

Elevator Ride

by Lon Howard

As expected, due to the splendid ineptitude of upper-maegashira rankers in September, Hokutoriki's modest 8-7 effort at maegashira 9e earned him a hefty boost up the banzuke, to number 3w. The 11-spot movement was more than enough to not only maintain his huge lead among the active elevator rikishi, but also to vault him past two stalwarts on the all-time top 20 list.

In 17th place, he was ideally positioned to go past at least three more men in the top-20. Sure enough, from maegashira 3, he faced nearly all the top-ten rikishi in Kyushu, and his measly five-win haul should merit at least a 12-spot banzuke drop, which would actually move him into 13th place.

From there, he'll have yet more room to 'grow' into an elevator legend, as his longevity factor doesn't top out (at 1.50) for ten more basho. Since he is already one of only four rikishi on the all-time top 20 list who did not spend a big portion of their careers in the 80s-early 90s time frame, he's already an elevator legend in my book. The all-time top-20 elevator list is found [here](#).

So kudos to Slick Rik – now, what else is new?

Takekaze remains in 2nd place, but still has miles to go in terms of challenging Hokutoriki, despite having gained ever-so-slightly on him with a 12-spot rise on the banzuke, thanks to his 9-6 showing at maegashira 14e in September. The brief run he made for the top spot at the year's beginning is now entirely neutered due to three consecutive mediocre make-koshi beginning in May.

In fact, as I had suspected, Futeno is hot on his trail and perfectly placed to overtake him. Sumo's trail-blazing blog-meister took full advantage of woeful efforts by upper maegashira by nailing down 11 wins at maegashira 10, earning him a whopping 18-spot promotion to maegashira 1w.

Having not been this high on the hog in over three years, his predictable nose-dive in Kyushu (5-10) will merit a possible repeat 18-point move. As Takekaze should not move too many spots in either direction from maegashira 8e with 9-6, Futeno will be the number two guy when the next report is done. The active top-ten elevator list is found [here](#) and the Elevator Rules are found [here](#).

These three appear on the verge of separating themselves from the

rest of the pack. The following trio of Asasekiryu, Kyokutenho and Tamanoshima are not well-positioned to make large moves. Had he been fit, the number 4 spot in the next list may have been occupied by a rikishi who wasn't even listed last time, but is now in 7th place. That would be the luckless Homasho, who was kyujo in September with 0-0-15 and was dealt a 26-spot dive, from maegashira 2w to 15w. However, a fumbling 7-8 in Kyushu, almost guaranteeing him a demotion to juryo, has scuppered his elevator chances.

The bottom of the top-ten list comprises the same three men, only shuffled some: Kakizoe, Takamisakari and Aminishiki. They present no challenge to the blue-chippers. Futeno's crash and burn in Kyushu enables him to make a run at blueblood class, but – as Takekaze has discovered – catching Hokutoriki is not an easy task. For now, Futeno will leapfrog Takekaze into 2nd place on the active list. Since their five win-scores were at least one more than expected, Hokutoriki and Futeno may not fall far enough on Hatsu's banzuke to assure them enough wins for a large bounce back up. Eyes peeled, then!

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	Hokutoriki	8.90	0.7368	6.56	1.40	9.18	
18	Tochihikari (2)	8.52	0.7049	6.00	1.50	9.00	1979
19	Kotofuji	10.00	0.6571	6.57	1.37	9.00	1991
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 *	8.90	0.7368	6.56	1.40	9.18
2	Takekaze *	7.47	0.7586	5.66	1.31	7.42
3	Futeno	7.57	0.7037	5.33	1.29	6.87
4	Asasekiryu *	7.71	0.6061	4.67	1.35	6.30
5	Kyokutenho *	6.61	0.6250	4.13	1.50	6.20
6	Tamanoshima *	7.06	0.5319	3.76	1.49	5.60
7	Homasho	8.33	0.5714	4.76	1.16	5.52
8	Kakizoe *	6.68	0.5147	4.01	1.32	5.29
9	Takamisakari *	5.70	0.6000	3.65	1.41	5.15
10	Aminishiki *	6.20	0.6410	3.29	1.50	4.93

* 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.