

Kokugi Konnections

How to make history and mess up an ozeki promotion push

by Chris Gould

The recent sumo internet trend is for matches from recent tournaments to be posted on youtube very quickly, allowing fans to watch them online even before the evening digest show. Such a development will only add colour to Sumo Fan Magazine, allowing us to illustrate points raised in our basho review articles with up-to-date video evidence.

Those of you itching to see the moment when Kaio equalled the all-time record for sumo wins need look no further than here.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDVahO1ZgMA> The match exemplifies the speed of thinking that has become Kaio's hallmark in his later sumo life, compensating for lack of stamina and strength with rapid execution of techniques. Here is the longer Japanese version of the match.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQwX_-kL05k

The following day's match, where Kaio actually breaks the win-record, may be seen here.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M2N_9SvNnFY Note the heavily accented hand-claps before

the fight as the Nagoya faithful seek to inspire Kaio's wounded frame to great achievements, and keep him on the dohyo even further past his sell-by date.

Kaio's last ever match can be found here, with viewers surely left in no doubt as to why he called it quits.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrDDiudLXYA> Meanwhile, the moment that Kaio actually announced his retirement can be seen here.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O3TkwoRbg84>

The man speaks with a dignity that far outweighs his final matches on the dohyo. Many people who witnessed this speech actually gained new appreciation for him because of it. Here, the big man expresses his own appreciation for the huge support that he received from the fans. He claims that surpassing the win record has left him with nothing else to achieve in sumo, and that this has cemented his desire to retire. "I trained hard for 23 years, I ascended up the ranks, and my sumo life gradually became much more fun!" he

comments. "It was just the best feeling to do my sumo to such an extent, and I'm just so happy I entered the sumo world in the first place!" he concludes.

Those interested in seeing just how close Kotoshogiku came to being an ozeki, can check out these highly dramatic encounters on Day 13 and Day 14. The first is against Okinoumi, who shows exactly why he's a rising star and most definitely one to watch.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0QV29bQ7OLo>

The next match is against 35-year-old Wakanosato, the perennial warhorse, always finding something extra in his bag of technical tricks just when you think he's completely washed up.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kT002QESAa8>

With the number of sumo videos ballooning by the week, we are quite possibly witnessing a golden age of internet sumo treasures. Kokugi Konnections will do its best to keep unearthing the hidden gems.