

Exclusive Topics for JAPAN AUTUMN INTERNATIONAL 2015 - 1st Edition -



October 2015

The Japan Racing Association

Welcome back to our annual series of newsletters leading up to the 2015 Japan Cup (G1, 2,400m). The fall racing season is heading towards the Japan Autumn International Series, which will be held over four weekends between November 15 and December 6, consisting of four prestigious G1 races—the Queen Elizabeth II Cup (G1, 2,200m), the Mile Championship (G1, 1,600m), the Japan Cup and the Champions Cup (G1, dirt, 1,800m). Total prize money for the four G1 events will amount to ¥1,216,520,000 (about US\$10,137,000), with additional bonuses for winners of designated overseas G1 events who also finish within third place in each race of the series.

Japan Cup Competition Wide Open following Retirements

Last year's Japan Cup was contested by an exceptional field of very highly rated runners, including the top two thoroughbreds in the World's Best Racehorse Rankings. This year, however, only one of last year's top five finishers will return, making it too early to point to a particular entry as no clear standout exists at this stage.

Epiphaneia (JPN, by *Symboli Kris S*), who won the Japan Cup last year as a four-year-old, was in action for this year's race after concluding his 2014 campaign with a fifth-place finish in the Arima Kinen (G1, 2,500m). He kicked off his five-year-old season in the Dubai World Cup (G1, dirt, 2,000m) and was well beaten to last place in a field of nine on the dirt track at Meydan. Upon his return to Japan, while training for the Takarazuka Kinen (G1 2,200m), he injured a tendon in his left foreleg, forcing his connections to retire him from racing in late July.



Epiphaneia
in the 2014 Japan Cup

Both *Just a Way* (JPN, by *Heart's Cry*) and *Gentildonna* (JPN, by *Deep Impact*), who respectively were second and fourth behind *Epiphaneia* in the 2014 Japan Cup, were scheduled for retirement as

of the end of the season. *Gentildonna* capped off a remarkable career with her seventh G1 victory in the Arima Kinen, while *Just a Way* ended with a close fourth behind the winner in the same race.

Harp Star (JPN, by *Deep Impact*), who finished an impressive fifth in the Japan Cup, created high expectations for her four-year-old season, but like *Epiphaneia* she retired unexpectedly. In her first start this year, she was sent to post the heavy favorite in the Kyoto Kinen (G2, 2,200m) in February, but disappointed to fifth. She then flew to Dubai for the Dubai Sheema Classic (G1, 2,410m), joined by fellow four-year-old and 2014 Tokyo Yushun (Japanese Derby, G1, 2,400m) winner, **One and Only** (JPN, C4, by *Heart's Cry*). After finishing eighth in a field of nine, however, she was diagnosed with injuries to the suspensory and sesamoidean ligaments in her right foreleg, prompting an early retirement and the start of a new career as a promising broodmare.



Just a Way (right)
in the 2014 Dubai Duty Free



Gentildonna
in the 2014 Arima Kinen



Harp Star
in the 2014 Oka Sho



Spielberg
in the 2014 Tenno Sho (Autumn)

The only horse among Japan Cup's top five finishers that has continued to train is third-place finisher **Spielberg** (JPN, H6, by *Deep Impact*). Kicking off this season with a fourth-place finish in the Sankei Osaka Hai (G2, 2,000m), he traveled to Great Britain for the Prince of Wales's Stakes (G1, 2,000m) at Royal Ascot, where he turned in a lackluster sixth. But he has maintained his health and is already training to defend his title in the Tenno Sho (Autumn) (G1, 2,000m) and then head to the

Japan Cup after a tune-up in the Mainichi Okan (G2, 1,800m) on October 11. With impressive past performances at Tokyo Racecourse, **Spielberg** likely could run well again this year if he maintains his form.

One and Only finished seventh in his first Japan Cup challenge and then 13th in the Arima Kinen. He kicked off his four-year-old campaign in the Dubai Sheema Classic and stalked the leaders early under Cristian Demuro, running alongside Dolniya (FR, F4, by *Azamour*) and Flintshire (GB, H5, by *Dansili*), who were fifth and second in the 2014 Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe (G1, 2,400m), respectively. While he was not quite able to keep up with the two,



One and Only
in the 2014 Tokyo Yushun

he still finished a credible third. He has yet to prove himself in Japan after turning in an 11th in his comeback start in June in the Takarazuka Kinen. Although he has shown little in his last four starts in Japan since finishing ninth in the Kikuka Sho (Japanese St. Leger, G1, 3,000m) last year, expectations are high for the late-developing colt to demonstrate improved form after his summer break when he makes his fall debut in the Kyoto Daishoten (G2, 2,400m) on October 12.



