

< Press Release >

Aderans

**<Aderans' hairstylists demonstrate their wig-styling techniques>
53rd FY Aderans All-Japan Skills Competition
Noriaki Kasai, ski jumper and Aderans Chief Ambition Ambassador,
also joins the event as a judge**

Aderans Co., Ltd. (Head Office: Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan; Group CEO, Representative Director and President: Yoshihiro Tsumura), promoting the wellness industry of hair, beauty, and health on a global scale, hosted the final round of the "53rd Fiscal Year Aderans All-Japan Skills Competition" at the Zenriren Building (Shibuya-ku, Tokyo) on Tuesday, January 18, 2022. The event aims to further enhance our technical skills to improve customer satisfaction.

The Aderans All-Japan Skills Competition is our traditional event which started in 1980, and this is our 27th time hosting this event. In addition to the traditional Free Style Category, where judges assess contestants' skills in production instructions, cutting, blow-drying, and styling of a custom-made wig, we also started the new Hair System Category this year. In this new Category, contestants use our semi-permanent hair systems, and judges look at their skills in attachment, styling, and customer service. This year, we invited Mr. Noriaki Kasai to the event as a judge. Mr. Kasai is a ski jumper from the Tsuchiya Home Ski Team, and he has been serving as Aderans Chief Ambition Ambassador, promoting our semi-permanent hair system "Freedom." He also offered a message of encouragement after the award ceremony.

In the Free Style Category, winners are selected for the Men's Division and the Ladies Division among employees who are qualified as a barber or hairdresser and work at Aderans salons, Ladies Aderans salons, domestic sales divisions, and other departments (946 employees as of January 31, 2022). Sixteen contestants, selected from different sales and other departments, participated in the final round on Tuesday, January 18, where the winner of each Division was decided. In the Hair System Category, winners are selected for the Men's Division, the Ladies Division, and the Advice Division among employees who are qualified as a barber or hairdresser and work at Aderans salons and Ladies Aderans salons (798 employees as of January 31, 2022).

The following winners were chosen through the votes of 36 judges and received award certificates from Chairman and Representative Director Nemoto.

[Free Style Category] Men's Division: Shizuki Fujitani from Aderans Hiroshima (also a former winner in the Ladies Division); Ladies Division: Kaori Akagi from Aderans Saga

[Hair System Category] Men's Division: Jiro Tanaka from Aderans Furukawa; Ladies Division: Kazuya Munakata from Aderans Morioka; Advice Division: Natsuko Fujimoto from Aderans Narita



Shizuki Fujitani (Men's Division winner, 2nd from the left) and Kaori Akagi (Ladies Division winner, 2nd from the right) with Chairman Nemoto (left) and President Tsumura (right)



[Winners' works]

Left: by Shizuki Fujitani (Aderans Hiroshima)
Right: by Kaori Akagi (Aderans Saga)

■ About the Free Style Category

In the Free Style Category, wigs produced based on instructions from the contestants were set on cut wigs (mannequins), and the contestants cut and styled them within an hour. They freely created their own styles according to the themes they had chosen in advance, with different hair lengths, volumes, and color combinations. This year was particularly competitive as several past winners of the Category were in the final round. The works showcased the finalists' outstanding skills and creativity such as updo hairstyles, which had been said to be extremely difficult with wigs, and dynamic styles.



Works by the contestants

➤ Overview of the 53rd Fiscal Year Aderans All-Japan Skills Competition: Free Style Category

- Dates: [Final round] Tuesday, January 18, 2022
[Preliminary rounds] September to October 2021
- Venue: [Final round] Zenriren Building
- Requirement: A person who works for Aderans Co., Ltd. and is qualified as a barber or hairdresser, working at an Aderans salon, a Ladies Aderans salon, Medical Business Department, Beauty Product Route Business Department, Domestic Sales Division (in charge of exhibitions), or East Asia Area Department.
- Selection flow: Aderans and Ladies Aderans salons across the country were divided into eight areas, and 16 winners of the preliminary rounds selected from the areas and departments participated in the final round, where each judge chose two works to decide the winner of each Division.
- Judges: There were 36 judges including Nobuo Nemoto (Representative Director and Chairman, Aderans Co., Ltd.), Yoshihiro Tsumura (Representative Director and President, Aderans Co., Ltd.), Toshio Omori (President, Hairdressing Federation of Japan), Noriaki Kasai (ski jumper from the Tsuchiya Home Ski Team; Aderans Chief Ambition Ambassador, promoting our semi-permanent hair system “Freedom” since December 2021), and Michio Nozawa (Fontaine's exclusive hair producer and top hair stylist).

