

Ones to Watch Aki Basho 2010

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Nagoya Basho 2010 was without doubt one of the strangest basho ever. With six out of 42 rikishi taking an enforced break of 0-0-15 and another one forced to retire, there was lot of room for improvement on the banzuke for those rikishi lucky enough to start. Eight lucky maegashira reached the minimum requirement for a promotion (an 8-7 overall score) and may look forward to considerable jumps upwards. Of course, **Hakuho** and his 47-and-still-going winning streak should be mentioned here, too, but more of that in the next issue.



Tokitenku

Tokitenku is back to where he was three years ago. Unfortunately he is not high enough in the promotion order to reach the komusubi rank for the third time. Nevertheless it will be interesting to watch him going against the big guys again and to see how many ozeki he will be able to fell this time. His lifetime

record against three of them is almost even!

Compatriot **Tokusegawa** is on a run. In eight of the last nine basho he has got a kachi-koshi, and in the last four he has reached a new career high rank every time. Now it will be the first time that he might face serious competition. His 190cm and 150+kg frame should be enough physically and, but is he mentally ready yet? Even if not, at 27 years he has still some time in makuuchi left, and this will not be the best we have yet seen of him.

The third Mongolian in this column, **Mokonami**, might be on a new career high rank in Aki. (Funny, he has had just seven basho in the first division but seems already like a long-time resident to me.) He will become a fixture in the lower makuuchi for now with occasional jumps into the joi-jin ranks. Aki might be one of those occasions, and it will be exciting to watch him meeting his first sanyaku opponent.

I have already said much about my "March Tenner" **Tosayutaka**, who started in Ozumo just three years ago. He's still adjusting to mid-makuuchi level, and his 8-7 will move him up high enough to face sanyaku opponents now. The last encounter ended with a devastating 3-12, and unfortunately I have not much hope that it will be any better this time.

Kokkai might meet Tosa in Aki again (they have already met six times in the last seven basho), and



Tosayutaka

you know that I'm watching this duel very closely. The Georgian has the upper hand in their previous meetings. But as he seems to be overtaxed even at mid-maegashira ranks nowadays we might see him slide down. And it may be doubted with reason that he can be as successful as in his last juryo stint in Kyushu 2003: yusho with 14-1.

Initially **Kimurayama** was more highly regarded than his current records warrant: he seems to be tucked between lower makuuchi and upper juryo with no chance of escaping from that area. Maybe he has become too heavy already as he has added almost 10 kg every year since 2006. Whatever the reason watch him, root for him, and hope that he'll finally stay in the first division more than three basho in a row (his current best mark).



Kimurayama

Within one year [Bushuyama](#) has had the whole range of ups and downs a rank-and-file maegashira can have: promotion to his highest

career rank, falling hard from there, even slipping into the second division, taking the title and returning in glorious fashion to the first division. You can't expect more from him and his 34 years of age than to repeat that performance – at best.

Luckily the "Elevator Ride" column has been discontinued as otherwise poor Lon would have to watch his favourite elevator rider [Hokutoriki](#) losing his position in the top ten all-time list. The year 2010 hasn't been his year so far with three negative records, even from positions where a 10-5 or better was almost guaranteed only some time ago. At his age a short trip into juryo could become the final destination. He had better get another kachi-koshi in

September!

Enjoy the Aki Basho!



Bushuyama