

= Eyeshield 21 =

Eyeshield 21 ( Japanese : ??????21 , Hepburn : Aish?rudo Nij?ichi ) is a Japanese manga series written by Riichiro Inagaki and illustrated by Yusuke Murata . The series tells the story of Sena Kobayakawa , an introverted boy who joins an American football club as a secretary , but after being coerced by Yoichi Hiruma , turns out to play wearing an eyeshield and the number 21 , under the pseudonym of " Eyeshield 21 " . Inagaki chose American football as a central subject of Eyeshield 21 after realizing that it fit perfectly with his idea for the series .

The manga was originally serialized in Shueisha 's Weekly Sh?nen Jump from July 2002 to June 2009 . The series consists of 333 chapters collected in 37 tank?bon volumes . An anime adaptation consisting of 145 television episodes was co @-@ produced by TV Tokyo , NAS , and Gallop . The television series first aired on Japan 's TV Tokyo network from April 6 , 2005 to March 19 , 2008 . The Eyeshield 21 franchise has spawned two original video animations ( OVAs ) , audio albums , video games , and other merchandise .

In North America , the manga was released by Viz Media from April 2005 to October 2011 . The anime series was later licensed in North America by Toonami Jetstream as a joint effort with Viz Media , and aired on December 17 , 2007 on its site , but before its completion , the streaming service was shut down . The whole series was streamed in English by Crunchyroll , while Sentai Filmworks licensed the series , with distribution from Section23 Films on DVDs .

In Japan , the Eyeshield 21 manga has sold over 20 million volumes . The manga and anime have been featured at various times in weekly top ten lists of best @-@ selling in their respective media . The anime has been watched by a large number of television viewers in Japan , helping to raise American football 's popularity in the country . Publications for manga , anime and others have commented on Eyeshield 21 , which received positive comments for its artwork and characters , and negative responses to its non @-@ football scenes .

= = Plot = =

In Tokyo , a weak , unassertive boy named Sena Kobayakawa enters the high school of his choice ? Deimon Private Senior High School . Sena 's only remarkable physical abilities are his running speed and agility , which are noted by the school 's American football team captain Yoichi Hiruma . Hiruma forces Sena to join the Deimon Devil Bats football team as its running back . To protect his identity from other teams who want to recruit him , Sena is forced to publicly assume the role of team secretary and enter the field under the pseudonym of " Eyeshield 21 " wearing a helmet with an eyeshield to hide his features . The makeshift team initially takes part in the spring football tournament hoping to win through the strength of their new " secret weapon " . However , the extremely weak team is eliminated early by the Ojo White Knights , one of the best football teams in Japan .

After Deimon 's defeat , the spring tournament is revealed as secondary in importance to the fall tournament , where the teams compete for the chance to play in the Christmas Bowl ? the high school football league championship . Hiruma , Ryokan Kurita , and Sena regroup and slowly build a real team from misfits and students looking to define themselves , such as Tar? " Monta " Raimon ? a baseball player who can only catch ? and the Ha @-@ Ha Brothers . Other characters slowly join the team , and the series follows the building and growth of the Deimon Devil Bats and its members , and rival teams as they all strive to achieve their goal of playing in the Christmas Bowl .

Following the Christmas Bowl , Japan begins to gather the best football players to form a team to represent it at the American Football Youth World Championship , where a Most Valuable Player ( MVP ) will be awarded an NFL contract and \$ 3 million . Team Japan reaches the final against Team America , in which the game ends as a tie , and both teams are declared winners . Both teams are unsatisfied with this and return to the field for their own , improvised " overtime " , causing chaos with officials . It is unclear which team wins the unofficial extra period , but Panther of Team America holds the MVP trophy aloft , winning the professional contract with the San Antonio Armadillos . The series concludes with Sena becoming the captain of the Devil Bats after Hiruma and Kurita leave

school to attend college . In his final year of high school , Clifford invites Sena to Notre Dame High School . In the final chapter , the main characters are in college or playing amateur @-@ league football while employed .

