FT NIKKEI UK EKIDEN YEAR 3 REPORT

RUN BY YOURSELF BUT NEVER ALONE

ABOUT THE FT NIKKEI UK EKIDEN

We use the power of sport to connect people and ideas across the world. Inspired by the Japanese tradition of ekiden relay running, our platform brings together sport, education, business, communities, culture and international collaboration.

Through our flagship UK Ekiden race, our growing schools programme and partnerships across sectors, we create opportunities for race participation, networking, learning, cultural exchange and innovation.

"We are only just at the beginning, with a bright future ahead. We are excited to work with our teams and commercial partners to bring together universities, business and the wider community across generations. Stay tuned!

Anna Dingley, Founder and CEO, Ekiden Group Ltd

2.6M ORGANIC CONTENT VIEWS

54K RACE FILM VIEWS

350 350 ATHLETES. 35 TEAMS

200+ MEDIA MENTIONS

1300 ONSITE SPECTATORS

112KM TOTAL DISTANCE

CONTENTS AT A GLANCE

1. UK's Premier Relay Championship University/Corporate & Community
2. Iconic Route Along The Thames
3. Our Partners - Building This Together
4. Supporters & Community Teams
5. Audience Reach & Media Impact
6. Financial Times Advertisement
7. Education & Cultural Exchange
8. Social Impact and Charity Partners
9. Introducing the Kanakuri Cup
10. Growing community in the UK, Japan and Beyond



FT NIKKEI UK EKIDEN YEAR 3 RACE MOVIE - WIN AS ONE NOW STREAMING ON YOUTUBE

UK'S PREMIER RELAY CHAMPIONSHIP

FT FINANCIAL TIMES NIKKEI

駅伝 3 UK EKIDEN

UNIVERSITY CATEGORY

17 UNIVERSITIES ACROSS ENGLAND, WALES AND SCOTLAND, & JAPAN

5/5 10 LEGS. 5 MEN & 5 WOMEN

170 STUDENT ATHLETETS

26 UNIVERSITIES APPLIED

WINNERS

1ST	**Oxford University**	**06:49:01**
2ND	**University of Exeter**	**06:52:19**
3RD	**Cardiff University**	**07:03:03**
	RITSUMEIKAN UNIVERSITY (GUEST)	06:50:59

4TH-8TH POSITION TEAMS QUALIFIED FOR YEAR 4

4th University of Birmingham
5th University of Bath
6th Newcastle University
7th University of Leeds,
8th UCL

UNIVERSITY TEAMS
(Alphabetical order)

1. Cambridge University
2. Cardiff University
3. Durham University
4. Imperial College London
5. King's College London
6. Loughborough University
7. Newcastle University
8. Ritsumeikan University *(guest team)*
9. Royal Holloway University
10. University of Bath
11. University of Birmingham
12. University of Bristol
13. University College London (UCL)
14. University of Edinburgh
15. University of Exeter
16. University of Leeds
17. University of Oxford





"That was the best running experience I've ever had. The UK Ekiden is an amazing race. There is nothing like it in the UK. I'm looking forward to next year already."

Ella Davey, Oxford University last leg runner

UK'S PREMIER RELAY CHAMPIONSHIP

FT FINANCIAL TIMES NIKKEI

駅伝 3 UK EKIDEN

CORPORATE & COMMUNITY CATEGORY

WINNERS

1ST	Marsh	08:07:17
2ND	Team ASICS & Special Guests	08:10:25
3RD	SiS	08:23:20



CORPORATE & COMMUNITY TEAMS

1. FT Nikkei Hayabusa
2. FT Nikkei Yamabiko
3. FT Nikkei Hikari
4. ASICS & Special Guests
5. ASICS FrontRunners
6. ABeam Consulting
7. Arcus Investment
8. Daiwa Capital Markets Europe
9. Sports Ground
10. Japan Airlines
11. Kikkoman Group UK
12. Marsh
13. Team SiS
14. Suntory Global Sprinters
15. UCC Brew Crew
16. Royal Air Force
17. State Visit Legacy Team
18. Storytellers

18 TEAMS
180 RUNNERS

15 COUNTRIES
REPRESENTED

4.7/5 PARTICIPANT
SATISFACTION





"The race shows how the Ekiden will become a massive part of UK running culture. The Ekiden is not a typical race but is an experience. Nothing can beat the drama in team running terms."

