



大相撲新報



SUMO SHIMPO

THE VOICE OF CALIFORNIA SUMO SINCE 1999

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Hakuho Joins The Legends

Goes Zensho for 10th Yusho; Asashoryu Settles For 11-4

By “Yukikaze” for SUMO SHIMPO

Both yokozuna-West ASASHORYU and yokozuna-West HAKUHO (both MGL) had something interesting at stake at the 2009 Haru Bashi. For SHORYU, his next yusho would be number 24 in his career, pulling him into a tie with **Kitanoumi (52)** for third place on the list of the sport’s legends. Meanwhile, HAKUHO’s next championship would be his 10th, which would start him on the legends list with the sky as the limit.

For the first nine days of the tournament it looked as if it could go either way, as both grand champions kept taking their matches. It was SHORYU who finally ‘blinked’ in this matchup, losing to ozeki #2-West HARUMAFUJI (MGL) while “Sleeping Thunder” was taking down the slumping ozeki #1-West CHIYOTAIKAI. “The Express” drew TAIKAI for day 11, and took full advantage – but when he lost on day 12 to ozeki #3-East KOTOMITSUKI while HAKUHO disposed of HARUMAFUJI, it was all but over. A loss to ozeki #1-East KOTOOSHU (BUL) followed by falling to the junior yokozuna on senshuraku, left him with an acceptable but empty 11-4.

HAKUHO’s triumph on the final day capped his second perfect performance. The victory makes him the 14th grand champion in modern sumo history to hold the Tenno-Hai ten times. His next championship (when it happens) will pull him into a tie with **Akebono (64)**.

There was a tie for top honors among the ozeki crew, as OSHU and HARUMAFUJI both put up 10-5 efforts. MITSUKI and #2-East KAIO both finished with 8-7s. If TAIKAI was hurt for this tournament, his decision to ‘sumo up’ and compete was a poor one: after trouncing maegashira #1-East HOKUTORIKI on day 1 he got pushed, forced and slapped down for the next six days. Winning over sekiwake-West KISENOSATO on day 8 did not stanch the bleeding: he failed to win another torikumi for the rest of the basho... and in so doing,

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SHUNBUN 2009: A Great Day Outdoors

By “Yukikaze” for SUMO SHIMPO

It wasn’t quite like three years ago, when more than twenty people came to do battle on the sand... and a trio of sumotori from Mongolia rode away with every gold medal they were eligible to win.

But the fourteen people who came to the “Dohyo of Dreams” on a warm spring Saturday for SHUNBUN 2009 (The Spring Equinox Tournament) all fought hard and well. They competed in six different competitions, and had a good time.

Form prevailed in the girls’ competition as Judy Morrow took consecutive matches. Alfredo Gutierrez’ trip from Fresno had not been made in vain, as he dominated the three-man lightweight division. Brad Sutton had shed over 50 pounds, but had not made it down to the 85-kilo lightweight limit. Despite the loss of heft, he still managed to come out on top in the five-man middleweight bracket. His win had been made a bit easier by perennial middleweight power Doug Cochran’s failure to come in under 115 kilos. But Doug had been a strong heavyweight in his early amateur sumo career: only the freakish power of current national champion Dan Kalbfleisch forced him to settle for the silver medal. Americus Abesamis and Jim Lowerre had never met mano a mano before this day: the winner of their match would get the heavyweight bronze. Both men went hard in a match that provided surprises for both of them... the biggest being that the referee judged Americus to have touched the ground first, and the line judges backing that decision.

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LET’S BUST THE TIME WARP AGAIN!... Two-time world heavyweight champion “Byamba” smashes through a painted panel for an upcoming segment of the Discovery Channel show “Time Warp”. The segment was recorded at the “Dohyo of Dreams”. (Photo: “Yukikaze”)



HAKUHO (from front page)

set a new record for losses by an ozeki with 13. Five rikishi hold the previous record of 12 losses: the latest one to earn entry into that shameful category was *Konishiki* at the 1988 Aki Bashi. Needless to say, TAIKAI is big-time kadoban for the Natsu tourney.

