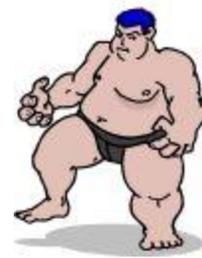




# AMERICAN SUMO



U.S. Sumo Federation  
827 N. Hollywood Way, #473  
Burbank, CA 91505

## Inspirational Thought:

*"The underlying factor in what makes a good sumo wrestler is fighting spirit and guts. You need the courage just to go out there and do it, and then when you're out there you have to try and get into a different mindset to give you the will to win."*



*I'm a big strong guy so I try to use strength and size to my best advantage. There are some guys who are fast who use speed to their advantage, and you have some guys who are throwers so they try to use throwing to their advantage. It's a matter of using your strengths to the best of your ability and cutting down on your weaknesses.*

— Emanuel Yarbrough



## INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER

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## USSF Sanctioned Events

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>POC</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
20 Feb 16	St Joseph, MO	U.S. Jr Nationals	Matt Ritchie	Tournament
5 Mar 16	San Antonio, TX	Fiesta Rodeo	Tom Zabel	Tournament
25 Mar 16	Seattle, WA	Sumo Sushi Demo	Andrew Freund	Demonstration
2 Apr 16	Cranford, NJ	U.S. Nationals	Helen Delpopolo	Tournament
21 May 16	Long Beach, CA	U.S. Sumo Open	Andrew Freund	Tournament
22 Oct 16	San Antonio, TX	Texas Classic	Tom Zabel	Tournament

## International Events

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>QUALIFYING EVENT</u>
30-31 Jul 2016	Mongolia	World Championships	2016 U.S. Nationals
TBD, 2017	TBD	World Combat Games	2016 North Americans
3 – 13 Aug 2017	Wroclaw, Poland	World Games	2016 U.S. Nationals

**In this section we will discuss basic fundamental movements, positions, and postures. These are key to your sumo training and ability to perform well during your matches.**

## SHINKYAKU

The shinkyaku stretch enhances the flexibility of the legs and strengthens the hips.

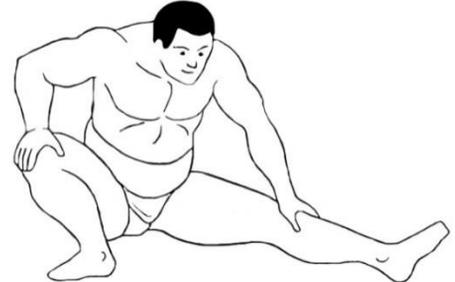
It is also a warm up for the more advanced matawari stretch. Your ultimate goal is to get so low that your thigh touches the dohyo.



Step 1



Step 2



Step 3

Step 1: Open the stance of shiko a bit wider. Pull your hips forward. Straighten back. Place palms on each knee.

Step 2: Straighten right leg firmly by shifting weight onto heel of lead (left) leg without leaning forward. Do not raise the heel of the lead leg off the dohyo. Stretch for a four/eight count.

Step 3: Shift to other leg for another four/eight count. Repeat steps 2 and 3, alternating right to left.

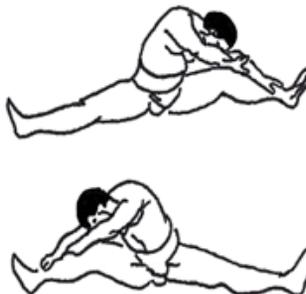
## MATAWARI

The most important element in the development of physical strength for sumo is the flexibility of the body. Like training for the tachiai (initial charge), matawari is the most painful for rikishi who do not have a flexible body. Matawari is effective for developing flexibility of your hips but also for your whole body.

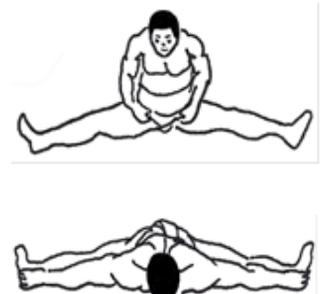
This routine should be completed after all other stretching exercises for maximum flexibility.



Step 1



Step 2



Step 3

Step 1: While sitting on the dohyo, spread both legs at an angle of 180 degrees, in basic terms – “do the splits”.

Step 2: Grab right ankle with hands and touch the chest to leg while keeping the leg straight – do not bend the knee. Alternate to each side – right and left leg. Stretch both sides slowly and firmly.

