

Kyushu Henka Summary

by Ben Doolan

Kyushu Basho was a slow henka basho by any stretch of the imagination. There were only 16 henka certified by majority vote, and only three of the Aki Basho top ten list managing to add to their henka tallies. In fact, without the efforts of three intrepid multiple henka-pullers, we would have been in unprecedented single-digit territory (at least in the 21 basho since Henka Sightings started).

One such multiple henka-puller was the ever-reliable Aminishiki. With the disappearance of Russian brothers Roho and Hakurozan from the calculations, Aminishiki finds himself in a league of his own henka-wise. His triple-henka effort for Kyushu was enough to see his rate rise above 8% of all bouts and set him nearly 3% ahead of his closest qualified rival, Yoshikaze.

The major threat to Aminishiki comes from the four as-yet-unqualified makuuchi rikishi who currently have higher henka-rates: Aran, Kitataiki, Kimurayama and Chiyohakuho. All of them still have a long way to go before qualification, and they could settle down into less evasive taichi ai practices, though at least Kimurayama looks destined for the top-ten list if he can manage the required 100 bouts.

Kimurayama also managed to accumulate three majority-voted henka in Kyushu. His usual, slightly off-centre, taichi ai saw him receive more nominations than this, though, in the eyes of most voters, this doesn't constitute a henka.

While it's still early days yet, if the performance of the new Russian on the block is anything to go by, then Aran might replace his countryman Roho atop the henka list. His first basho in the top flight saw three bona fide henka, and elevation up the banzuke may see more in future in an effort to kachi koshi against better opponents.

Due to the low numbers of henka, there was only minimal change on the top-ten list, with Asasekiryu and Hokutoriki dropping below Yoshikaze due to henka-free basho. Here is the list of top-ten active henka-pullers, ranked in order of the *percentage of total bouts in which they have henka'd*. Only the henka bouts that received a majority of yes votes are counted.

Aminishiki	8.25
Yoshikaze	5.31
Asasekiryu	4.98
Hokutoriki	4.98
Kakuryu	4.66
Kotooshu	4.35
Ama	4.13
Kasugao	3.41
Kotomitsuki	3.18
Tokitenku	3.17

The stand out henka target in Kyushu was Tosanoumi, who was victimised on three occasions. It's not unusual for Tosanoumi to be targeted, having been a regular in the top-ten target list for some time, though it was unusual for him to lose all three times. Prior to this basho he had lost only 27% of bouts in which his opponent had henka'd. He still boasts a very respectable 57% win-rate.

Dejima was also targeted twice, but managed to salvage one win by beating Aran on day 5. Other than this, there was an even spread of henka victims, with nobody else being on the receiving end more than once.

Here's the current top-ten list of targets, ranked in order of the *percentage of total bouts in which they were a henka target*. Again, only the henka bouts receiving a majority 'yes' vote are used in these calculations:

Hokutoriki	9.22
Dejima	7.30
Miyabiyama	6.54
Kotooshu	5.35
Tosanoumi	5.32
Chiyotaikai	4.81
Kasugao	4.55
Iwakiyama	4.28
Kaio	4.17
Toyohibiki	4.17

As with the top-ten henka perpetrators, there was only minimal change with the targets list due to the low number of henka. Tosanoumi was the only big mover, with a jump from 8th place to 5th, while Kisenosato and Goeido fell out of the top ten to be replaced by Kaio and Toyohibiki.

The entire henka database can be seen [here](#). The perpetrator and target worksheets include all makuuchi bouts since the beginning of the study. All categories in the perpetrator and target worksheets are completely 'sortable' by anyone on their own computer. As posted, the perpetrator list is sorted by Henka to Bouts % (H/Bouts %) and the

target list is sorted by Target to
Bouts % (Target %).

While the Kyushu Basho probably

won't rank up there for henka
aficionados, January next year
may well have them licking there
lips with glee, as on average, the

Hatsu produces more henka than
any other basho. So stay tuned,
and be prepared for more taichi ai
hijinx in the new year.