

Kokugi Konnections Record Breakers

by Chris Gould

With so many wrestlers on course to break records at present, it is time for Kokugi Konnections to review some of the records they are trying to break.

As mentioned in the basho review, ozeki Kaio – still intent on going strong at the age of 37 – now has 966 career wins under his wide belt. The record holder for sumo career wins is the legendary Chiyonofuji (Yokozuna 1981-1991), who belied his small physical stature to garner an astonishing 1045 career victories. While it may be unlikely that Kaio's fading frame will surpass that milestone, it is likely that he will become only the second man to register 1000 victories.

Many fans may recall that Chiyonofuji, the 'Wolf,' sent his wins total into four figures against Hananokuni on the seventh day of the 1990 Haru basho. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vy5imJbrmG0>. He secured the victory in style with his trademark scoop throw (sukuinage), the same technique used to defeat Ozutsu to capture the then-record of 965 career wins. However, fewer fans may recall that he actually had a chance to post 1000 wins a day

earlier, against an up-and-coming man of similar build by the name of Kirishima. In the early 1990s, Chiyonofuji and Kirishima entertained with some exciting matches, and none more so than on Day 6 in Osaka. For a textbook example of classic yotzu-zumo, look no further than the following link. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wcucHXU07jI>. This is the moment Kirishima truly arrived on the sumo stage, and he recalls it fondly in his book.

Also on the lookout for record-book glory in Fukuoka is Hakuho, who is seeking to break the record for sumo wins in a calendar year. That milestone, of course, belongs to his arch-rival Asashoryu, who achieved his 84th victory of 2005 against a hapless Chiyotaikai, accessible via this page: <http://www.banzuke.com/~movies/kyushu2005/151105mov.html>.

Asashoryu, on the other hand, will try for a 25th Emperor's Cup in the year's final basho. Should his attempt prove successful, he will surpass former NHK Chairman Kitanoumi's haul of 24 makuuchi yusho, the last of which was achieved in May 1984. Kokugi

Konnections has already showcased the bout which brought him the championship, so here – instead – is the match against fellow grand champion Takanosato which earned him a perfect score: 15 wins from 15 bouts. The match should be of interest to anyone who wonders what sumo's Golden Era was like. Added feel for the atmosphere is provided by full NHK commentary.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s3OgaljC3rA>.

Fans with a keen mind for statistics will most probably know why the next clip is significant in the record books.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mnpYxSTaYkE>. It is actually Chiyotaikai poleaxing Baruto to escape kadoban for the 13th time in May 2009 – another sumo first. Should he overturn a kadoban situation again in Kyushu, he will extend this number to 14 – a record both impressive and unwanted.

Join us next time for the most ambitious Kokugi Konnections yet, as we sift through the 2000s archives to try and unearth the Makuuchi Match of the Decade.