

Elevator Ride

by Lon Howard

Boy can I call 'em or what? OK, back to earth now – my predictions may not attract many fantasy sports gamers but at least this time I knew where the Takekaze Elevator Index (EI) was headed – straight up with no end in sight! Right now he's the only name in the elevator news. With the release of the Haru banzuke, he moved up 13 banzuke spots with his Hatsu 12-3 breakout, and with his Haru breakdown of 3-12, he's pretty much guaranteed to move another 13 or so spots in the opposite direction come May. That's an elevator double-dip.

Although he's been number two on the top ten list of active elevator rikishi for some time, Hokutoriki has always had a ginormous lead over him. That lead has been shrinking steadily over the past year, and could be in jeopardy soon. In fact, it was just one year ago when I reported that Takekaze was still "light years away" from catching Slik Rik, when Rik had an EI of 9.30 and Take's was 6.55. With the Haru banzuke, the two stood at 8.94 and 7.23 and that difference should erode even more after the Haru Basho because of Hokutoriki's 8-7 mark compared with Takekaze's 3-12.

To put Takekaze's elevator prowess in perspective, if he had a 'mature' Longevity Factor (LF) of 1.50, and assuming he falls 13 spots on the Natsu banzuke, he'd be in 20th place on the all-time list. So he's on the fast track to becoming a big-time elevator rikishi, in historical terms.

With his recent surge, Takekaze has also brought my own prediction of recent times crashing back to earth, at least temporarily. I predicted that Futeno would be the one to break out of the pack and possibly someday challenge Hokutoriki, among the active group. Well, he's still #3, and will probably stay there for the near future because #4 Asasekiyū has apparently decided he wants to stay a joi-jin for awhile; and as we know, that doesn't do a lot for one's Elevator Index.

From Hatsu to Haru, the names on the top ten active elevator rikishi list are exactly the same, and no one moved up or down more than one position. It's interesting to note that the EI of seven of them actually increased, with one factor probably being that the Longevity Factor is still going up for all of them, and also that nine of them

changed direction on the banzuke. The list of top ten active rikishi can be found [here](#).

Hokutoriki was one of them whose EI actually dropped, but only from 8.98 to 8.94, which did not affect his position on the all-time top 20 list. He still stands at #19 there. Recently I've noticed that he has won a few bouts after having 'slipped' into a yotsu position during torikumi. If this trend continues, and his sumo stabilizes, it may undermine his aptitude for elevator-ness. Hmm... well, just things to watch for, eh?

The all-time top 20 list of elevator rikishi can be found [here](#). The rules for calculating a rikishi's Elevator Index may be found either [here](#) or on either the top ten or all-time top 20 list.

Those are the banzuke bounces for this time. Let's all get behind Takekaze and cheer him on to another 12-3 production in May, so we can have a real scrap for #1 between him and Hokutoriki! Thanks for 'watching' and see you next time.

All-Time Top 20 Elevator Rikishi

	<u>RIKISHI</u>	<u>MOQ</u>	<u>AFQ</u>	<u>REI</u>	<u>LF</u>	<u>EI</u>	<u>MY</u>
1	Itai	11.58	0.8039	9.31	1.50	13.96	1987
2	Takanofuji	11.00	0.9355	10.29	1.33	13.69	1988
3	Sadanoumi	10.61	0.7674	8.15	1.45	11.81	1984
4	Daijuyama	9.91	0.7460	7.39	1.50	11.09	1986
5	Jingaku	9.47	0.7955	7.53	1.46	10.99	1987
6	Kirinji	10.23	0.6867	7.02	1.50	10.53	1981
7	Higonoumi	10.06	0.6863	6.90	1.50	10.35	1997
8	Daitetsu	10.13	0.7586	7.69	1.31	10.07	1986
9	Kyokudozan	8.40	0.8043	6.76	1.48	10.00	1992
10	Takamisugi	9.70	0.6812	6.43	1.50	9.91	1989
11	Kasugafuji	8.88	0.7619	6.77	1.44	9.75	1992
12	Mainoumi	9.21	0.7368	6.78	1.40	9.50	1994
13	Koboyama	9.06	0.6875	6.23	1.50	9.34	1985
14	Tochiazuma (1)	8.34	0.7414	6.18	1.50	9.27	1972
15	Kyokushuzan	9.51	0.6500	6.18	1.50	9.27	2001
16	Ozutsu	8.19	0.7500	6.15	1.50	9.22	1985
17	Tochihikari (2)	8.52	0.7049	6.00	1.50	9.00	1979
18	Kotofuji	10.00	0.6571	6.57	1.37	9.00	1991
19	Hokutoriki	8.94	0.7353	6.58	1.36	8.94	
20	Toyokuni	9.00	0.7143	6.43	1.37	8.81	1965

- (1) The sekiwake
 (2) aka Kaneshiro

Explanation of the Terms:

MOQ (Move On Quotient): Average number of banzuke spots (not numbered ranks) moved per basho.

AFQ (About Face Quotient): Percentage of time rikishi changed direction on the banzuke.

REI (Raw Elevator Index): $MOQ \times AFQ$.

LF (Longevity Factor): $1.xx$ (xx = number of basho in qualifying string).

EI (Elevator Index): $REI \times LF$.

MY (Mid-Year): Year of the mid-point in rikishi's qualifying string.

For a detailed description, see the [Rules](#).

