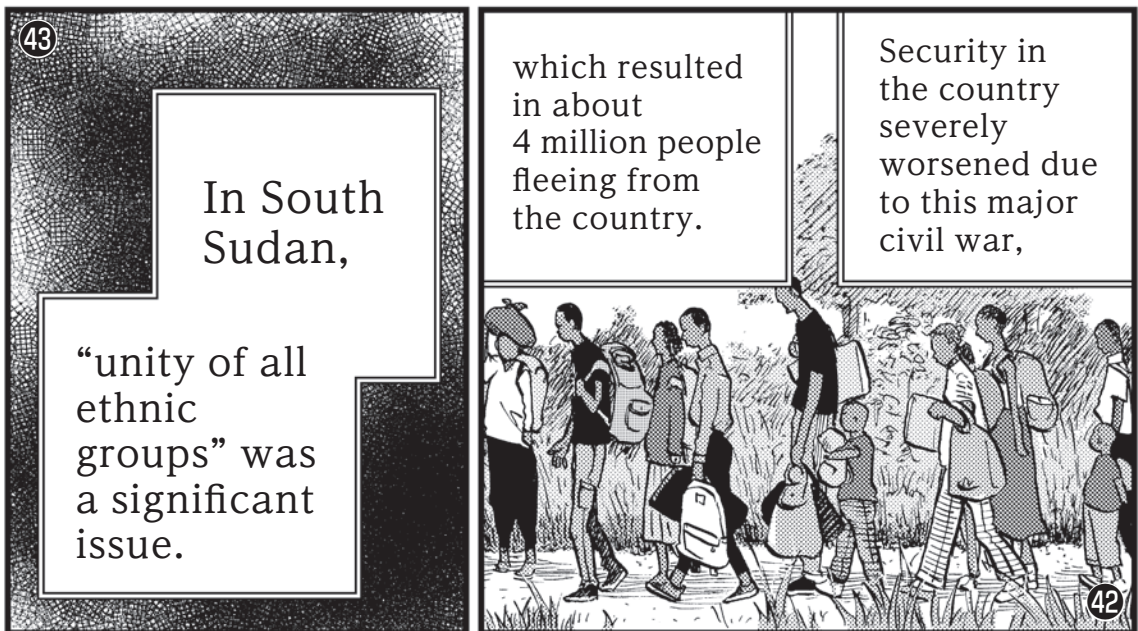
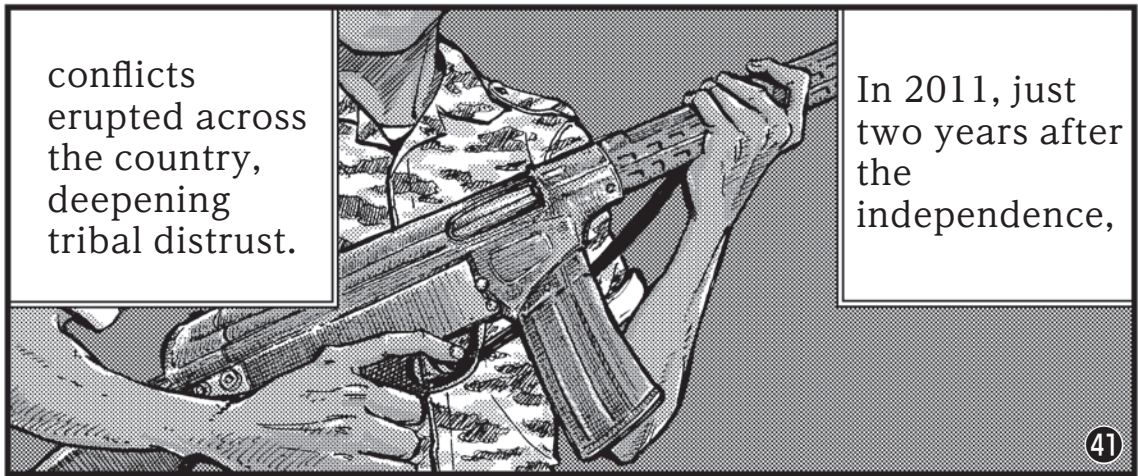






## National Unity Day

An annual national sports competition held since 2016, for “Peace and Social Cohesion” in South Sudan.