= = Production = =

Before the series was published regularly , Inagaki and Murata published two one @-@ shots called Eyeshield Part 1 ( ?? , Zenpen ) and Part 2 ( ?? , K?hen ) on March 5 and 12 , 2002 in Weekly Sh?nen Jump . During Eyeshield 21 's original run in the magazine , Inagaki went several times to the United States to see college football matches , and visit a space center to collect reference materials to use as a basis for creating the NASA Aliens . He also visited a military base as he needed to draw one when Hiruma 's background is revealed , and watched an NFL game where he noted that the " players transmitted an intimidating and powerful feeling " , saying that they " were facing dinosaurs " . With this in mind he created Rikiya Gaoh , an American player of monstrous size .

Despite having never played American football , Inagaki chose this theme after deciding that he wanted to create " a protagonist that was wimpy at the beginning , yet could perform outstandingly in a sports game " , and with this premise in mind he decided that American football would be " a very suitable material . " When originally creating Eyeshield 21 Inagaki said he was wary because he did not want his manga becoming " a simulator of football " . The fact that football is not a popular sport in Japan also worried Inagaki . As last resort , he thought to turn the series into a " Kamen Rider @-@ style masked hero story " if it could not met the popularity required for the magazine .

Before being asked to work on Eyeshield 21 , Yusuke Murata had read some of Inagaki 's manga and noted that they " had many cool design concepts of uniforms and equipment " . He said , " it could be turned into a great manga story " and he would " be happy to take the challenge " ; eventually he was chosen . While illustrating chapters , Murata made many mistakes , and his pollen allergy hurt him because whenever he made a mistake he inhaled dust from his eraser . To draw the characters ' sketches , he used a mechanical pencil that he considered special because it was given to him by Masanori Morita .

= = Publication = =

The Eyeshield 21 manga series was written by Riichiro Inagaki , illustrated by Yusuke Murata , and originally serialized by Shueisha in the Japanese magazine Weekly Sh?nen Jump from July 23 , 2002 to June 15 , 2009 . The manga consists of 333 chapters spanning 37 tank?bon ( collected volumes ) , the first of which was released on December 20 , 2002 and the last on October 2 , 2010 . Eyeshield 21 has also been published as part of the Shueisha Jump Remix series of magazine @-@ style books . Fourteen volumes were released between June 28 , 2010 and February 14 , 2011 . An English translation of the manga was published in North America by Viz Media under the Shonen Jump Advanced label between April 5 , 2005 and October 4 , 2011 . The manga has also been licensed in some countries such as in France by Glénat , in Hong Kong by Culturecom , in Indonesia by Elex Media Komputindo , in Italy by Panini Comics , in South Korea by Daewon Media , and in Taiwan by Tong Li Publishing .

= = Anime adaptations = =

= = = Original video animations = = =

Two original video animations ( OVA ) based on the Eyeshield 21 manga series were developed . The first one , named The Phantom Golden Bowl , was developed by Production I.G and shown as part of the Jump Festa Anime Tour on September 2003 and in Jump Festa 2004 . The second OVA , titled Eyeshield 21 : Christmas Bowl e no Michi ? Minami no Shima de Tokkun da ! YA @-@ HA ! !

? , was shown at Jump Festa 2005 . The two OVAs were later released on DVD ; the first was released with the second OVA of Naruto in a compilation called Jump Festa 2004 Super DVD . The other was released by Bandai Visual as an extra track on the sixth DVD of the Eyeshield 21 anime series .

== Television series ==

The Eyeshield 21 anime adaptation was co @-@ produced by TV Tokyo , NAS , and Gallop , and was directed by Masayoshi Nishida until episode 103 , and by Shin Katagai from 104 to 145 . The series of 145 television episodes aired in Japan from April 6 , 2005 to March 19 , 2008 on TV Tokyo . In Japan , Bandai Visual distributed the anime in DVD format ; thirty @-@ six volumes were released between July 26 , 2006 and June 26 , 2007 .