Active Top 10 Elevator Rikishi

	<u>RIKISHI</u>	<u>MOQ</u>	<u>AFQ</u>	<u>REI</u>	<u>LF</u>	<u>EI</u>
1	Hokutoriki *	8.94	0.7353	6.58	1.36	8.94
2	Takekaze	7.12	0.8000	5.69	1.27	7.23
3	Futeno	6.88	0.7391	5.08	1.25	6.35
4	Asasekiryu *	8.20	0.5862	4.81	1.31	6.30
5	Kyokutenho *	6.40	0.6154	3.94	1.50	5.90
6	Tamanoshima *	7.39	0.5349	3.95	1.50	5.73
7	Takamisakari *	5.69	0.6857	3.90	1.37	5.35
8	Kakizoe	6.70	0.5769	3.87	1.28	4.95
9	Roho	7.33	0.5500	4.03	1.22	4.92
10	Tamakasuga *	5.88	0.5417	3.18	1.50	4.77

* Fully qualified rikishi.

Some figures could seem inaccurate because the spreadsheet calculates unrounded numbers.

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REI (Raw Elevator Index): $MOQ \times AFQ$.

LF (Longevity Factor): $1.xx$ (xx = number of basho in qualifying string).

EI (Elevator Index): $REI \times LF$.

For a detailed description, see the [Rules](#).

Elevator Rules

THE GENERAL PROCEDURE:

These components are used in determining a rikishi's position in the Ranking:

- 1 *Move On Quotient (MOQ)*: The average number of banzuke spots moved per basho (currently 42 spots on the makuuchi banzuke): Starting with the 2nd basho in the string, count the number of spots moved – whether up or down – from the previous basho, and do this for each basho, through the final basho in the string. Total all those figures counted and divide by the number of figures used. This is the MOQ, and is expressed as a number with two decimal places., e.g., 6.25.
- 2 *About Face Quotient (AFQ)*: The percentage of time the rikishi changed direction on the banzuke: Starting with the 2nd basho in the string and going down, record a plus (+) if the rikishi moved up the banzuke from the previous basho, and record a minus (-) if the rikishi moved down (no mark is made if there was no movement). Then, starting with the 3rd basho in the string, determine if there was a change of direction from the previous basho or not. e.g., after a plus (+) is recorded, a change of direction occurs with the next minus (-), and vice versa. Finally, divide the total number of direction changes by *the total number of times a direction change was actually possible* (i.e., number of basho in the string, minus 2). This percentage is the AFQ, and is expressed as a decimal in four places, e.g., .6315.
- 3 *Raw Elevator Index (REI)*: Simply multiply the MOQ by the AFQ.
- 4 *Longevity Factor (LF)*: 1.xx, with xx equal to the total number of basho in a rikishi's qualifying string. e.g., if a rikishi has 45 basho in his string, his LF is 1.45. When a rikishi's LF reaches 1.50, it

will go no higher, but remain at 1.50 for the remainder of his career. This is to prevent a rikishi from posting a large Elevator Index (EI) based more on his longevity than on his movement up and down the banzuke.

- 5 *Elevator Index (EI)*: Multiply the REI by the LF.

Rikishi are then ranked according to their Elevator Index, highest on top.

SPECIFIC RULES:

- 1 A rikishi must have an unbroken string of at least 30 consecutive qualifying basho in order to be listed in the all-time Ranking.
- 2 A rikishi's string is assumed to start with his first makuuchi appearance and end with his last – with these exceptions:
 - When a string begins with the first makuuchi appearance, in order for it to remain unbroken, as you count down the list of basho, the total number of makuuchi appearances must at least equal the total juryo or below appearances. At any point, when this is not true, that string is broken, and a new string is assumed to begin with the second makuuchi appearance, with the same test applied. The string actually begins with the first makuuchi appearance where the test is passed.
 - If using the above exception produces a string with less than 30 basho because the string doesn't start with the first makuuchi appearance, just start the string with the next oldest makuuchi appearance – going back in time – until you've gone up far enough back for a 30-basho string. If this exception is used to create a 30-basho string, it will be disregarded

when and if it's no longer required.

- If the last makuuchi appearance is immediately preceded by at least three consecutive juryo or below appearances, the string will not end with that appearance. Instead, the string ends with the last makuuchi appearance that is not *immediately* preceded by at least three juryo or below appearances.
- 3 If a rikishi doesn't accumulate a string of at least 30 consecutive qualifying basho under these rules, his string will simply begin with his first makuuchi appearance and end with his last. If there are still less than 30 basho in the string, it will begin with his first makuuchi appearance and continue until he retires. As long as the string has at least 30 basho, he will qualify to be listed in the Ranking.
 - 4 In calculating the Move On Quotient (MOQ), a rikishi is credited with zero banzuke spots moved for any demotion to juryo, and for the first makuuchi basho when transiting back from juryo – regardless of how many actual spots were moved. i.e., In counting the number of banzuke spots moved from any one basho to another, both basho must be in makuuchi. Similarly, no credit is given for a change of direction when transiting to and from juryo.
 - 5 All sanyaku ranks other than East are considered West, e.g., S2e, S2w are both counted as Sw. *

* Note: Trying to be exact in accounting for more than two spots for each sanyaku rank (in the cases where that occurred) required a system which sometimes produced nonsensical outcomes further down the banzuke, such as rikishi going from M6e to M7e, yet being credited with a 0 or a 1 count in spots moved, even though two spots were actually moved.