

番付昇進

banzuke shoushin

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introduction

Banzuke Shoushin is a sumo career simulation. That means that game does not primarily focus on single bouts, or even a single tournament, but on the whole of a rikishi's career. That's why it's called 'Banzuke Shoushin' (番付昇進), which means 'rise through the ranks of sumo'.

Simulating 10 or 15 years of sumo, or even more, is not possible in a short time (without abstracting away too much), and consequently, Banzuke Shoushin is a long game. One game year takes approximately one hour to play, and the whole of a single rikishi's career takes between 10 and 15 hours. It is easy to store away the game and continue later between years, however. And it is also no problem if players join in or drop out during that process. Furthermore, the game can continue for as long as you want – just play a new rikishi when your 'old' one retires.

Banzuke Shoushin is not a game for many players. Although there are 12 rikishi in the game, most of these are – and should be – controlled by the game. The game can be played solitaire, but 2 or 3 players is also fine. 4 still works, but more is pushing it. Given the nature of the game, a basic knowledge of the sport of sumo might be an advantage both to understanding these rules, and to enjoying the game.

components

The PDF file 'components' includes the boards and markers that you'll have to make yourself. Print out the file, glue the pages on heavy stock paper or chipboard, and cut out. There is one **main board** (page 1), 12 **rikishi boards** (round) and a bunch of (small) **markers** of different types. Those will be explained below.

Additionally, you need 4 dice and very many

wooden cubes in at least 6 colors. **Dice** needed are:

- two normal 6-sided dice (hereafter **D6**) in two different colors, preferably white and black, but any two colors will do;
- one '3-sided' die (hereafter **D3**); this is basically a D6 with the numbers 1, 2, and 3 each on two faces of the die;
- one color die (hereafter **CD**) with the following six colors on the faces: white, black, red, blue, yellow, green.

At minimum, you'll need about 30 to 40 **wooden cubes** in each of the following 6 colors: white, black, red, blue, yellow, green (same as the CD). A few more white cubes might be useful.

The game is easier to play if some of the markers are also replaced by cubes. If you wish to do so, you'll need 12 gray cubes to replace the age markers; 10 orange cubes per player to replace action point markers; and about 8 cubes in any unused color as loss makers.

markers

There are 6 kinds of markers:

- 12 **rank markers** with the names of sumo ranks (yokuzuna, ōzeki, etc.);
- 2x40 **rikishi markers** (2 per rikishi) showing a colored *mawashi* and the rikishi's name in kanji and latin script;
- 12 **age markers** (small, square) with the kanji 齡 (these can be replaced with gray wooden cubes);
- 9 **loss markers** (small, square) with a black diamond and the kanji 負 (these can be replaced with wooden cubes in any unused color);
- a lot of **weakness markers** in three varieties: with 1, 2, or 3 dots with the kanji 弱 in them;
- even more **action point markers** (hereafter **AP**) (these can be replaced by orange wooden cubes).

There is a separate file with 2 **bookkeeping sheets**. You do not necessarily need those, but they may

come in handy for recording tournament results, and rikishi values in case you need to store away the game for a while.

rules / game phases

Set-up happens as part of the normal game procedure so that does not need a separate chapter in these rules. Rather, we'll dive right in with the game phases. The 5 game phases together are one **game year**, which represents a (calendar) year in sumo. The rest of these rules will explain these game phases one after the other.

game phases

1 – new year phase

1a – new entry subphase

1b – action point subphase

2 – training phase (pl. first)

3 – basho phase

3a – tournament subphase

3b – results subphase

4 – banzuke phase

5 – year end phase

1 – new year phase

1a – new entry subphase

In the new entry phase empty slots on the banzuke are filled. That means that new rikishi are 'created'. This happens from bottom up: lowest empty slot first, then the next. At the beginning of the game all 12 rikishi have to be created. There are different procedures for **game-controlled rikishi** and **player controlled rikishi**. At the start of the game, player-controlled rikishi take up the lowest *maegashira* ranks (from M6 up).