Initially , Viz Media and Cartoon Network planned to air a dubbed version of Eyeshield 21 on the internet video streaming service Toonami Jetstream , and on NFL Rush site as a joint effort with National Football League ( NFL ) , but the anime was eventually posted only on Toonami Jetstream , with the first episode being available on December 17 , 2007 . However , it was not completed due to Toonami Jetstream 's cancellation and shutdown . In December 2008 , the video streaming service Crunchyroll announced that it would begin to stream Eyeshield 21 subtitled on its site on January 2 , 2009 . The last episode was available on November 1 , 2009 for premium users , and on March 7 , 2010 for free users . On February 26 , 2010 , Section23 Films announced that Sentai Filmworks received the license to the anime . The first fifty @-@ two episodes were released on four subtitled @-@ only DVDs between May 18 , 2010 and February 8 , 2011 .

=== Audio ===

The music for the Eyeshield 21 anime adaptation was composed by K? ?tani . The series use twelve pieces of theme music , five opening and seven ending themes . The opening themes are " Breakthrough " and " Innocence " by V6 , " Dang Dang " by ZZ , " Blaze Line " by Back @-@ On , and " Hon? no Running Back " by Short Leg Summer . The ending themes are " Be Free " by Ricken 's , " Blaze Away " by The Trax , " Goal " by Beni Arashiro , " Run to Win " by Aya Hirano , Miyu Irino , Koichi Nagano and Kappei Yamaguchi , " A day dreaming ... " by Back @-@ On , " Flower " by Back @-@ On , and " Song of Power " by Short Leg Summer .

A number of audio CDs linked to the anime series have been released in Japan . The original soundtrack was released on two discs by Avex Mode on March 5 , 2008 under the title Eyeshield 21 Complete Best Album . Three compilation albums , Eyeshield 21 Original Soundtrack Sound Field 1 , Eyeshield 21 Sound Field Especial , and Eyeshield 21 Song Best , featuring opening and ending themes , insertion songs , and character and team songs were released on August 31 , 2005 , December 21 , 2005 , and March 23 , 2006 respectively . Six maxi singles containing character songs have also been published . The first three , for Sena Kobayakawa , Mamori Anezaki , and Monta , were released on October 26 , 2005 . The other three , with the songs of Haruto Sakuraba , Seijurou Shin , and Suzuna Taki , were released on January 25 , 2006 . In addition to the musical CDs , Eyeshield 21 Drama Field 1 , an audio drama CD , was released by Avex on September 21 , 2005 .

== Related media ==

Two art books based on Eyeshield 21 were released . The first , Eyeshield 21 Illustration Collection : Field of Colors , was published on November 2 , 2006 . The second , entitled Paint Jump : Art of Eyeshield 21 , was released on December 19 , 2008 . Eyeshield 21 Official Databook : Chou Senshu Retsuden Ballers High , a databook , was published on October 4 , 2005 . A pair of light novels were launched ; the first , written by Katsumi Hasegawa , based on and named for the first OVA , was published on March 24 , 2004 . The second , Eyeshield 21 : Netto no Hundred Game ! , written by Eijima Jun , was published on May 26 , 2006 . The only original creator of the series who

worked on these light novels was Murata , who illustrated them . In Japan , jigsaw puzzles , action figures , plush dolls , calendars , key chains , and a medal game machine were sold as merchandise for the series . Konami also released a collectable card game series .

= = = Video games = = =

Konami produced Eyeshield 21 games for Sony video game systems ; it released Eyeshield 21 : Let 's Play American Football ! Ya ! Ha !! for the PlayStation 2 on December 22 , 2005 and Eyeshield 21 : Portable Edition for the PlayStation Portable on March 2 , 2006 . Nintendo secured the rights to the Eyeshield 21 video game license for its systems in December 2004 , releasing Eyeshield 21 : Max Devil Power for the Nintendo DS on February 2 , 2006 and Eyeshield 21 : Devilbats Devildays for the Game Boy Advance on April 6 , 2006 . Another game was scheduled for release on the Nintendo GameCube , but it was later canceled . Nintendo published an Eyeshield 21 game for the Wii , entitled Eyeshield 21 : The Field 's Greatest Warriors , which was released in Japan on March 8 , 2007 . Two non @-@ football games , Jump Super Stars and Jump Ultimate Stars , released for the Nintendo DS , have featured characters from the series . Various Devil Bats , Shin and Sakuraba from the White Knights appear in support cameos .