Fenomeno
in the 2014 Tenno Sho (Spring)

Fenomeno (JPN, by *Stay Gold*), who was eighth in last year's Japan Cup, never regained his true form, finishing 10th in the Arima Kinen and then eighth in his kick-off start this season, the Nikkei Sho (G2, 2,500m) in March. His hopes of claiming his third consecutive title in the Tenno Sho (Spring) (G1, 3,200m) were dashed when he injured the suspensory ligament of his right foreleg and further tests also found tendon injuries in his left foreleg, leading his connections to announce his retirement to

stud.

2014 Satsuki Sho (Japanese 2000 Guineas, G1, 2,000m) victor and Japan Cup ninth-place finisher **Isla Bonita** (JPN, C4, by **Fuji Kiseki**) had just one start this spring, the Nakayama Kinen (G2, 1,800m), in which he finished fifth, before being turned out again to regain his health. He is being conditioned towards a comeback this fall, probably the Mainichi Okan and then the Tenno Sho (Autumn), but judging from his best distance, the chances of his starting in the Japan Cup are slim.



Isla Bonita
in the 2014 Satsuki Sho

Consequently, the level of this year's field could open paths for those that were unable to be among the top finishers last time. **Denim and Ruby** (JPN, M5, by **Deep Impact**), who finished 11th, has been winless for over two years, but her tenacious runner-up effort behind **Gold Ship** (JPN, H6, by **Stay Gold**) in the Hanshin Daishoten (G2, 3,000m) was impressive. While she failed to launch her powerful late charge in the Tenno Sho (Spring), she proved well up to the competition by scoring a second runner-up effort at the G1 level—following the 2013 Japan Cup—in the Takarazuka Kinen, which was won by **Lovely Day** (JPN, H5, by **King Kamehameha**), another Kaneko Makoto Holdings Co., Ltd. runner. **Denim and Ruby** sustained a bowed tendon in her right foreleg during training for the Mainichi Okan and will be sidelined from racing, including this year's Japan Cup.

15th-place **Decipher** (JPN, H6, by **Deep Impact**) and 12th-place **Hit the Target** (JPN, H7, by **King Kamehameha**) finished first and second, respectively, in the Sapporo Kinen (G2, 2,000m) in August. Both horses claimed a grade-race title earlier in the season—**Decipher** won the Chunichi Shimbun Hai (G3, 2,000m) in March and **Hit the Target** scored a win in the Meguro Kinen (G2,

2,500m) in May—and have continued to make their presence felt in big events.



Denim and Ruby
in the 2013 Flora Stakes



Decipher
in the 2015 Sapporo Kinen



Hit the Target
in the 2015 Meguro Kinen



Gold Ship
in the 2015 Tenno Sho (Spring)

Meanwhile, **Gold Ship**, who was not available for the Japan Cup last season, scored his third successive Hanshin Daishoten title in March. In the Tenno Sho (Spring), despite displaying his erratic behavior when being loaded into the gate and then trailing behind early, he commenced his attack with 1,000 meters to go and prevailed by a neck margin for the victory. Typical of the unpredictable son of *Stay Gold*, the heavy favorite gray was rank in the gate, missed his break in the Takarazuka Kinen and was

unable to make up for his mistake, finishing 15th. His connections have already announced his retirement as of the end of this year.

The 2013 derby winner, **Kizuna (JPN, H5, by Deep Impact)**, returned from a long break after sustaining a fracture in his left foreleg following a fourth-place finish in the Tenno Sho (Spring) last year. He was third in his comeback start in the Kyoto Kinen in February and the runner-up in his next start, the Sankei Osaka Hai in April. But then he fell short in this year's Tenno Sho (Spring), prompting his connections to cancel a trip to Longchamp for the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe. Unfortunately, in midst of training towards the Tenno Sho (Autumn), he injured a tendon in his right foreleg and was forced to retire, so he will have to entrust his Arc dream to his offspring.



Kizuna
in the 2013 Tokyo Yushun



Lovely Day
in the 2015 Takarazuka Kinen

Five-year-old **Lovely Day** has shown great improvement this season, landing his first grade-race title in the Nakayama Kimpai (G3, 2,000m) in January and then beating proven winners **Kizuna** and *Harp Star* for another title in the Kyoto Kinen. Although he was unsuccessful in handling extra distances of both the Hanshin Daishoten and the Tenno Sho (Spring), finishing sixth and eighth, respectively, he bounced back to win the Naruo

Kinen (G3, 2,000m) in June. Sent to post sixth choice in the “all-star” Takarazuka Kinen, the son of *King Kamehameha* stalked the pace-setter in second and held on strongly after taking the lead for his first G1 victory. The emerging late developer is set to begin his fall campaign with the Kyoto Daishoten, then make his bid for further titles in the autumn middle-distance G1 events.