Matt Seddon, Athletics Director, UK Ekiden

ICONIC ROUTE ALONG THE THAMES

FT Nikkei UK Ekiden was launched in June 2024, during the State Visit of Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan. The inaugural route ran along the Thames Path from Oxford, where both studied, to Windsor, home of the British Royal Family. Symbolically connecting Japan and the UK through one of Britain's most iconic landscapes.

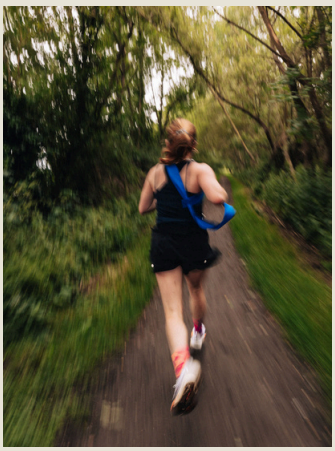
Since 2025, the race has followed a new route from Windsor to Reading and back, a total of 112km, taking runners along the beautiful Thames Path and through Henley-on-Thames, a place closely connected to Emperor Naruhito's memories of the Thames and featured in his memoir The Thames and I.



Windsor Castle view from race village









BUILDING THIS TOGETHER

Our partners play a vital role in the success of FT Nikkei UK Ekiden. Their generous support enables us to deliver the annual race and year-round initiatives, including university team participation, corporate networking, the Mini Ekiden programme, and community engagement activities that inspire the next generation and bring communities together.

NIKKEI

FT FINANCIAL TIMES

asics

ABeam Consulting

Arcus

Daiwa Capital Markets

JAPAN AIRLINES

kikkoman seasoning your life

MARSH

SIS SCIENCE IN SPORT

SPORTS GROUND

SUNTORY GLOBAL SPIRITS

UESHIMA COFFEE COMPANY · KOBE 1933 ·

TOP 6 REASONS WHY COMPANIES PARTNER WITH THE UK EKIDEN

- DIRECT ACCESS TO HIGH VALUE AUDIENCE
- BUSINESS NETWORKING
- TEAM BUILDING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
- CORPORATE BRAND AWARENESS
- SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION
- CSR & VOLUNTEERING

WHAT WAS YOUR HIGHLIGHT?

"Meeeting lots of wonderful people, taking part in a real ekiden again, running in such a wonderful location"

"Seeing complete extremes of sport celebrated in 1 event: witnessing the elite racers at the university end of the field, and the joy of the supporters and runners!"

"Coming through the Henley with the drums beating away which you could here and of course Paddington at the finish line."

SUPPORTERS & COMMUNITY TEAMS

CELEBRATING UK-JAPAN PARTNERSHIP & CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Alongside our commercial partners, UK Ekiden is supported by government organisations and institutions in both the UK and Japan. We welcomed three community teams to the race, celebrating the strong friendship, collaboration, and spirit of teamwork between the two nations, with participants from over 15 countries.

STORYTELLERS TEAM

Legends who live the spirit of Ekiden through their work and impact on others include:

- **Richard Whitehead**, *double Paralympic Gold Medallist*
- **Stephanie Twell,** *Three time Olympian*
- **Adharanand Finn, David Smyth & Megan Boxall,** *writers*
- **Alexander Betts**, *Prof-vice-chancellor at Oxford University*
- **Chise Izumo and Haru Rokkaku**, *students who represented Ishikawa Prefecture.*





STATE VISIT LEGACY TEAM

Bringing together to celebrate the State Visit of Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan to the UK in 2024. This partnership formed part of the foundations established during UK Ekiden's inaugural year.



ROYAL AIR FORCE

Representing the strong and growing friendship between the UK and Japan, built on close cooperation, shared values, and an enduring partnership.