If (at a later stage in the game), there are multiple open slots at the bottom of the banzuke, and one or more players are entitled to entering a new rikishi (after retirement, for example), then the player-controlled rikishi take up a series of slots with *maegashira* 6 (if an odd number) or *maegashira* 6 and *juryō* 1 (if an even number) in the middle, or as close as possible thereto, and the other empty slots (if any) are filled by game-controlled rikishi.

The order between player-controlled rikishi is random if the players involved have no other

rikishi in play. If they do, then the order is the reverse of the banzuke positions of their other rikishi.

rikishi characteristics

Rikishi have 7 different characteristics (aside from their name and rank). These are **age** and 6 different **skills** represented by 6 different colors:

- spirit (心, white),

- endurance (耐, green),

- strength (強, red),

- weight (重, black)

- speed (速, yellow), and

- technique (技, blue).

Note that some of these are not normally considered 'skills', but in the game that's what they are called. Also note that **spirit** in many ways is different from the other skills.

Every skill can vary between levels 0 and 4, which is marked with that number of wooden cubes of the skill color on the skill area on the rikishi board.

All rikishi (either game- or player-controlled) have weaknesses in 3 different skills. In one skill there is 1 weakness, in another 2, and in a third 3. These weaknesses are marked with weakness markers. Weakness and skill level add up to a maximum of 4. Essentially, the dots on the weakness markers take up spaces that could otherwise be filled with wooden cubes. If a rikishi has a 2-weakness marker on strength, he can have only 2 red cubes.

creating game-controlled rikishi

The determination of the various values (age, weaknesses, and skill levels) of a game-controlled rikishi is done by means of dice (D3 and D6), two flow charts, and three tables. These flow charts and tables are shown on the last page of these rules. Creating one game-controlled rikishi takes about 2 minutes.

step 1: flowchart (1)

A first D6 roll (rolling die symbol with 'D6' in it) determines the weakness for weight. Rounded squares with numbers represent die roll results. Depending on the weight weakness, by means of one or two D3 rolls, the other two weaknesses are distributed. Place the three weakness markers in the appropriate skill areas on the rikishi board.

step 2: flowchart (2)

Next, flowchart (2) is used to determine age and strength category (table A, B, or C) for the rikishi. First a D6 and D3 are rolled simultaneously. The D3 gives column number, the D6 row number. With these two numbers, the table gives the age of the rikishi. Depending on the D3 roll a further roll (of either the D3 or D6) may be necessary. If the D3 roll was 1, then this is not necessary and the determination of abilities is done by means of table (A). If the D3 roll was 2 or 3, a further die roll determines which table is applicable.

step 3: tables (A) to (C)

Let's assume that we're using table (A) (it works the same for tables (B) and (C)). A D6 roll determines which row of the table is applicable. Let's say that 5 is rolled. This means that the rikishi has ability values 3-2-2-2-1-0. These values now have to be distributed. Note that for the last three this is easy. The black dots represent weaknesses. Hence, the skill that was determined to have a weakness 3 by means of flowchart (1) gets 0 skill cubes; the weakness 2 skill gets 1; and the weakness 1 skill gets 2. This leaves three other skills that still need to be decided. These will get ability values 3-2-2 (the first three in the table), and by means of a D3 roll it is decided which one goes where. There is only one 3 value, so it is easiest to place that one – a single D3 roll is sufficient to find out which one of the three remaining skills will get the 3 value. The two skills still left after that both get 2 cubes.

step 4: Decide on a **name** by placing the name marker on the designated area of the rikishi board.

creating player-controlled rikishi

Creating player-controlled rikishi is easier and more difficult at the same time. There is no complicated procedure by means of flowcharts and tables, but that means that the player will have to think and decide for him-/herself to find out what is best.

Age is 21. Weaknesses 1, 2, and 3 are placed as the player wishes, with the following two provisions:

- only one marker (1, 2 or 3) per skill; and
- weight + speed + endurance = total weakness 3 or more. It is up to the player to decide how this is done. Just placing the 3 weakness marker on one of those three skills is fine. Placing the 2 on one of them and the 1 on another is also OK. And, of

course, placing the 1 and 3 or even all 3 on these skills is also OK. As long as the sum total weakness for these 3 skills is at least 3.