Step 3: Lean forward – stretch out arms 180 degrees and parallel with legs. Keep leaning forward, touching the dohyo with your chest. Stretch slowly and firmly.

Note: A beginner or someone who is not flexible may use a helper to push forward/down on the back to allow for maximum stretch.

決まり手

# KIMARITE KORNER

By Tom Zabel

Because of the size differential of wrestlers competing as amateurs (light-, middle-, heavy-weight) versus professional (no weight divisions) there are some techniques used more often in the amateur arena than on the professional side. In this section we will highlight various techniques.

**Katasukashi** and **Kimedashi** are two common techniques used in amateur sumo.

**KATASUKASHI**  
Shoulder Swing Down

“**Kata**” is “**shoulder**”, “**Sukashi**” means “**promptly, without delay**”. Force your opponent down by placing one hand on opponent’s shoulder blade from inside and one outside, pulling him down and forward. This move is best used when your opponent charges in with his head low.



- STEP 1 With one arm/hand hooking or holding your opponent’s armpit, place your other hand over your opponent on his shoulder blade as he launches a counter-push technique.
- STEP 2 Turn away from your opponent while pulling him.
- STEP 3 Pull him down and forward while slapping his shoulder blade with the other hand.

**KIMEDASHI**  
Arm Bar Force Out

“**Kime**” is a “deciding factor” and as used in sumo is an “**arm bar**”, and “**dashi**” is “**out**” of the dohyo, so **Kimedashi** is a **force out by arm bar**.

The attacker locks up the defender’s elbow by wrapping his own arms around them from the outside and pulling up and in to march or swing the opponent backward and out of the ring.



- STEP 1 Use this when your opponent has two inside grips or there is a height and strength difference between you and your opponent.
- STEP 2 Lock up your opponent’s two arms (inside yours) with outside grips so that he cannot move. Pull up on his arms.
- STEP 3 Force your opponent back and out of the dohyo. Do not weaken your grip until he is out of the ring.

# KINJITE

By Tom Zabel

There are various sportsmanship customs that are firmly observed by sumo athletes during a match. They are called kinjite, the “do not do”, or prohibited fouls. If an athlete performs any of these action, whether on purpose or not, it will result in a disqualification and loss of the match. An athlete may not do the following:

1. Hit with a closed fist
2. Pull opponent's hair
3. Jab at opponent's eyes or solar plexus
4. Bite
5. Grab or pull the groin area
6. Grab the throat
7. Kick at the chest or waist
8. Bend back opponent's fingers
9. Slap opponent's face with arm outstretched more than shoulder width
10. Take ahold of clothing other than the mawashi (e.g., underpants, leotard, bandages, support pads, etc...) twice or more

## ADDITIONAL RULINGS

### KABAITE

#### Opponent Already Defeated

If you are falling simultaneously with your opponent and he/she is determined (by the gyoji) to already be defeated (shinitai), and you touch the ground before he/she does in order to protect him/her from injury, the gyoji may rule in your favor. This is called kabaite.

### TSUKITAI

#### Opponent Not Yet Defeated

If you are falling simultaneously with your opponent and is determined (by the gyoji) to not yet be defeated (ikitai), and you touch the ground before he/she does, the gyoji will rule in favor of your opponent. This is called tuskitai.

# JAPAN'S PRO NEWS

## EMPEROR'S CUP FINALLY BACK IN JAPANESE HANDS

### KOTOSHOGIKU POSTS 14-1, OUTRACES HAKUHO TO BREAK GAIJIN RENSHO

by Jim "Yukikaze" Lowerre



Kotoshogiku defeats Hakuho on Day 1.  
– Japan Times

There was very little in the run-up to the 2016 Hatsu Basho which indicated that this would become a historic event. And up until day 11 it was looking more like more of the “same-old, same-old”, with yokozuna-West HAKUHO leading the yusho race with ten victories to start. Keeping pace with “Sleeping Thunder” was ozeki #2-East KOTOSHOGIKU, but no one seriously thought this would amount to anything: in 25 basho at sumo's second-highest rank, SHOGIKU had posted a double-digit win record only seven times while going kadoban five times. And he had been rather underwhelming in Fukuoka in November, just managing to make kachi in the last couple of days. So when HAKUHO and SHOGIKU stepped onto the clay on day 11, the outcome was already set in most minds...