The lower sanyaku will have the East-siders staying in place, while the West-siders will be replaced. It looked bad for sekiwake-East BARUTO (EST) as he stood at 4-7 after day 11. But he hitched himself up and won his last four bouts to get his *kachi*. Komusubi-East GOEIDO balanced *shiroboshi* and *kuroboshi* for the first nine days, then took five of his last six to finish at 9-6. Sekiwake-West KISENOSATO was not able to keep his momentum going, as he slipped to a “Woolworth” finish (5-10). Four wins in the last five days was ‘too little, too late’ for komusubi-West KYOKUTENHO: he ended his fifteen days at 6-9 and will be back in the hiramaku in May.

#7-East HOMASHO posted an 11-4 for the second basho in a row, to lead the maegashira ranks again. Other noteworthy hiramaku efforts:

#1-West KAKURYU (MGL) (10-5)

#5-West AMINISHIKI (9-6)

#11-East ASASEKIRYU (MGL) (9-6)

#11-West ARAN (RUS) (9-6)

#13-East CHIYOHAKUHO (10-5)

#14-East TAMAWASHI (9-6)

In Juryo: #3-West TOYOHIBIKI went 12-3 to take the division title and earn a spot on the top line of the Natsu banzuke. Other notable records from the top of sumo’s minor leagues:

#6-East MOKONAMI (MGL) (9-6)

#8-East KOTOKUNI (9-6)

#9-West KITATAIKI (10-5)

#10-East SAKAIZAWA (10-5)

#11-East WAKAKOYU (11-4)

#11-West SHIRONONAMI (9-6)

#13-East WAKATENRO (9-6)

#13-West ASOFUJI (9-6)

“Legendary” Yokozuna (10+ Yusho)

(updated after Haru 2009)

YOKOZUNA	Heya	Yusho	Zensho
Taiho	Nishonoseki	32	8
Chiyonofuji	Kokonoe	31	7
Kitanoumi	Mihogaseki	24	7
ASASHORYU	Takasago	23	5
Takanohana II	Futagoyama	22	4
Wajima	Hanakago	14	3
Musashimaru	Musashigawa	12	1
Futabayama	Futabayama	12	8
Akebono	Azumazeki	11	0
HAKUHO*	Miyagino	10	2
Kitanofuji	Kokonoe	10	3
Tochinishiki	Kasugano	10	1
Tsunenohana	Dewanoumi	10	1
Wakanohana I	Hanakago	10	1

JUNIOR DIVISION YUSHO WINNERS (Haru 2009)

Division	Rank	Shikona	Heya	Rec.
Makushita	17-E	TOKUSHINHO	Kise	6-1
Sandanme	67-W	WAKARIKIDO	Matsugane	7-0
Jonidan	55-W	CHIYONOKUNI	Kokonoe	7-0
Jonokuchi	22-W	AOKI	Kise	7-0

Current Holders of USSF Dan Rank

Rank (Degree)	Name (Club)
Sandan (3rd)	Tom Zabel (LSSA)
Nidan (2nd)	Hiroshi Matsuzaki (SCSK), Harry Dudrow (SCSK), Kelly Gneiting (SRSA), Jim Lowerre (SCSK), Doug Cochran (GSS)
Shodan (1st)	Jeff Riddle (GSS), Andrew Freund (CSA), Troy Collins (CSC), Rene Marte (JKC), Tyler Olsen (GEM), Trent Sabo (OSK), Marcus Barber (SCSK), Kurt Rightmyer (SCSK), Bart Harris (LSSA), Art Morrow (SCSK), Packy Bannevans* (GSA)

* Rank conferred by the Japan Sumo Federation

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Effective with this (Hatsu) issue, SUMO SHIMPO will become a solely-electronic publication, with issues being available in Adobe PDF format at www.sumoshimpo.com. We will no longer produce a print version. Subscriptions will no longer be offered or accepted. Membership in the SCSK will still be available at \$5.00/year.

Comments and contributions from readers are not only welcome, but strongly encouraged.

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IF YOU REALLY LOVE SUMO, AND WANT TO STAY CLOSE TO IT FOR MANY YEARS TO COME...