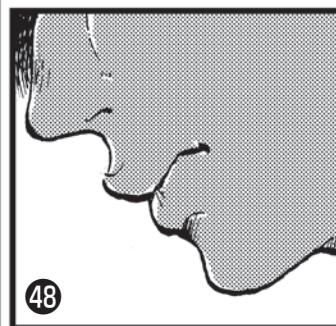
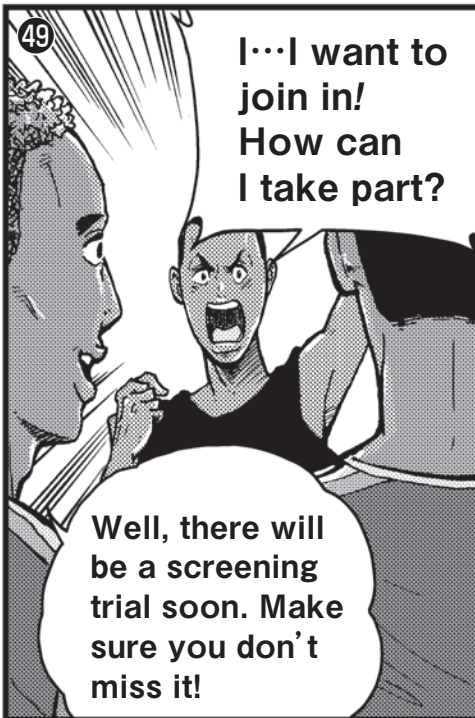
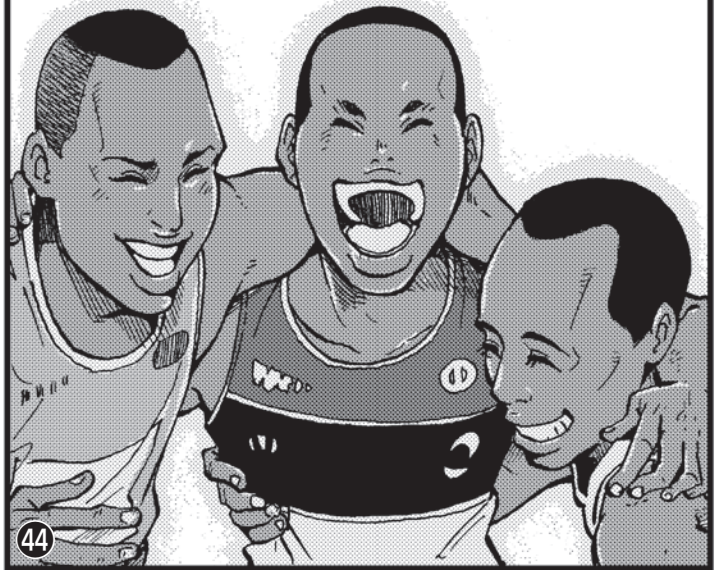
In 2016,

this first-ever attempt was organized with the cooperation of JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency)

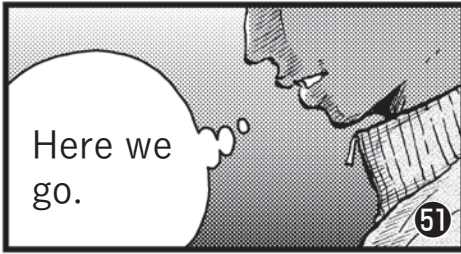
which has been promoting peace through sports in South Sudan.

to bring together young people from different regions and ethnicities to interact with each other through sports.

This led to the idea of National Unity Day, sports.

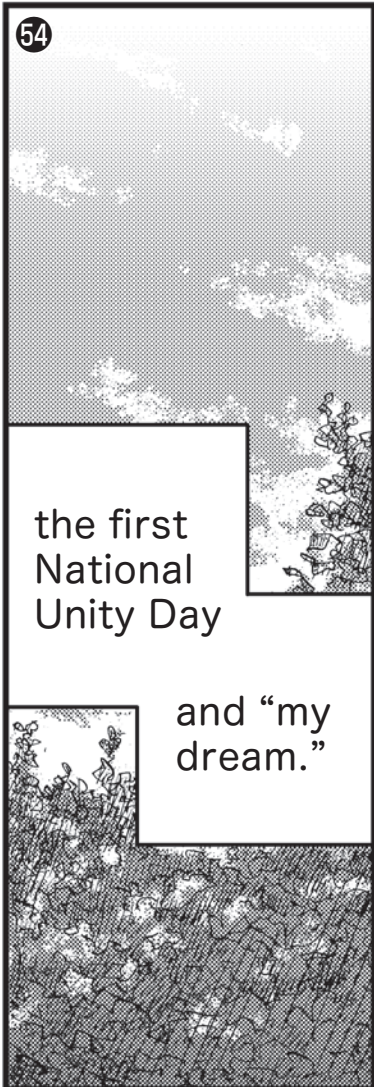






and got qualified to participate in National Unity Day representing Juba County.

At the trial, I won



This is how I came to challenge