British Embassy Tokyo · MUSUBI · Embassy of Japan in the UK · MOMIJI · JNTO · 東京倶楽部 · WAJOY · BLICK ROTHENBERG a part of AZETS · FUJIFILM Value from Innovation · LINLEY · SAPPORO · ヒーバー

AUDIENCE REACH & MEDIA IMPACT

SOCIAL MEDIA NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA COVERAGE

SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVATIONS

UK Ekiden increased visibility among highly relevant audiences across long-distance running, universities, corporates, and Japan-UK communities. Collaborations with media partners, press outlets, creators, and running and cultural influencers significantly expanded the visibility of the UK Ekiden in Japan and internationally.

2.6M CONTENT VIEWS **166K** ACCOUNTS REACHED **35.9K** INTERACTIONS

MEDIA COVERAGE

200+ NUMBER OF MEDIA MENTIONS

54K RACE FILM VIEWS

Strengthened its national and international profile through extensive editorial coverage across the UK and Japan. Coverage across

- Financial Times
- Nikkei Newspaper 日経新聞
- The Times
- BBC Radio Berkshire
- Nihon TV　日本テレビ
- Life at FT
- Yomiuri Newspaper　読売新聞
- Oxford Mail
- Edinburgh News
- Workingham Today
- Sustain Health Magazine
- Sustain Health Magazine
- Yahoo! Japan Yahoo!ジャパン
- Nagasaki Newspaper　長崎新聞
- Kahoku Shinpo 河北新報
- Iwate Nippo　岩手日報
- Nikkei Runners Salon 日経ランナーズサロン
- Runners Magazine 月刊ランナーズ
- Hokkoku Toyama Newspaper　北國富山新聞
- Hokkoku Toyama Newspaper　北國富山新聞
- Hokkoku Toyama Newspaper　北國富山新聞
- Mainichi Newspaper　毎日新聞
- Chunichi Newspaper 中日新聞
- Tokyo Newspaer 東京新聞
- West Japan Newspaper 西日本新聞
- Others　他多数



550K+ Views on NTV



AUDIENCE REACH & MEDIA IMPACT

PREMIUM ADVERTISEMENT

PREMIUM BRAND EXPOSURE IN THE FINANCIAL TIMES

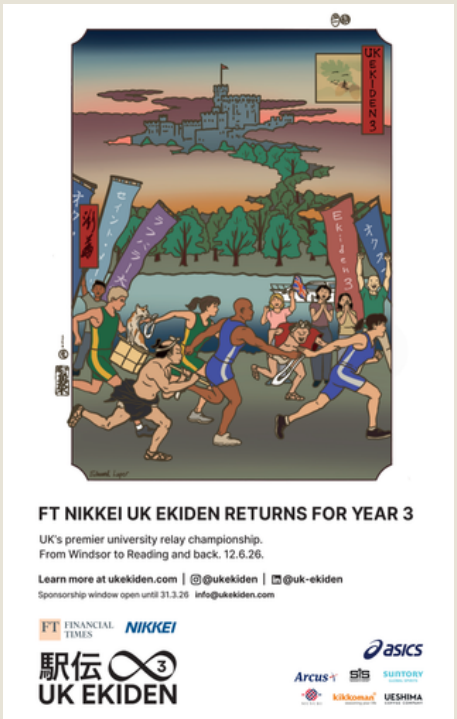
Sponsors received guaranteed logo placement in four full-page Financial Times advertisements, providing premium exposure to an international business audience and strengthening their association with one of the UK's leading UK-Japan sporting events.



JUNE 2026



MAY 2026



FEB 2026



JUNE 2026



750K

ESTIMATED FT WEEKEND AUDIENCE OF EKIDEN RACE POSTERS





EDUCATION & CULTURAL EXCHANGE

MINI EKIDEN ACROSS THE UK & MUSIC

GROWING SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

UK Ekiden contines to inspire participation beyond race day by introducing the spirit of Ekiden to schools, young people and local communities accross the UK.



50 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS PARTICIPATED IN MINI-EKIDEN RACES

Welcomed school groups to experience the event and cheer on ekiden athletes, inspiring the **next generation of runners.**



Celebrating cultural exchange through music

Live performances by UK and Japanese musicians, showcasing traditional Japanese music and celebrating cultural collaboration.