■ Judges Profile

Toshio Omori (President, Hairdressing Federation of Japan)



He became a board member of the Federation in May 1988 and has been the president since May 2006, currently serving his sixth consecutive term. He has also served as the president of the Federation of Environmental Hygiene Trade Associations and of the National Business Guidance Center. In 2016, he became the OMC Master Stylist Winner in the 2016 OMC World Cup (world hairdressing championships) in Seoul, South Korea.

Some of his achievements include the Minister of Health and Welfare Award, Nippon Kenshokai Foundation Award, Minister of the Environment Award, Medal with Blue Ribbon, OMC Hall of Fame Award, Award for Outstandingly Skilled Workers (Contemporary Master Craftsman), OMC Global Ambassador, and OMC Environmental Awareness Award.

<Comment from Mr. Omori>

2022 marks the year of the tiger. As we can see from the expression “adding wings to a tiger,” something strong like a tiger could go even higher and further if it had wings. By acquiring solid technical skills as well as sales skills, you can also go further, broader, and higher. I hope you keep enhancing these technical skills through this traditional event. Each small step will help build a better tomorrow. I wish you all the best.

Noriaki Kasai (ski jumper)



He started skiing when he was in third grade. Since he has an exceptionally long career as a ski jumper, over 30 years, and still keeps going as a first-class jumper in his late 40s, people around the world respect him and call him “legend.” He holds a total of five Guinness World Records, including the oldest to make a World Cup podium and the most appearances in the FIS Ski Jumping World Cup. He also won the 63rd Yukijirushi Megmilk Cup (a domestic ski jumping competition) in January 2022 and keeps challenging himself. Currently, he is a player-coach at the Tsuchiya Home Ski Team. He has also been playing a role as Aderans Chief Ambition Ambassador since December 2021, promoting our semi-permanent hair system “Freedom.”

<Comment from Mr. Kasai>

As I watched the competition, I was impressed with the amazing skills and creativity of the finalists. I am also a user of the hair system “Freedom.” The product is really breathable, and I can now enjoy the wind and rain I used to hate. I would like to promote Aderans’ “Freedom” across Japan and the world. I will turn 50 this year, and I still keep going as a ski jumper within and outside the country. I will keep challenging myself, never giving up, and I hope you (the participants) too will keep challenging yourselves to achieve your ambitious goals.

■ Men's Division Winner

Shizuki Fujitani (Aderans Hiroshima)

[Theme]

“Leo”

[Comment from the winner]

I was the winner of the Ladies Division at the competition in the 50th fiscal year, and was determined to win the second title this year by winning the Men’s Division as well. So, I’m truly glad I won. For this work, I kept practicing while referring to the works of classic cut winners in the world competition. I was really particular about the hair color. In fact, I tried different colors many times until a day before the event because the colors of the base hair and the product didn’t match. Through this competition, I have learned skills such as blow-drying, and I’m determined to leverage them at work every day.

[Comment about the work]

I have chosen the theme “Leo” for several reasons. First, I’m a Leo. Second, the color of Leo is red, the same as the Aderans logo. I have also chosen this theme to make the work energetic. I hope you can also check out the facial makeup and rhinestones on the cheek, inspired by the constellation Leo.



■ Ladies Division Winner

Kaori Akagi (Aderans Saga)

[Theme]

“Arc”

[Comment from the winner]

This was my second time to participate in the event, and I’m really glad I finally won this time. I have chosen the theme “Arc” to express feminine softness through gentle waves and curls. I particularly focused on the braids and curves. Also,



learning from the mistakes I had made last time, I also kept practicing while focusing on time management, in order to have enough time for cutting, styling, and adjusting. But I was overwhelmed by anxiety during the event and couldn't do what I wanted to do. It made me realize, painfully, my lack of skills. I will keep working hard to further improve myself.

[Comment about the work]

An arc represents a curve like a bow, and I have chosen it as my theme because I want to be like it, being gentle, flexible, as well as strong. When I worked on this style, I particularly focused on the design near the wig clips. You can easily see the edge of the wig around the clips when you try updo hairstyles. To address this problem, I braided the hair there to make the wig more stable and fashionable. I also gave gentle waves to the net on the front.



