

As the public celebrated the national baseball team’s advance to the second round of this year’s World Baseball Classic in Tokyo after cheering with one heart the team’s battle with South Korea on Tuesday evening, many could not help but be confused over why a number of TV anchors and Taiwanese fans rooted for the team by calling it “Chinese Taipei.”

Granted, it may be a necessary concession to refer to Taiwan officially as “Chinese Taipei” in international sport, in line with the protocol it signed with the International Olympic Committee, but why degrade one’s own country on its home turf with such a demeaning — and geographically incorrect — name?

Even as members of the public undermined their nation’s image in this way from the bleachers, some international media outlets treated it with respect by properly addressing it as “Taiwan” in their coverage.

One may recall that when pitcher Wang Chien-ming (王建民) was playing for the New York Yankees and reliever Kuo Hong-chih (郭宏智) for the Los Angeles Dodgers, they were both introduced by their teams as hailing from Taiwan, not “Chinese Taipei.”

When top-ranked female golfer Yani Tseng (嚴尚嫻) made it into Time’s list of the 100 most influential figures last year for her athletic achievements and work ethic, she was also introduced as coming from Taiwan, not “Chinese Taipei.”

In April last year, while being interviewed by Taiwanese press about the performance of Taiwanese pitcher Chen Wei-yin (陳偉殷), Orioles manager Buck Showalter also appeared to have a clearer grasp of Taiwan’s stance than some Taiwanese when he said: “Stop calling [Taiwan] ‘Chinese Taipei.’ I have done my homework, Taiwan is Taiwan, it has nothing to do with China. Please don’t confuse me with ‘Chinese Taipei.’”

Some may dismiss the name issue as trivial and accuse those bringing up the matter of spoiling the mood and attempting to incite political wrangles. However, that is exactly the sort of silence and passivity we should beware of, because China is counting on exactly that reaction in its pursuit of unification, all the while belittling Taiwan.

‘Chinese Taipei’ belittles Taiwan

Written by Taipei Times Editorial
Thursday, 07 March 2013 07:58

Beijing’s efforts to diminish Taiwan internationally are no secret. It has employed many tactics — openly and clandestinely — to shape a global impression that downgrades Taiwan’s sovereignty through the use of language.

The seemingly harmless practice of calling Taiwan “Chinese Taipei” is slowly creeping in and transforming the Taiwanese public’s national identity, as evidenced by more Taiwanese fans cheering for the nation’s athletes by calling them “Chinese Taipei” rather than “Taiwan.”

Some may recall that President Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九), while seeking re-election, named his campaign headquarters “Taiwan Cheers, Great! (台灣加油, 好!)” and formed a legion of campaign groups called “Taiwan cheer teams (台灣加油隊).”

As Taiwan’s national baseball team, bearing the public’s best wishes and high expectations, left for Tokyo yesterday, one hopes Ma, as the head of the state, will lead fans in cheering for Taiwan’s team in line with his former campaign slogan — “Taiwan Cheers, Great!” — and not the demeaning name “Chinese Taipei.”

Or is that too much to ask?

Source: [Taipei Times - Editorials 2013/03/07](#)