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Sojitz Corporation

Japan Takes Fifth at Men's Blind Football World Championships  
– Sojitz Group Member and Blind Soccer Athlete Masaki Goto Plays Key Role –

The Japan men's national blind soccer team competed at the IBSA Men's Blind Football World Championship 2023 held in England's Birmingham from August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Masaki Goto, an employee of Sojitz Group company Sojitz Shared Service Corporation, was selected for the starting lineup and played in all six of the Japan team's matches at the tournament.

The Japan men team's fifth-place ranking at the Men's Blind Football World Championship 2023 did not secure them a spot in the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. However, the team may still earn a chance to compete at the Summer Games in 2024 based on the outcome of the 2023 Parapan American Games to be held later this November.\*

Masaki Goto was first chosen to represent Japan in the IBSA Blind Football World Grand Prix 2023 held in Brazil this past May and went on to appear in all of Japan's matches at the Blind Football Grand Prix France 2023. Goto has established himself as a key member of the Japan team and will be an important player to watch moving forward.

Goto provides services which support the wellness of Sojitz Group members through his work at Sojitz Shared Service. Sojitz supports Goto's activities as a blind soccer athlete and strives to create a working environment that facilitates his full-time participation in team practices, training camps, and tours.



[Goto executes a defensive press during the Japan team's match against Turkey (left) and poses with a flag covered in messages of support from Sojitz Group members (right) ]

Sojitz has been an official partner of the Japan Blind Football Association (JBFA) since 2018 and supports the JBFA's vision of realizing an inclusive society in which disabled and non-disabled individuals can live in unity. Sojitz also holds interactive blind soccer events for children at the shopping centers it operates as part of the company's larger efforts to build a society that is strengthened by diversity.

Sojitz is committed to diversity management practices and strives to become a general trading company that constantly cultivates new businesses and human capital. To realize this vision, Sojitz has positioned the transformation of diversity into competitiveness as a central theme under which the company will leverage diverse human resources as an organizational strength for consistently creating value with speed amidst a rapidly changing business environment.

\*JBFA website: Paralympic qualification requirements (Japanese language):

<https://www.b-soccer.jp/news/23216-20230826-2>

[Related Information]

Sojitz initiatives in support of blind soccer:

<https://www.sojitz.com/en/csr/contribute/blindsoccer/>

[Related New Release]

“Sojitz Sponsors Japan Blind Football Association to Support Parasports.” Sojitz Corp. Press release, 1 November 2018.

<https://www.sojitz.com/en/news/2018/11/20181101.php>

[For questions, contact:]

**Sojitz Corporation** Public Relations Dept. +81-3-6871-3404