Toho Jackal (JPN, C4, by Special Week) captured his first G1 and classic title in the 2014 Kikuka Sho in record time, just 149 days after just making a late-career debut in May of his three-year-old season, but he was sidelined for eight months with a hoof problem thereafter. He performed well in his comeback start and four-year-old debut, finishing fourth in the Takarazuka Kinen, but he disliked the soft turf in the Sapporo Kinen in August, finishing eighth. He will run in the Tenno Sho (Autumn) and then head directly to the Japan Cup.



Toho Jackal
in the 2014 Kikuka Sho

Dirt Champions Still Going Strongly



Hokko Tarumae
in the 2014 Champions Cup

The Champions Cup (G1, dirt, 1,800m), formally known as the Japan Cup Dirt since its inaugural running at Tokyo Racecourse and later transferred to Hanshin in 2008, was moved to Chukyo Racecourse last year. **Hokko Tarumae (JPN, H6, by King Kamehameha)**, who became the first dirt champion in a memorable first running at the left-handed course, capped off his 2014 season with another G1 victory in the Tokyo Daishoten (G1, dirt, 2,000m). He has remained strong this season, kicking off his

six-year-old campaign with a third consecutive G1 win in the Kawasaki Kinen (dirt, 2,100m), before joining *Epiphaneia* in Dubai, where he held on well for fifth in the Dubai World Cup. He promptly scored his ninth career G1 win in a comeback start in late June in the Teio Sho (dirt, 2,000m), matching *Vermilion (JPN, by El Condor Pasa)* and *Espoir City (JPN, by Gold Allure)* for most G1 wins. He is set to extend the streak in his fall targets, the JBC Classic (dirt, 2,000m) and the Champions Cup.

Namura Victor (JPN, H6, by Zenno Rob Roy) finished impressively for second in the 2014 Champions Cup despite coming in as the eighth favorite. He has yet to win this season, registering 11th, third and fourth in the first half of his six-year-old campaign, and then third in his fall debut in the Sirius Stakes (G3, dirt, 2,000m) on October 3. Champions Cup third-place finisher **Roman Legend (JPN, H7, by Special Week)** sustained a chip fracture of the proximal palmar aspect of the third metacarpal bone in his left foreleg, after having finished third in the Heian Stakes (G3, dirt,

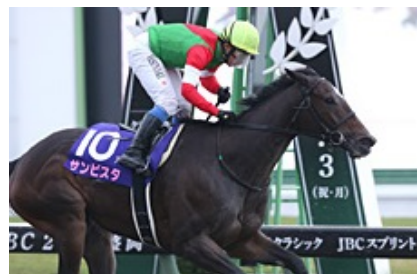
1,900m) in May, but he is due to make his comeback in November 8 in the Miyako Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,800m). **Sambista (JPN, M6, by Suzuka Mambo)**, who scored her first G1 victory in the JBC Ladies' Classic (dirt, 1,800m) and then fourth against male rivals in the Champions Cup last year, has continued training and is in good form this year. She has already won three grade-race events for females and will attempt to defend her title in this year's JBC Ladies' Classic.



Namura Victor
in the 2014 Antares Stakes



Roman Legend
in the 2014 Elm Stakes



Sambista
in the 2014 JBC Ladies' Classic

Wonder Acute (JPN, H9, by Charismatic), fifth in the Champions Cup last year, is still going strongly at nine years of age. He landed his third G1 victory in the Kashiwa Kinen (dirt, 1,600m) in May and will return from his summer break for the Mile Championship Nambu Hai (dirt, 1,600m) on October 12. Others expected to run in the Nambu Hai include **Grape Brandy (JPN, H7, by Manhattan Cafe)**, who was ninth in the Champions Cup and won the 2013 February Stakes (G1, dirt, 1,600m), and **Best Warrior (USA, H5, by Majestic Warrior)**, who was 11th in the Champions Cup and won the Mile Championship Nambu Hai last year.