Except SHOGIKU's, that is. By HAKUHO's own post-bout admission, the Sadogatake heyagashira was on him with surprising speed, locking up his arms and driving him to the tawara before he knew what was happening. A final push forced the Mongolian out of the ring – and put SHOGIKU in the lead for the yusho. He bested yokozuna #2-East HARUMAFUJI the following day, but lost his bid for zensho to maegashira #7-East TOYONOSHIMA by tottari on day 13. No matter: SHOGIKU polished off sekiwake-East TOCHIOZAN and ozeki #2-West GOEIDO to finish with a

powerful 14-1 record and claim the Emperor's Cup. By so doing, he became the first native Japanese to hold the Tenno-Hai since moto-ozeki TOCHIAZUMA won at the 2006 Hatsu Basho – and ended a string of gaijin domination that had lasted for 59 hon-basho. (This does not count the 2011 Haru Basho, which was cancelled.)

HAKUHO had every intention of staying in the Cup hunt: wins over GOEIDO and yokozuna #2-East KAKURYU testified to that. But he would fall to ozeki #1-East KISENOSATO and yokozuna #1-East HARUMAFUJI in the final days, and ended his January effort with a second consecutive 12-3 mark. This marked the first time since 2012 that “Sleeping Thunder” had gone three consecutive basho without a championship. HARUMA had fallen behind in the early going with a day 2 kinboshi loss to maegashira #1-West SHOHOZAN: he lost any chance with two losses in the final four days to tie HAKUHO at 12-3.

KAKURYU also gave up an early gold star to maegashira #1-West AMINISHIKI, was 3-2 after day 5, won his next four, and then batted .500 over the last six days for a mediocre 10-5 effort. KISENOSATO finished with a 9-6. Both Western ozeki fared poorly: Natsu 2015 champion, #1 TERUNOFUJI was 3-2 after day 5, withdrew on day 6 and was absent for the remainder of the basho. GOEIDO collapsed completely, lost his last nine bouts and ended with a 4-11 and kadoban.

Only one of the lower sanyaku managed to make kachikoshi, and that just barely. It took a senshuraku victory for sekiwake-West YOSHIKAZE to get his eight and keep his paycheck for another two months. East-sider TOCHIOZAN's fate was sealed with his loss on day 14: his final record was 7-8. Both komusubi went makekoshi and will likely be down in the hiramaku ranks come March: East-sider IKIOI fell to 5-10, while Westerner TOCHINOSHIN came in at 6-9.

TOYONOSHIMA's win over KOTOSHOGIKU placed the Shukun-Sho (Outstanding Performance Prize) in his hands, while his 12-3 record was tops among the maegashira.



Kotoshogiku receiving the Emperor's Cup.  
– Japan Times

# Hakuho Hai VI (1-31-16)

By Packy Bannevans

For the second year in a row, I had the privilege of coaching a kid's sumo team from Atlanta and taking them to the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Hakuho Cup (<http://hakuho-cup.com/>). This year's team members were twin brothers Matan & Ori Gal, Aldino Yildiz, Patrick Flynn, Connor Chung, and Will Tucker. Our training got started even later than last year, so U.S. Taido Karate founder Mits Uchida and I had only 2 months to turn his karate students into rikishi.

As was the case in 2015, we were invited to a private practice session at Miyagino Beya prior to the all-day Sunday tournament. Although the practice was initially led by the lower ranked members of the stable, Hakuho joined us later on and worked with our kids for more than an hour. To make things even more interesting, there were two camera crews present – one from NHK and the other from the popular program YOUは何しに日本へ? (Why did you come to Japan?) on TV Tokyo.



At the airport.  
Photo courtesy of Packy Bannevans

[Note: The NHK segment can be found via this link - <http://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/english/news/features/201602050818.html>.]



Miyagino Beya with Hakuho.  
Photo courtesy of Packy Bannevans

After a hard workout (and lots of interviews) we were treated to a traditional sumo meal of chanko nabe prepared by Hakuho's stablemates.

We did manage to fit some sightseeing in and were able to tour Akihabara's Electric Town, Asakusa, the Edo Tokyo Museum, Tokyo Tower, the Emperor's Palace, Meiji Shrine, and finally Tokyo Sky Tree - which was a 20 minute walk from our hotel. Several parents also joined our group this year and were especially fond of the various Japanese foods we were able to sample – ramen noodles, kaiten (conveyor belt) sushi, and lots of snacks from street vendors and convenience stores.

