

SFM Fan Interviews

Asashoryu retirement: What the general public in Japan think

by Chris Gould

'When I was watching the TV at lunchtime, and I saw the news that the Kyokai were meeting to discuss Asashoryu's future, I expected it to be just like any other time: he'd get a slap on the wrist and be allowed to continue. But, at the back of my mind, I thought that this time he might end up leaving, so I can't say I'm surprised.'

Harumi, 38, Iwatsuki

'I don't really like him so much. Putting that aside, his previous scandals were not so serious. But this time, he went a little too far, didn't he?'

Junko, 65, Koshigaya

'I think his leaving is positive for sumo. The negative headlines will disappear and the sumo association can concentrate on marketing itself rather than worry about him.'

Yoshi, 47, Tokyo

'Every country is packed with different personalities: quiet, confident, loud and violent.'

In Japan, we see all these types, and I'm sure it's the same in Mongolia. My impression is that Asashoryu is more aggressive than the average Mongol, and certainly too aggressive for sumo. That is why the Kyokai cannot accept him.'

Michiko, 55, Kuki

'He's caused too many scandals. It was only a matter of time before one of them caught up with him. He has to go now.'

Shin, 65, Hokkaido

'I think Asashoryu is making a fool of Japanese customs and he should absolutely go.'

Makiko, 64, Kasukabe

'What's the big deal? His previous scandals don't seem so serious to me. So what – the guy skives off sumo duties to play soccer. It seems the sumo association are coming down a bit hard on him.'

Mike, 42, Omiya

I really respect Asashoryu for

living his life the way he wants to live it. I wish I could live like him.'

Kayo, 22, Utsunomiya

'I thought he was an exciting yokozuna and it is very sad news that he has decided to retire. Sumo attendances will probably decrease because of this.'

Chikako, 63, Hokkaido

'I'm sorry to see him go but he's caused so many scandals by himself. He deserved to be punished.'

Saori, 60, Saitama

'I wanted him to stay on and do his best for a little longer, but I felt that this time there really was no alternative but for him to go. It's a shame.'

Mayumi, 46, Saitama

'I was really shocked about the alleged assault. He's a scary guy.'

Marie, 27, Tokyo