

# Ones to Watch – Kyushu Basho 2009

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This time's OTW have no specific theme, merely focusing on makuuchi, juryo, upward-movers, downward-sliders and, as it has been a fine tradition this year: some twins.

A record of 51-24 after five basho makes [Kotooshu](#) statistically the best ozeki in 2009 so far (he is one win ahead of Harumafuji). After a yusho in July he got the obligatory 9-6 in September that busted his second yokozuna run but at least prolonged his kachi-koshi streak to nine tournaments. Without any doubt he will get the tenth consecutive positive record in November (barring serious injuries) and it will be exciting to see whether he keep his position as best-performing ozeki of 2009.



*Ozeki Kotooshu*

In September, [Kakuryu](#) returned to the sekiwake rank after just one basho. He definitely is a force to reckon with and seems to feel pretty comfortable in the sanyaku ranks now. In contrast to many

other men up there his weaponry is not based on brute power but on technical skills, as he is one of the lightweights among sumo's top ten athletes. His four Gino-sho have not been awarded for nothing. Three of his Gino-sho came in 2009, so let's see whether he can make it four during the next three weeks.



*Kakuryu*

The man mountain [Yamamotoyama](#) seems to be stuck between lower makuuchi and upper juryo. It has been pretty foreseeable that his tactics of relying on his ever-increasing weight and just walking into the opponent would become ineffective in the paid ranks – and yield injuries. The ineffectiveness has surfaced, the injury has surfaced, and what will become of YMY? His stablemaster Onoe (weighing only half as much during his active days) should take care of that problem soon, otherwise we won't be able to watch Yamamotoyama any longer.

Unfortunately in Kyushu the question will once again be: "To Cling, or not to Cling... to makuuchi?"



*Yamamotoyama*

Another man on the brink of first and second division is [Masatsukasa](#). After his promotion to juryo (and the subsequent surprising revelation that he had been married for two years already!), he has pushed his average rank higher and higher every year. He is a constant in upper juryo today, where he will again be in November after a senshuraku make-koshi from M16. We will watch him come back from there and become a makuuchi constant in 2010.

The Georgian member of the heavyweight Kise-beya, [Gagamaru](#), will be in his shin-juryo basho after a perfect 7-0 makushita yusho. With that promotion, all of today's rikishi from the Caucasus republic are

now in the paid ranks. Of course, he will work his way through the second division fast and will soon meet his senior compatriots. Let's just hope that their bouts will not only be about who will apply the best henka!

Half a year ago I mentioned the possibility of a future "Twins to Watch" column. Well, with [Fujinoumi](#) and [Fujinohana](#) we now have three active twin pairings, but let's give them some time to adjust themselves to

Ozumo first. For a change, the two Fujis do not hail from Nishonoseki-ichimon but from Dewanoumi.

Enjoy the Kyushu Basho!