The number of participants in this year's event grew 50% to 1,200, but the number participating countries dropped to only 5 – China, Korea, Mongolia, the U.S. and host Japan. We arrived around 7:30 AM to the Kokugikan and found out that both the individual and team competitions would be single elimination. This was the only way to accommodate the larger number of participants and to try to end the day at a reasonable time.

We drew a Japanese team in the first round of the team competition and our stage would be the main dohyo. To our great surprise, the team had only had 3 wrestlers instead of 5. We knew that we only had to win one match in order to advance. That is exactly what happened when Patrick won the third match and Connor and Will won by default. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> round, also against a Japanese team and on the main ring again (but this time with all 5 opponents present) we lost our first 3 matches; however, both Connor and Will had strong wins and we finished with a 5-5 record overall.



At the Kokugikan.  
Photo courtesy of Packy Bannevans

In the individual competition, we were able to enter 6 wrestlers. Unfortunately, only Connor managed to win and advance to the 2<sup>nd</sup> round. After having no wrestler last year win more than one fight total, Will (2 wins) and Connor (3 wins) have set the bar high for the U.S. team in 2017.

A very special thanks goes out to Uchida-sensei's friend and sempai Katsuki-san whose support of our team made this amazing experience a reality.

# GENTLE GIANT PASSES

By Tom Zabel

Emanuel Yarbrough, passed away on 21 December, 2015. Although a fierce competitor in the ring or on the field, standing 6' 8" tall, and weighing at one time, 882 lbs., all those that knew Manny would say he was the nicest person you would ever have the privilege of meeting – a gentle giant.

“Tiny” was in the Guinness Book of World Records for being the heaviest athlete. He was a NCAA All-American in football and wrestling and in 1989 he won the silver medal in Judo at the U.S. Nationals. He also did mixed martial arts and competed in early UFC matches.

What he is best known for is his sumo. He was coached by the late Yoshisada Yonezuka. At the 1<sup>st</sup> World Amateur Sumo Championships in 1992, Manny placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the open-weight division. His defining moment came in 1995, when he was the first non-Japanese to take the GOLD at the World Championships. He was one of the most famous sumo wrestlers outside Japan. From '92-'96 he accumulated one gold, three silver, and a bronze medal in those world championships.

Manny was known throughout the world sumo community and he will be greatly missed by all of us, especially those of us in the United States Sumo Federation who knew him personally.



## 2016 U.S. JR NATIONALS

By Thomas Zabel

One of the main criteria used to determine if sumo would be included at the 2020 Olympics in Japan was the participation of youth in the sport. Because the IOC did not think that sumo had enough youth around the world participating in sumo, it was not picked up for Japan's Olympics.

Although juniors have participated along side the seniors at the U.S. National Sumo Championships in past years, there really has not been much of a separate competition for them. The main reason is that we rarely get more than one competitor in each division at the junior level. (When there is more than one competitor, we have been holding a junior competition, but usually they are acknowledged as the junior champion and they get experience by wrestling at the senior level.)

The USSF has sent a few juniors to the World Championships in the past, with Harrington Wa'a (1999 gold junior open), Gregory Donofrio (2001 bronze junior middle), and Sarena Gneiting (2014 bronze junior heavy) bringing home some hardware, but we have never sent a full juniors team (men or women) to the World Championships.

This is one of the areas that the USSF would like to develop, but we need everyone's help in order to build a larger, more diverse youth participation in sumo both domestically and internationally. One of the ways we can encourage this is to hold classes, seminars and demonstrations locally and give the younger kids an opportunity to participate in a local competition. Another way the USSF is trying to foster youth participation is to hold a separate U.S. Junior National Sumo Championship. We had a good youth participation at last years' Senior National with approx. 35 kids participating in exhibition matches. This year we are trying to make it a little more formal and recognize our Junior winners.

The U.S. Junior National Sumo Championships are being held in St. Joseph, MO on February 20<sup>th</sup>, in conjunction with the Liberty National Wrestling Championships. For more information you can contact the tournament director, Matt Ritchie and/or the Trustees at the [President@AmericanSumo.org](mailto:President@AmericanSumo.org) e-mail address.