(Flow chart (1) has a similar result, by the way. The point of this, of course, is to assure that very heavy rikishi have deficits in speed and/or endurance. A very heavy rikishi cannot be very fast (speed weakness), or only for a very short time (endurance weakness).)

9 skill cubes are distributed among the various skills as the player wishes. The total of skill cubes / level plus weakness in any skill cannot exceed 4 (as already mentioned above).

(Don't forget to choose a name.)

1b – action point subphase

All player-controlled rikishi get action point markers (or cubes) (hereafter **AP**). The number of AP received is 6 plus the rikishi's spirit (心, white) level (hence, a maximum of 10).

2 – training phase

In the training phase, the rikishi try to improve their skills while *oyakata* (stable masters) and others try to improve their spirits. *For the purpose of training, spirit is not considered a skill.* To avoid confusion the term 'skill' will be used as little as possible in this chapter. **Improvement** is an increase in any skill level (other than spirit). **Spirit increase** is an increase in spirit.

Player-controlled rikishi train before game-controlled rikishi. *(Well actually, they all train at the same time, but by doing it in this order the players are unable to respond to the training of game-controlled rikishi in the same year. That's the closest to simultaneous.)*

2a – player-controlled rikishi

The table **training costs** on the last page of these rules shows what spirit increases and improvements cost (paid in AP). This depends on the age of the rikishi. A young rikishi can get a spirit increase for 1 AP and an improvement for 2 AP. Maximally he can get 2 of each and 3 in total. Spent AP are discarded.

2b – game-controlled rikishi

The training of game-controlled rikishi is determined by the **training table** on the last page.

Roll a D6, this gives the row number. Check spirit (心, white) level and age, and find the right column. In most cases, there are 2 numbers in the cell found; the first is spirit increases, the second improvements. If there is only 1 number, this is spirit increases. (This only happens for very old rikishi that are no longer able to improve their skills.) Roll the CD to determine which skills improve. White rolls (spirit, 心) do *not* count and are not rerolled. If another skill is rolled that cannot improve (because it is already filled to the maximum) that is not rerolled either.

3 – basho phase

The basho phase is the heart of the game and takes by far the longest. In 45 bouts a whole year of sumo is simulated. The program of bouts is shown on the main board. It starts with the bout between the maegashira 1 and 4 on day 1, and ends with the bout between yokozuna and ōzeki on day 9.

Bouts are decided by a roll of 3 or 4 dice. The CD determines match tactic and the two D6 add to the scores of the rikishi. We'll turn to the D3 later. A rikishi's **bout score** is his skill level in the match tactic skill plus his skill levels in the two adjacent skills plus the roll of his D6. Preferably, use a white D6 for the higher ranking rikishi, and a black D6 for the lower ranking. Other colors are OK, but don't forget which color stands for which rikishi.

3a – tournament subphase

The following procedure is repeated 45 times: once for every bout.

step 1: determine tactical preferences

Game controlled rikishi: If a cell in the tournament schedule is white, that rikishi will make the tactic in which he has the highest chance of winning that bout his tactical preference. (*This requires counting cubes and comparing; see above for 'bout score'.*) Place an AP marker on the tactical preference skill area. If the match tactic turns out to match with that rikishi's tactical preference (but only then), this AP counts as an extra point for his bout score.

Player-controlled rikishi do *not* select a tactical preference in case of a white cell in the tournament schedule. Rather, they can always choose a tactical preference, but have to spend an

AP to do so. A player-controlled rikishi can spend an additional AP (hence, 2 in total) to *strengthen* his tactical preference. See *step 2* for the effects. (Use the AP or APs to mark the tactical preference; after the bout it is / they are discarded.)

step 2: roll dice

If at least one of the rikishi in the bout chose a tactical preference, roll all 4 dice; otherwise roll the two D6s and the CD.

If 3 dice are rolled the CD determines match tactic. A rikishi's **bout score** is his skill level in the match tactic skill plus his skill levels in the two adjacent skills plus the roll of his D6 (see note above). The rikishi with the highest bout score wins. (See below for tie breakers.)

