



DID YOU KNOW?

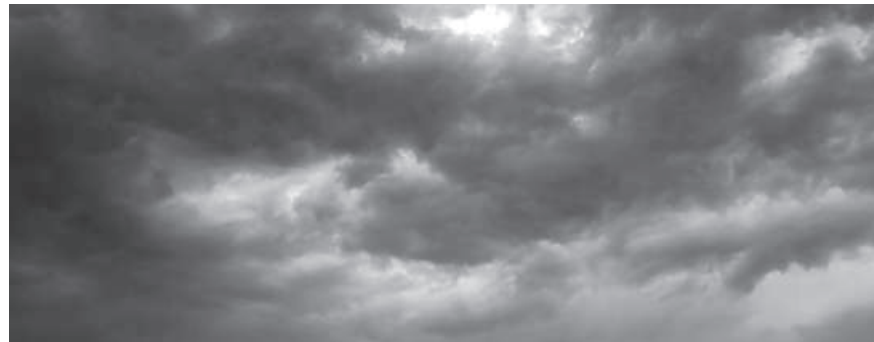
KALBAISAKHI

Where the name comes from and what it signifies

Nor'wester, also known as "Kalbaisakhi", is a seasonal thunderstorm accompanied by strong winds and heavy downpours. It hits the Indian subcontinent hard during April and May bringing sudden changes like strong winds, lightning, thunder, and heavy rain.

"Kalbaisakhi" comes from the two words "Kal," meaning black, and "Baisakhi", the first month of the Bangali calendar. It's named after the dark clouds that signal its approach. Kalbaisakhi storms take place when warm and cold air clash, causing quick weather shifts. These storms usually occur when spring is ending and summer is starting, usually from mid-April to mid-May.

Kalbaisakhi signifies the shift from spring to summer in the Indian subcontinent. It brings abrupt weather changes like strong winds, lightning, and heavy rainfall, affecting agriculture and daily routines unpredictably. While the rain provides much-needed water for crops, the storms also pose risks with their fierce winds and hailstorms, making agricultural planning challenging due to Kalbaisakhi's unpredictable nature.



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The First Slam Dunk is sports anime distilled to its essentials

RAIAN ABEDIN

In the climax of the original manga, the five central characters from Shohoku High School play against Sannoh Kogyo High School, the reigning champions. However, this final match was never featured in the anime adaptation – as it was discontinued before they got around to that. Almost 30 years later, *The First Slam Dunk* features this climax, except that this particular adaptation adds backstories never seen in the anime or manga, creating an experience that not only builds on top of its already established legacy but stands its own ground as a standalone film.

The First Slam Dunk has, in many ways, perfectly distilled everything that makes sports anime good – from its colourful characters to the amazing grunge rock that drives the momentum of the match – the movie knows the essence of good sports anime.

The narrative is aided in two particular ways – one from the director, Takehiko Inoue (who was also the author of the manga), and his deep understanding of basketball. No play here seems unrealistic, the group dynamics and how the ball moves and sounds feel fresh, without any of the added bells and whistles of the heightened reality presented in many sports anime. The realism adds a layer of tension you really cannot recreate by giving your players a visual metaphor akin to a superpower. Takehiko Inoue clearly understands this, his direction makes the match hypnotic to watch.

Then, there is the animation. *The First Slam Dunk* utilises a mix of conventional 2D animation for off-the-court



scenes and 3D for all the on-court sequences. The result is, to my surprise, spellbinding.

3D is often looked down upon by fans of anime for how poor the execution generally tends to be. Here, the kineticism that only 3D movement could provide worked

greatly to the movie's benefit – couple that with the frankly gorgeous shading on the characters and certain sequences that evoke moments from the *Spiderverse* movies, and what you have is something that can serve as the standard for anime films moving forward.