

Letters to the Editor

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Offenders should be punished

Dear SFM,

It seems to me that the major problem with sumo is old fashioned. Granted, what the members have done cannot be condoned. They should all be expelled, no exceptions. This is what we called zero tolerance policy. If a member does not want to be expelled, don't do the crime. They don't deserve to be a member of the sumo world, no matter what the crime is. I don't think it is right to punish everybody because of what a few have done, but I think that is the Japanese way.

It probably would help to give the four lower divisions a salary. Maybe that would help them some and not be tempted to do what the Kyokai deems to be wrong and is also wrong through tradition. The world has modernized immensely in the last one hundred years. Things must change or get left behind. I will always be a sumo fan, no matter what. However it does pain me to continually see

these things happen.

The older sumo fans in Japan must realize that some of the current rules in sumo do not apply, and should be changed. My opinion only. I lived in Japan from 1964-1966 and 1975-1976. I think I have a fair understanding of the culture. I wonder how many true sumo fans in Japan are younger than 40? Sumo has to compete with the technology available to younger people. There are a lot more things to do these days than sit in the Kokugikan.

Yours,
Ronald Kloess, Hawaii

Thanks for training advice

Dear SFM,

Thanks for replying to my email about watching sumo training.

On February 3rd, we arrived in Ryogoku at 8am and were just a little too late for both the stables

we visited. Still we got to see some of the guys even if they were just tidying up the gym.

I couldn't find the Pearl Hotel for the map of sumo stables, but maybe it will interest SFM readers to know that the stables are marked on a tourist info map opposite MacDonalds – perhaps that can help someone out in the future.

Either way, it was a worthwhile trip just to see their training/living quarters. I've become fascinated by the sumo lifestyle during my time in Japan, so I'll definitely keep tabs on your site in future for the results of the next tournament now that I can recognise a few of the faces and names. I have been a fan of MMA and K1 for many years but had little idea of what goes on in Sumo beyond the fights prior to my visit.

Thanks again for being so helpful and best wishes for the future.

Lee Brownsword, UK