If 4 dice are rolled the 3D and CD together determine match tactic. If the 3D is 1, then the tactical preference of the highest ranking rikishi (in the bout) is match tactic; if the 3D is 2, then the tactical preference of the lowest ranking is match tactic. If no preference is chosen by the rikishi rolled, or if the D3 is 3, then the CD determines match tactic. If the match tactic corresponds with a rikishi's tactical preference, that rikishi gets an extra point (the AP marker) on his bout score.

If a player-controlled rikishi *strengthened* his tactical preference (meaning that he made extra effort to let the match be decided by his tactical preference) by spending 2 AP rather than 1, then, if the match tactic is determined by the CD and a color adjacent to that rikishi's tactical preference is rolled, that die roll result changes into that tactical preference. (The 2 AP markers still give only 1 extra point together, *not* 2.)

Ties are quite common and are resolved by means of the following *tie breakers*.

- (1) Lowest adjacent wins. That is, the rikishi look at their skill levels directly adjacent to the match tactic skill. The rikishi that has the lowest wins. (*This represents specialization: to be tied while having a lower adjacent means (usually) that that rikishi is more strongly (or at least more narrowly) specialized in the match tactic.*) If there still is a tie then:
- (2) Highest skill level wins. If there still is a tie then:
- (3) Highest weight level wins. If there still is a tie then:

(4) Rematch. Start again from step 1. Player rikishi that spent AP on a tactical preference can change that tactical preference if they wish so. They cannot get the AP back (by not choosing a preference), however.

step 3: injuries

If a rikishi rolls 1, he (possibly) has an injury.

If he had no previous injury that tournament, roll the CD. If endurance (耐, green), strength (強, red), or speed (速, yellow) is rolled, move a cube of that color to the lower edge of the rikishi board. This cube represents a minor injury; it is not counted in the rikishi's skill level for that skill for the remainder of the tournament.

If the rikishi had a previous injury, meaning that there is a cube on the lower edge of the rikishi board, and that rikishi rolls 1, then discard this cube. He now has a serious injury, affecting him on the longer term.

(At the end of the tournament, cubes on the board edges return to the appropriate skill areas; discarded cubes stay discarded.)

step 4: winner

Write down the match result.

If there is a loss marker on the edge of the winner's rikishi board, remove it.

If the winner is a maegashira, and he won against a yokozuna or ōzeki, he receives 1 spirit (心, white; but only if he still has room for more spirit, of course).

step 5: loser

If there is *no* loss marker on the edge of the loser's board, place one. A player-controlled rikishi can discard 1 AP to remove the loss marker (but only if he does so immediately).

If there *is* a loss marker, remove it, and reduce that rikishi's spirit level (心, white) by 1.

3b – results subphase

Tournament winner or winners (that is, those rikishi with the largest number of victories; this may be tied) that are *not* yokozuna or ōzeki receive 1 spirit (心, white; but only if they still have room for more spirit, of course).

If the yokozuna has makekoshi (more losses than wins; thus 4 wins or less) he immediately retires (forcibly).

If the ōzeki has makekoshi and is 31 or older, he immediately retires

4 – banzuke phase

The new banzuke (ranking) is determined in two steps. However, in case there are multiple new player-controlled rikishi in play, these are – before step 1 – stacked in random order on the banzuke spot of the highest ranked among them. This stack is resolved in step 1 from top (of the stack) to bottom.

step 1

From bottom to top, move rikishi markers on the banzuke section of the main board to the left column *and* up or down depending on their tournament results. A rikishi that won all 9 bouts moves up 7 spots; 8 wins is +5; 7 +4; 6 +2; 5 +1. Below that, rikishi are makekoshi (more losses than wins) and move down. 4 wins is -1; 3 -2; 2 -4; 1 -5; and 0 (all bouts lost) is -7. If there already is a rikishi marker on a space and another moves there, put it on top.

The two juryō rikishi did not fight. Both move to the juryō 1 space in the left column, the juryō 1 ranked rikishi goes on top.

