

# Komatsuryu - 56th Annual Aki Taikai

*by Mark Buckton*

Sunday, October 28th, a fine autumn day coming on the back of Japan's 20th typhoon of the season, saw the Riverside Center in Taito-ku host the 56th annual Aki Taikai held at the Komatsuryu Dojo.

With around 170 participants including two non-Japanese and a young lad set to join Tamanoi Beya in 2008, many eyes were on Sumo Ireland's sole rep set to travel to Thailand for the 2007, Sumo World Championships in mid-November - John Gunning - Komatsuryu member.

Now at 115 Kg, (limit for middleweight participation in the SWC) Gunning entered the event in less than tip-top shape

having been unable to shake a cold for some time, but appeared in better form than in recent years. A decent tachiai from a low position many European based rikishi would do well to adopt saw him initially stop his opponent until he found himself upright and being marched backwards out of the dohyo.

Non-Japanese fan attendance was up on recent years with a handful making the trip to the club near the famous Senso-ji Temple but as ever, large numbers of family members and interested fans made it a case of standing room only for much of the day until proceedings wrapped at around 2:30 p.m.