MAKE THE COMMITMENT!! **Become a United States Sumo Federation** **LIFE MEMBER**

A one-time tax-deductible donation of \$200.00 eliminates your worries about annual USSF dues **FOR LIFE**. If you compete in USSF-sanctioned amateur sumo events for ten years or more, a Life Membership will pay for itself. It also shows you are very serious about the sport, and is a definite 'resume enhancer' if you decide to seek office in the USSF or any other amateur sports body.

Application form is available at www.sumoshimpo.com

The 700-Win Club

(after Haru 2009)

Rikishi (Top Rank)	MD Basho	MD Wins	Wins/Basho
Chiyonofuji (Y58)	81	807	9.96
Kitanoumi (Y55)	78	804	10.31
KAIO (O)	94	774	8.23
Taiho (Y48)	69	746	10.81
Musashimaru (Y67)*	73	706	9.67
Takanohana II (Y65)	75	701	9.35

* Non-Japanese

The ASASHORYU Watch

(after Haru 2009)

Rikishi (Top Rank)	MD Basho	MD Wins	Wins/Basho
ASASHORYU (Y68)	50	536	10.72

Poll question:

Now that SHORYU has won 23 championships (and looks as if he's good for a few more), does he deserve ichidai toshiyori (one-generation elder) status when his active career is over?

(This would, of course, be predicated on SHORYU becoming a citizen of Japan. If he doesn't, he would be ineligible regardless of the number of yusho he wins.)

Please send your comments to jimlowerre@yahoo.com.

SHUNBUN (from front page)

Nine men stepped forward to compete in the openweight lists. To keep the bracket balanced, Alfredo and Ryan were selected randomly to “wrestle in”: Alfredo won the slot. To those who have been around the sport for awhile, it was not surprising to see Andrew Freund make his way through the main bracket until he was in the finals. But that was where the run came to an abrupt end, against Dan. Pushed into the consolation bracket, Alfredo battled through for the bronze. With Jim sidelined by a bloodied, sand-scraped knee, Glenn Crosby and Art Morrow fought for the masters’ title: Glenn won the “old gold”.

Thanks to the Discovery Channel’s donation for the use of the “DoD” for a segment of their “Time Warp” show (see related article), the SCSK is able to fund a California Open Sumo Championships this year. The event is slated for late afternoon on Saturday, August 8 at the “DoD” in Garden Grove.

The field at SHUNBUN 2009 (l to r): Mark Reiman, Jim Lowerre, Judy Morrow, Art Morrow, Doug Cochran, Ryan White, Dan Kalbfleisch, Jose Jimenez (back), Alfredo Gutierrez (front), Brad Sutton, Andrew Freund, Americus Abesamis, Hannah Crosby, Glenn Crosby. (Photo taken with “Yukikaze’s” camera.)

RESULTS of SHUNBUN 2009

(April 4, 2009: “Dohyo of Dreams”, Garden Grove, CA)

Girls (best 2-of-3)	1. Judy Morrow 2. Hannah Crosby
Mens’ Lights (round-robin)	1. Alfredo Gutierrez 2. Andrew Freund 3. Art Morrow
Mens’ Middles (round-robin)	1. Brad Sutton 2. Jose Jimenez 3. Ryan White Also competing: Glenn Crosby, Mark Reiman
Mens’ Heavies (round-robin)	1. Dan Kalbfleisch 2. Doug Cochran 3. Jim Lowerre Also competing: Americus Abesamis
Mens’ Open (single-elimination with repechage)	1. Dan Kalbfleisch 2. Andrew Freund 3. Alfredo Gutierrez Also competing: Abesamis, Cochran, Jimenez, Reiman, Sutton, White
Mens’ Masters (best 2-of-3)	1. Glenn Crosby 2. Art Morrow
“Daddy-Daughter” team standings (unofficial)	Tie between Crosbys and Morrows (1 gold, 1 silver for each team)



“Dohyo of Dreams” Caught In A “Time Warp”

by “Yukikaze” for SUMO SHIMPO

The whole thing came like a missile out of a clear sky.