The yokozuna gets a bonus move of 1 space up. *(This makes it more difficult to take over the yokozuna spot, which represents the fact that a yokozuna cannot demote.)*

step 2

Move markers back in the right column from top to bottom. The highest on the left column goes on the yokozuna spot in the right column, and so forth. Higher on a stack means higher position on the right column.

spirit and retirements (1)

If the yokozuna does *not* end at the top of the right column, he immediately retires.

If a rikishi demotes to juryō and is 31 or older he retires; if he demotes and is younger, he loses 1 spirit (心, white).

If a rikishi promotes from juryō to makuuchi (maegashira and higher) he gains 1 spirit (心, white; but only if they still have room for more spirit, of course).

5 – year end phase

All rikishi age 1 year (move age markers; markers do not move beyond 35, even though an active rikishi may be older).

For all rikishi that are 31 to 33 years old, roll the CD twice. Discard the number of endurance (耐, green), strength (強, red), or speed (速, yellow) results rolled.

Do the same for rikishi 34 or older, only roll 3 times.

spirit and retirements (2)

If a rikishi is either maegashira or juryō, *and* 31 to 33 years old, remove 1 spirit (心, white). If he is either maegashira or juryō, *and* 34 or older, remove 2 spirit; if in that case, the rikishi has insufficient spirit (meaning that he has less than 2 *before* removal) then he retires.

Player-controlled rikishi can retire at this point in the game (if the controlling player wishes to do so).

If there are retirements, move up rikishi to fill empty slots. Empty spaces on the banzuke should always be at the bottom. (But this only happens after the above spirit/retirement checks.)

Player-controlled rikishi discard all unspent AP over 1 (they can keep a maximum of 1).