= = Reception = =

The manga had sold more than 20 million copies in Japan ; individual volumes frequently appeared on top ten lists of best @-@ selling manga there . Individual volumes have appeared in Diamond Comic Distributors 's lists of 300 best @-@ selling graphic novels in North America several times . In 2011 , the Japanese website Ameba conducted a " Top 10 " online web poll of the " Best Sh?nen Jump Manga of the 21st Century " and Eyeshield 21 was placed seventh , although in another poll of the best Sh?nen Jump titles that the readers nonetheless did not want to continue reading , Eyeshield 21 ranked twentieth . The anime adaptation was also featured several times in Japanese television rankings , with the first episode having a 7 @.@ 5 percent television viewership rating . In 2006 , Japanese television network TV Asahi conducted a poll for the top hundred anime , and Eyeshield 21 was placed 47th . Moreover , Eyeshield 21 's series is credited with increasing the number of Japanese teenagers playing American football .

Critics have generally given the Eyeshield 21 manga positive reviews . Deb Aoki from About.com wrote that tying with Bleach , Eyeshield 21 was the best continuing sh?nen manga of 2007 , because it " has well @-@ written characters , dynamic artwork , nail @-@ biting cliffhangers , plus a winning mix of comedy , action and drama " . On the 2008 list , Aoki listed Eyeshield 21 as the best continuing sh?nen , as it was able to " [ come ] into its own " from other sh?nen series . In that same year , Pop Culture Shock 's Sam Kusek elected it the best continuing manga series . Jarred Pine from Mania Entertainment praised the humor and how the creators " bring out the energy and excitement of the game for the readers " . June Shimonishi reviewing for School Library Journal , wrote that it " delivers a fresh and entertaining take on all the standard sports clichés " . She also said that its art is " superb ... with every inch filled with details and no gag left unseen " . Zac Bertschy from Anime News Network ( ANN ) declared Eyeshield 21 " defies convention " by turning what most might consider " a really ridiculously bad idea " into " something most everyone would be able to enjoy " . Carlo Santos from ANN called it a " typical sports story " , writing that what make it an above average series are its characters and artwork . He also wrote that people who think American football is boring " may change their minds after seeing the action sequences in Eyeshield 21 . " Later , however , Santos said , " [ a ] lot of familiar clichés show themselves " in Eyeshield 21 , and that " [ t ] he storyline also does a sloppy job of keeping track of the game ... making it even less believable than it already is " .

The anime adaptation of Eyeshield 21 received positive and mixed responses . Bobby Cooper from DVD Talk praised how the rules of American football is " explained to a foreign audience that has no clue what it 's all about " , adding that instructions at the commercial breaks " were informative and similar to the Go lessons of Hikaru No Go . " He also said the explanations was " hilarious " , but

that " Eyeshield 21 is an excellent introduction to football " . The on @-@ field action was also praised , with he saying the sports action is " where Eyeshield 21 truly shines " , although he criticized the scenes away from the football field , " the pacing slows to a crawl and the storyline gets a little boring " . In her review , Erin Finnegan from Anime News Network stated , " [ t ] he pace of Eyeshield 21 is its saving grace . It 's way less boring than all the time outs and commercial breaks in a regular NFL game . Football is hard to understand , but Eyeshield 21 explains the Byzantine rules ... in an entertaining way . We 're never left waiting for the ref 's decision for long minutes like in real life . A lot of dramatic tension carries the action between plays . " Finnegan also criticized the artwork , saying , " any episode [ of the show ] without a game is clearly farmed out to an inferior animation studio " . Chris Beveridge from Mania Entertainment wrote that Eyeshield 21 " has a good solid story idea , showing a young man finding his way through sports by finding friends and realizing he has potential , but it is so sidelined so often that it 's frustrating to see it deal with situations as it does . "