A producer for the Discovery Channel series “Time Warp” called me while I was at work. She told me that the series was planning a segment on the slow-motion physics of sumo wrestling. Since the “Dohyo of Dreams” is the only permanent working sumo ring in the United States, they wanted to make arrangements to shoot the segment there. I asked who they were bringing in to do the actual sumo work, and was told they had contracted with two-time world heavyweight champion Byambajav Ulaanbayar (known locally and addressed as “Byamba”) and three-time US heavyweight champion Kelly Gneiting. After we had agreed on the details, I called Kelly just to check. He said he was going to be there on Tuesday, March 24... and he was looking forward to finally setting foot on the legendary “DoD”.

Some of the work was already being done on Monday when I arrived home. A small art crew was building a wooden frame, installing two drywall panels, and painting one side blue. They said they would be back on Tuesday to finish.

Lorinda and I had been informed they would begin arriving at 0700, but they beat that by almost an hour. Trucks parked along the street disgorged equipment in a manner worthy of a well-planned military “op”. One of the first people in the backyard emplaced a high-end digital camera overlooking the entire area, then set it to shoot a frame of video every ten seconds. A canopy was set up to house the recording equipment for both the high-speed cameras the show is centered around, and the standard video cameras that would capture the vast majority of the action. One of those cameras was hooked up at the end of a boom that was based near the edge of the dohyo. Meanwhile, the art designers were painting the show’s logo on the blue side of the drywall panels. Other canopies were emplaced to provide shade. A high-end porta-potty was dropped off for the crew’s sanitary needs (thankfully). Lighting specialists sited high-powered Klieg lights in strategic locations (powered by a portable generator, again thankfully) while landscapers placed potted bamboos and small palm trees along the south fence and in front of the sheds. A pair of emergency medical technicians (“daylighting” on their off-time from their

fire departments) stood ready if needed. Through it all I took many pictures, answered questions whenever they cropped up... and stayed out of the way when my presence was not required.

Byamba and Kelly arrived on-site at 0830, accompanied by Andrew Freund and Tamir Dolgormaa. The Idaho truckman found a spot in the shade of our solitary orange tree, and set to stretching for the work at hand. Judging by the amount of time he spent on his knees, stomach, back and what all... however much he was paid, he earned every penny!

Mid-afternoon saw the arrival of current US heavy/open champion Dan Kalbfleisch, to get in some serious practice. (I was curious that his services had not been requested for the main effort, seeing that he was available.)

Then came time to produce the potential title sequence. Special care was taken to set up this shot and make sure all the angles were covered – because there could only be one take. A ladder had been left in place behind the main line of cameras and lights, so I was able to get high enough to view the panels. The countdown was carefully managed... and at the right moment Byamba burst through the carefully-painted Time Warp logo with all the power one would expect from a champion sumotori. It was positively beautiful.

The production company left the yard as clean as it was when they arrived, if not cleaner. They even re-covered the dohyo and put all the cover weights in place. Once the last person left around 1915, the only signs that anything had happened that day were four potted palms (which were taken by “Tonkatsu” for other landscaping purposes) the porta-potty (picked up the following morning) and seven bags of play sand (placed in storage for future dohyo use). And since Byamba has stated that he wants to conduct practices for the upcoming World Games at the “DoD”, that sand will see use quite soon, I’m sure.

(Follow-up: I have received my copy of the show. It will be available for viewing at future events at the “Dohyo of Dreams” on a 42” HDTV.)



More Photos from March 24, 2009 (by "Yukikaze")



Brotherhood Intervention

by Kelly Gneiting (Special for SUMO SHIMPO)

Safely parked at a Wintersville, Ohio truck stop, I crawl into the bunk of my big rig to settle down for the night. As I do, a quick look at my cell phone indicates 1 missed call, that of 2008 World Sumo medalist Trent Sabo. So I dial up Trent and collapse on the mattress.

Déjà vu... Reminiscent of two days ago, minutes into our conversation the phone beeps and 2003 North American (Heavyweight) Champion and lifelong friend Casey Burns shows on screen.