count score

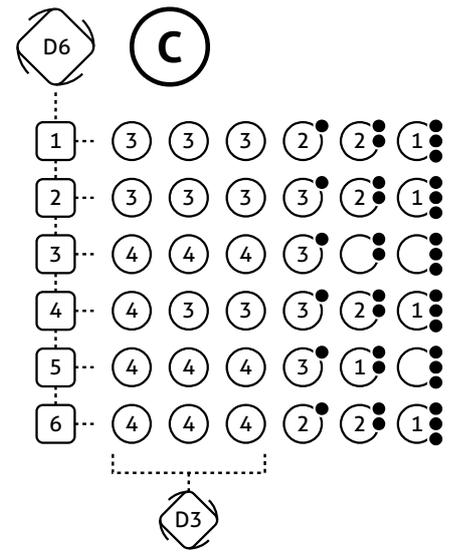
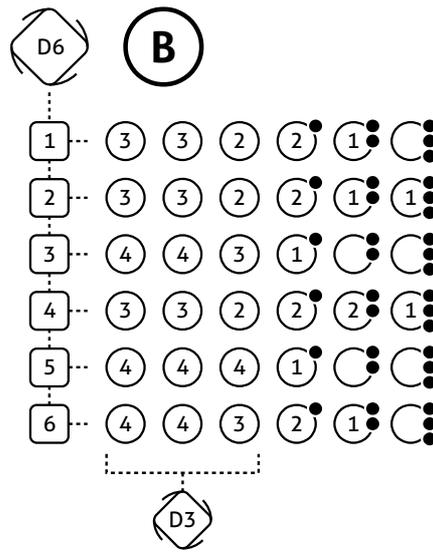
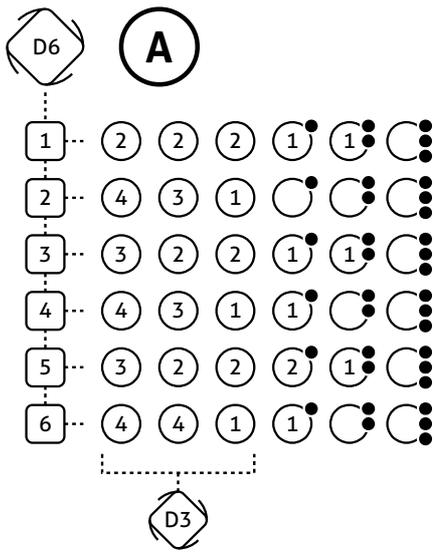
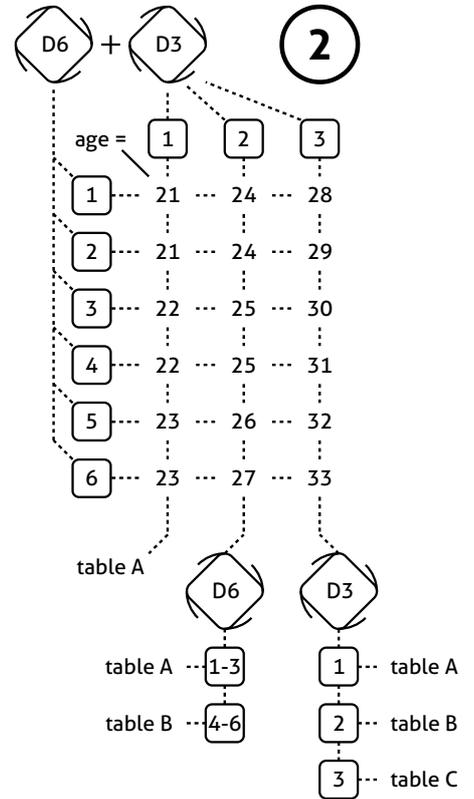
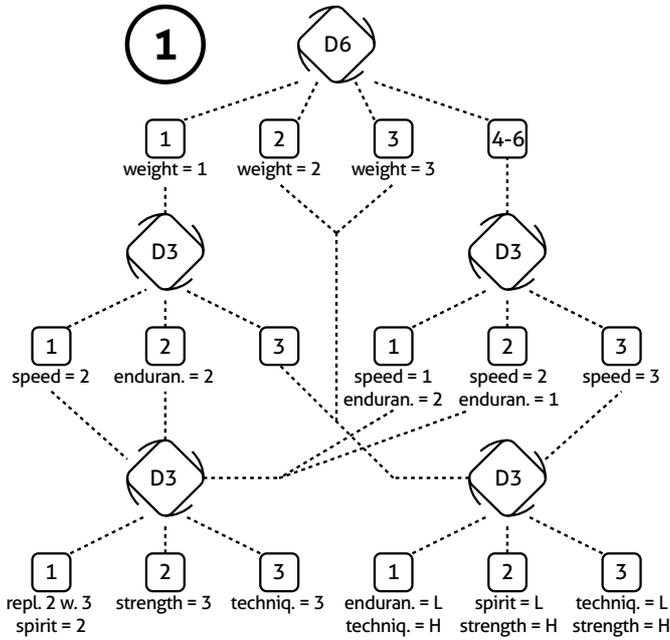
Each rikishi scores the number of points associated with his rank. On the banzuke, the middle of each row has above each other rank abbreviation (Y to J2), rank number (1 to 12), and rank score (15 to 0). This is the number of points a rikishi gets that year. A retired yokozuna gets 5 points in the year of retirement.

This ends the year. Continue with phase 1 of the next year.

other rules

If a player leaves the game, his/her player-controlled rikishi become(s) game-controlled.

If a new player joins the game then the lowest ranking game-controlled rikishi retires. If that lowest ranking game-controlled rikishi was juryō, then the lowest ranking game-controlled maegashira demotes to that juryō position. The new player's rikishi get rank maegashira 6. If necessary, other player-controlled rikishi move up on the banzuke to open that spot.



training table

	21-26			27-30			31-33			34+	
	0	1-2	3-4	0	1-2	3-4	0	1-2	3-4	0	1-3
1	10	11	02	00	01	01	00	00	00	0	0
2	11	12	02	10	02	02	00	01	01	0	1
3	11	12	03	11	10	02	10	01	01	0	1
4	20	21	03	20	11	03	10	02	01	1	1
5	20	21	12	20	12	12	11	10	02	1	1
6	21	22	13	21	21	12	20	11	11	1	1

training costs

	心 (spirit)	improv.
21-26	1	2
27-30	2	3
31-33	3	4
44+	4	n.a.

max. 2 心 (spirit)
 max. 2 improvements
 max. 3 total