

# Elevator Ride

by Lon Howard

As you will recall, Hokutoriki is the only active rikishi on the top 20 all-time list of elevator rikishi, and that due to his recent two-basho descent into juryo, his place on the list has been falling fast. Actually, he has now fallen off the list and sits in 23rd place. But as of this writing, we know that he compiled a 9-6 record in the Natsu basho, and so that should bump him up maybe six or eight banzuke spots (not numbered ranks), and at least stop his slide down the list. He probably won't move back up onto the top 20 list for a while because he won't get credit for a change of direction this time. This is because his last movement on the banzuke that was completely within makuuchi was also in an upward direction. But – since his rank for Nagoya still won't be all that high, he really needs to make yet another upward move so he'll have enough banzuke room to plummet down but still stay in the top division. Then he'll be in a position to leap back up and return to his old elevator form. Hopefully, he still has a long makuuchi career ahead, and as his Longevity Factor (LF) increases, so will his place in the all-time ranking, as long as he resumes his elevator ways without another trip to juryo. Just to compare, if he had the same Longevity Factor

(LF) as Kyokushuzan, right now he would be 9th all-time, and surpass Shoes-on, who is 11th.

Since he is the only significant active elevator rikishi, the remainder of the top 20 all-time list is unchanged, except for Kurama moving up to no. 20, as a result of his exit. Hokutoriki's current Elevator Index (EI) is 8.75, and after him, the next fully qualified active man is Kaiho – no. 70 at 5.96.

The complete all-time top 20 list may be found on [page 2](#).

Now let's look at the rest of the currently active rikishi. Remember that the active list as published here also includes rikishi who haven't yet compiled a 30-basho qualifying string, but who have accumulated 15 basho. Including these unqualified men allows us to more completely gauge how the active rikishi are progressing, elevator-wise, even though many of them are not yet fully qualified. Naturally, the active men's EI is expected to be lower than those who have retired, just because they would have a lower Longevity Factor. For example, if there were no LF, no. 2 man Takekaze would be 33rd all-time, and since he still only has 22

makuuchi basho (not counting Natsu), he could yet be a contender if he has a long career.

On [page 3](#), the top ten active list clearly shows that Hokutoriki, Takekaze and Asasekiryu are the only serious elevator challengers on the horizon. One would need an REI (Raw Elevator Index: calculated without the LF) of at least 6.00 to get into the top 20 all-time list, unless they had a very long makuuchi career. My vote right now for the active rikishi with the most career elevator potential is Futeno, because he is still young, but giving every sign that he doesn't have the mental makeup to realize his potential. With his natural ability, he'll clean house near the bottom of the division and then crash and burn every time he nears the joi-jin. Hokutoriki is kind of like that too, but as a one-trick-pony, he's easier for the lower-rankers to figure out, and so will always be vulnerable to juryo excursions and the accompanying penalties. Futeno's versatility should prevent that from happening to him.

That's the elevator report for this time. If you have any thoughts, please send to [editor@sumofanmag.com](mailto:editor@sumofanmag.com). See you in August.

## 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	0.804	9.31	1.53	14.2	1987
2	Takanofuji	11	0.936	10.29	1.33	13.7	1988
3	Kirinji	10.23	0.687	7.02	1.85	13	1981
4	Daijuyama	9.91	0.746	7.39	1.65	12.2	1986
5	Sadanoumi	10.61	0.767	8.15	1.45	11.8	1984
6	Takamisugi	9.7	0.681	6.61	1.71	11.3	1989
7	Jingaku	9.47	0.796	7.53	1.46	11	1987
8	Ozutsu	8.19	0.75	6.15	1.78	10.9	1985
9	Higonoumi	10.06	0.686	6.9	1.53	10.6	1997
10	Daitetsu	10.13	0.759	7.69	1.31	10.1	1986
11	Kyokushuzan	9.51	0.65	6.18	1.62	10	2001
12	Kyokudozan	8.4	0.804	6.76	1.48	10	1992
13	Tochiazuma (1)	8.34	0.741	6.18	1.6	9.89	1972
14	Tochihikari (2)	8.52	0.705	6	1.63	9.79	1979
15	Kasugafuji	8.88	0.762	6.77	1.44	9.75	1992
16	Mainoumi	9.21	0.737	6.78	1.4	9.5	1994
17	Koboyama	9.06	0.688	6.23	1.5	9.34	1985
18	Kaiki	8.27	0.662	5.47	1.67	9.14	1981
19	Kotofuji	10	0.657	6.57	1.37	9	1991
20	Kurama	8.37	0.661	5.53	1.61	8.9	1982

Some figures could seem inaccurate due to the spreadsheet calculating unrounded numbers.

- (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, scroll down to the [Rules](#) on page 4.

## 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 *	8.8	0.7586	6.68	1.31	8.75
2	Takekaze	7.05	0.75	5.29	1.22	6.45
3	Asasekiryu	8.44	0.5833	4.92	1.26	6.2
4	Kaiho *	6.8	0.6047	4.11	1.45	5.96
5	Kyokutenho *	6.23	0.617	3.84	1.49	5.73
6	Tokitsuumi *	6.31	0.5882	3.71	1.53	5.68
7	Tamanoshima *	7.67	0.5263	4.04	1.4	5.65
8	Futeno	7	0.6667	4.67	1.2	5.6
9	Tamakasuga *	5.76	0.5522	3.18	1.69	5.38
10	Aminishiki *	6.56	0.55	3.61	1.42	5.12

\* Fully qualified rikishi.

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

For a detailed description, scroll down to the [Rules](#) on page 4.

# 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

- 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 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.
  - 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.

- 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.