Paddington Bear cheers on the UK Ekiden





SOCIAL IMPACT & CHARITY PARTNERS

YEAR 3 PARTNERS - ISHIKAWA PREFECTURE AND MORCURE

UK Ekiden works with local partners in Japan and the UK to support communities, create international opportunities for young people, showcase regional culture and craftsmanship, and give back through meaningful cross-cultural connections.

This year, we were proud to partner with Ishikawa Prefecture, celebrating its rich cultural heritage and traditional craftsmanship while strengthening UK-Japan exchange through the event. Following the devastating 2024 Noto Peninsula earthquake, the partnership also helped highlight Ishikawa's resilience, raise awareness of the region, and support its ongoing recovery.
In Year 2, we partnered with Kagoshima Prefecture.



DONATION MADE TO GAXO IN NOTO PENINSULA



INVITATION OF TWO STUDENTS FROM ISHIKAWA PREFECTURE



INTRODUCING LOCAL CRAFTS



TIMBER BEAM FROM NOTO REBORN AS THE TROPHY



Engraved on the back of the finisher medals, reflecting the themes of resilience, connection, and renewal.

With the wind and snow
Words become the passing sash
As we weave the spring

風雪を聴き
言葉を襷に
春を編んでいく

GAXO, ガクソー

LOCAL CHARITY PARTNER - MORCURE

The UK Ekiden is turning collective effort into meaningful impact. In Year 3, we supported MorCURE, a family-led charity based in Henley-on-Thames, a handover point along the race route, dedicated to advancing research and care for those living with MORC2-related disorder. Every step taken in the race helps raise awareness and bring hope to families facing this rare condition. **Learn more at MORCure**



INTRODUCING THE KANAKURI CUP

NAMED AFTER SHISO KANAKURI, THE LEGENDARY "FATHER OF EKIDEN"

The Kanakuri Cup was created for the Corporate & Community category trophy.

This was made by British luxury craftsmanship brand LINLEY and completed on 2 June 2026. It incorporates wood from a house damaged in the Noto Peninsula Earthquake, giving the material a new life through British craftsmanship.

The Kanakuri Cup was named in honour of Shiso Kanakuri, widely known as the “Father of the Japanese Marathon” and the “Father of Ekiden” for his contribution to the development of long-distance running in Japan. The naming was made possible with the support of Tamana City, Kumamoto Prefecture, which liaised with the Kanakuri family and received their kind approval.

On 12 June, the Kanakuri Cup was presented to the winning team in the Corporate & Community category for the first time.



ABOUT SHISO KANAKURI

Shiso Kanakuri was one of Japan’s first Olympic athletes, competing at the 1912 Stockholm Games, and a pioneer in connecting Japanese athletics with the international stage. He dedicated his life to the development and promotion of long-distance running and the marathon in Japan. He also played a key role in founding the Hakone Ekiden and remains an iconic figure in Japanese ekiden culture.



Photo: Tamana City, Kumamoto

“We are deeply honoured to have received this wonderful opportunity. We understand that our grandfatherloved seeing young people enjoy sport and actively took part in local marathon and ekiden events during his lifetime. As his family, we are truly amazed to see the seeds planted by our grandfather and his generation 100 years ago cross the sea and blossom here in the UK.”

Family Representative: Nobuo Kuratsuchi, Grandson of Shiso Kanakuri

MORE THAN ONE RACE ON ONE DAY

GROWING COMMUNITY IN THE UK, JAPAN AND BEYOND

The race in June serves as our flagship race, with continuous activations throughout the year. UK Ekiden is a platform to celebrate the best of Japan and the UK, bringing the community together through sport, culture and education for businesses and universities.



PRE-RACE TASUKI CEREMONY, JUNE 2026



KANAKURI CUP LAUNCH RECEPTION, LINLEY LONDON, JUNE 2026



ASICS & UK EKIEN SHAKE OUT RUN, MAY 2026



RACE BRIEFING, MAY 2026



PHOTO EXHIBITION AT FUJIFILM, SEPTEMBER 2025



SUNTORY JAPANESE WHISKEY TASTING, NOVEMBER 2025

JOIN US FOR YEAR 4

OPPORTUNITIES IN THE FOLLOWING SECTORS:

MEDIA

SPORT

TECHNOLOGY

TRANSPORT

CULTURE

EDUCATION

FINANCE

CONSULTING

TOURISM