“Hey Trent , do you want me to conference in Casey Burns?” I ask.

“Sure, why not.” Trent replies.

The identical response of two days ago when Trent, Casey, and I had a three-way conversation that lasted over an hour, highlighted by Trent’s insistence that Casey and I throw our hats into the ‘The Amazing Race’ ring.

“You guys are absolutely stupid if you don’t.” Trent said at the time. You’ll be the first ones picked! Think about it. You guys need to be on a show where you can show off what big people can do. Kelly (430 lbs), you ran a marathon, Casey (475 lbs), you dive off cliffs and swim across lakes. Both of you are sumo champions. You’ve been in the Marines together, were high school team captains together...” and on and on and on.

But tonight we weren’t going to have a two-hour conversation. It was late and I was tired. Still, I conference in Casey.

“You guys won’t believe this!” Casey tells us. “‘The Amazing Race’ people are casting in Idaho Falls a day and a half from now—this Saturday! It’s been all over the news! Can you make it back to the homeland, brother?”

“Oh great! No.” I remark. “I’m sitting here in Ohio , and tomorrow I pick up in New York , 2000 miles away.”

“The casting call insists that BOTH people show up to be considered... Oh, well, I guess it would have been nice.” Casey responds.

“No, you guys don’t understand!” insisted Trent . “This is an omen!!!”

The next day, sometime after 5:00 p.m. I pull away from Dunkirk, New York with a loaded trailer to begin my five-day journey to Grandview, Washington when my phone rings. Again, it’s Trent Sabo. That call was the spark that ignited events which culminated with me standing in Idaho Falls the morning of the next day waiting in a mawashi with Casey to perform our two-minute casting call.

The first words out of Trent’s mouth were, “I bought you a round-trip ticket from Chicago, which will put you in Idaho Falls for two hours to do the casting interview with Casey. Then, after two hours, you fly back to Chicago . You can make it, right?”

What followed was nothing short of a ‘drive all night’, ‘call people all night’, ‘stars aligning perfectly’ miracle. And Casey and I knocked it out of the park, to the applause of the entire room. We were on the news that night, and a picture of us appeared on the front page of the Sports section the next day. A final decision by ‘The Amazing Race’ will be made by April 23rd, but regardless of the outcome, this experience is a testimony of an uncommon brotherhood. I’m proud to be a part of the United States Sumo Federation and its members.

Special thanks to Jeremy Gneiting, Steve Bird, Dan Kalbfleisch, Beatrice Davis (Manny Yarbrough’s agent), Matt Anderson, and especially Trent Sabo for his unusual and remarkable vision. The man simply wouldn’t take ‘no’ for an answer.

For Casey and I, only time will tell.

Next call from Trent, I’m going to ask about his progress reading the Book of Mormon. He didn’t buy his way out of that one.

(EDITOR’S NOTE: as of April 23, the producers of “The Amazing Race” have not made any final decision on who the participants will be in the next running. We wish Casey and Kelly all the best.)

United States Sumo Calendar for 2009

CLASSES/TRAINING SESSIONS

SESSION	DAY	START	END	FEE	LOCATION	STAGING ORGANIZATION
GSS Practice	SU	ongoing	ongoing	Yes	Combined Martial Science 13611-A 12th St., Chino, CA	Golden State Sumo (Doug Cochran)

Contact the listed STAGING ORGANIZATION for the latest fee schedule and other information.

COMPETITIONS

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION	STAGING ORGANIZATION
2009 US NATIONALS	June 13, 2009	“Muscle Beach”, Venice, CA	United States Sumo Federation
2009 CALIFORNIA OPEN	August 8, 2009	“Dohyo of Dreams”, Garden Grove, CA	Southern California Sumo Kyokai
GEORGIA SUMO OPEN	September 19, 2009	TBA	Georgia Sumo Federation
SHUUBUN 2009	September 26, 2009	“Dohyo of Dreams”, Garden Grove, CA	Southern California Sumo Kyokai

All information on this calendar is subject to change. Contact the listed STAGING ORGANIZATION for latest information.

And Because We Had Another Full Page To Fill...