■ About the Hair System Category

Unlike wigs, which need to be put on and removed, hair systems enable users to leave them on for a long period and enjoy everyday lives. They are gaining growing popularity in recent years. The first Hair System competition was held this year in order to help employees across the country improve essential technical skills on hair systems, which have been evolving in recent years. For Men's and Ladies Divisions, each contestant spent 40 minutes during the event to attach a pre-cut/curled hair system to a mannequin and to create a style according to an assigned theme. The judges assessed their efficiency, thoroughness, and consistency with the theme. For the Advice Division, the judges reviewed the videos of each contestant serving a customer (pre-recorded) before the final round and announced the winner during the event.



Jiro Tanaka (Men's Division winner, 2nd from the left), Kazuya Munakata (Ladies Division winner, 3rd from the left), and Natsuko Fujimoto (Advice Division winner, 4th from the left) with Chairman Nemoto (left) and President Tsumura (right)



Works by the contestants

➤ Overview of the 53rd Fiscal Year Aderans All-Japan Skills Competition: Hair System Category

- Dates: [Final round] Tuesday, January 18, 2022
[Preliminary rounds] Hair System Division: June to November 2021
[Selection period] Advice Division: June to November 2021
- Venue: [Final round] Zenriren Building
* For the Advice Division, pre-recorded videos were reviewed online beforehand.
- Requirement: A person who works for Aderans Co., Ltd. and is qualified as a barber or hairdresser, working at an Aderans salon or a Ladies Aderans salon.
- Selection flow: Aderans and Ladies Aderans salons across the country were divided into eight areas, and each area selected one representative for each Division (Men's, Ladies, and Advice), resulting in a total of 23 participants at the final round where the winner of each Division was decided.

Judges: There were 36 judges including Nobuo Nemoto (Representative Director and Chairman, Aderans Co., Ltd.), Yoshihiro Tsumura (Representative Director and President, Aderans Co., Ltd.), Toshio Omori (President, Hairdressing Federation of Japan), Noriaki Kasai (ski jumper from the Tsuchiya Home Ski Team; Aderans Chief Ambition Ambassador, promoting our semi-permanent hair system “Freedom” since December 2021), and Michio Nozawa (Fontaine's exclusive hair producer and top hair stylist).

* The judges were different for the Free Style and Hair System Categories.

■ Men's Division Winner

Jiro Tanaka (Aderans Furukawa)

[Comment from the winner]

“Balance” was the theme I have chosen this time. Since we already had a sample and many judges would look at our works, I somewhat arranged the style in order to attract attention. I particularly focused on the balance on the front side. Attaching the hair system was not a problem because I always do it with customers. During the performance, other contestants were doing so well that it got me in the zone. It was the best work I have ever done. We can't satisfy customers without technical skills. I will keep working hard to meet customers' needs and to maintain good relationships with them for a long time.



■ Ladies Division Winner

Kazuya Munakata (Aderans Morioka)

[Comment from the winner]

I'm really glad to receive this award because winning the skills competition has been one of my goals since I joined Aderans. During my practice, I particularly focused on hair system attachment. I wouldn't have enough time for styling if I spent too much time in attachment. So, I thought the key point would be how fast and carefully I could attach the system. During the final round, I was almost overwhelmed by anxiety. But I was able to perform well thanks to the practice. In order to further promote hair systems, I would like to train other staff members as well.



■ Advice Division Winner

Natsuko Fujimoto (Aderans Narita)

[Comment from the winner]

I couldn't believe I won. Although I have faced many challenges, I truly feel glad that I work for Aderans. I would also like to thank the salon manager for playing the role as a customer. During the performance, I kept in mind to act natural, showing how I worked with customers every day within a limited time period, as well as to take measures against COVID-19 infections while serving the customer. Winning the competition has given me confidence at work. Customers tend to have questions and concerns when they first try hair systems. I would like to introduce these products to more customers and put smiles on their faces by addressing their concerns, introducing comfortable ways to use the products, and providing attentive services.



■ About the Aderans All-Japan Skills Competition

The Aderans All-Japan Skills Competition is our traditional event which started in 1980. This is an opportunity for hairstylists nationwide not only to compete their skills, styles, and creativity but also to inspire each other, thereby integrating the education and training they have received. In order to provide the product excellence that can truly satisfy customers, we are committed to continuing our efforts to realize our management philosophy of “Product excellence,” “Technological expertise,” and “Most educated in hair-related, beauty and health solutions with the highest levels of service.”

■ About Hair Systems

A hair system is a semi-permanent hair-related product that enables users to shampoo and enjoy other activities as if it were their own hair. It gives users a more natural feel than conventional wigs, which they need to put on and remove. Aderans offers a variety of hair systems including “Freedom” and “Aderans Gold.”

Product website: <https://www.aderans.co.jp/mens/products/> (in Japanese)



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