Wonder Acute
in the 2014 Teio Sho



Grape Brandy
in the 2013 February Stakes



Best Warrior in the 2014
Mile Championship Nambu Hai

Incantation (JPN, H5, by Sinister Minister) disappointed to tenth in his last Champions Cup, despite being sent to post the fourth choice, but bounced back to form this season by finishing a 1/2-length second in the spring version of JRA's dirt G1, the February Stakes. He is currently sidelined after pulling up from his third grade-race victory in the Heian Stakes with a fracture of the first phalanx in his left hindlimb. **Chrysolite (JPN, H5, by Gold Allure)**, the 2013 Japan Dirt Derby (dirt, 2,000m) winner, had a runner-up effort in the JBC Classic last year and then entered the inaugural running of the Champions Cup, but flopped badly to 14th. He rebounded to prove his performance in June, missing by just 3/4 length to **Hokko Tarumae** in the Teio Sho.

Copano Rickey (JPN, H5, by Gold Allure) also failed to live up to his billing as the race favorite in the last Champions Cup, where he broke poorly and finished a distant 12th. In his next start, the Tokyo Daishoten, he was no match for winner **Hokko Tarumae** but he bested the rest of the field. He kicked off his 2015 season with a win in the Tokai Stakes (G2, dirt, 1,800m) and proceeded to score a consecutive win in the February Stakes. Although he was found to have a mild fracture of the distal radius in his left foreleg, he is due to return to racing in time for the Nippon TV Hai (dirt, 1,800m) on October 7, prior to the JBC Classic in November. The outcome of this race against **Hokko Tarumae** will greatly influence expectations for the Champions Cup.



Incantation
in the 2015 Heian Stakes



Chrysolite
in the 2013 Japan Dirt Derby



Copano Rickey
in the 2015 February Stakes

Nonkono Yume (JPN, C3, by Twining) is first in line among the up-and-coming three-year-olds with back-to-back grade-race victories in the Unicorn Stakes (G3, 1,600m) in June and his first G1 title in the Japan Dirt Derby.



Nonkono Yume
in the 2015 Unicorn Stakes

Three-Year-Olds Compete for Berths in Final Leg of Triple Crown

Two trial races got underway prior to the final leg of the three-year-old classics, the Kikuka Sho on October 25, despite having lost Duramente (JPN, C3, by King Kamehameha), winner of the first to legs, the Satsuki Sho and the Tokyo Yushun, for the rest of the season due to a leg fracture.

Satsuki Sho third-place finisher **Kitasan Black (JPN, C3, by Black Tide)** got off to a very good start this fall. He took the St. Lite Kinen (G2, 2,200m) on September 21, outdueling pacesetter **Musee Alien (JPN, C3, by Screen Hero)**, winner of the Mainichi Hai (G3, 1,800m) in March, after stalking the *Screen Hero* colt on his outside throughout the 2,200-meter trip. Close behind in fifth and seventh, respectively, were well-backed **Beruf (JPN, C3, by Harbinger)**, a grade-race winner in the Keisei Hai (G3, 2,000m) who was coming off an impressive runner-up effort against older rivals in the Kokura Kinen (G3, 2,000m) in August, and race favorite **Satono Rasen (JPN, C3, by**

Deep Impact), who had finished a 1-3/4-length second in the Tokyo Yushun after winning the Kyoto Shimbun Hai (G2, 2,200m) in May. **Bright Emblem (JPN, C3, by Neo Universe)**, a Satsuki Sho fourth-place finisher and a grade-race winner in the Sapporo Nisai Stakes (G3, 1,800m) as a two-year-old, was unable to live up to his billing, finishing a disappointing 10th.



Duramente
in the 2015 Tokyo Yushun



Kitasan Black
in the 2015 St. Lite Kinen



Musee Alien
in the 2015 Mainichi Hai



Beruf
in the 2015 Keisei Hai



Satono Rasen
in the 2015 Kyoto Shimbun Hai



Bright Emblem
in the 2014 Sapporo Nisai Stakes

Lia Fail (JPN, C3, by Zenno Rob Roy) made a successful switch from dirt to turf racing this season, winning his first two turf starts, including his first grade-race victory in the Kobe Shimbun Hai (G2, 2,400m) on September 27. **Real Steel (JPN, C3, by Deep Impact)**, runner-up by 1-1/2 lengths in the Satsuki Sho and fourth in the Tokyo Yushun, finished second. **Tagano Espresso (JPN, C3, by Black Tide)**, victor in the 2014 Daily Hai Nisai Stakes (G2, 1,600m), disappointed to eighth.



Lia Fail
in the 2015 Kobe Shimbun Hai



Real Steel
in the 2015 Kyodo News Service Hai



Tagano Espresso
in the 2014 Daily Hai Nisai Stakes

The Rose Stakes (G2, 1,800m), held on September 20 as the major trial for the Shuka Sho (G1, 2,000m), the final leg of the three-year-old Fillies' Triple Crown, was won by **Touching Speech (JPN, F3, by Deep Impact)**, who had just stepped up in class after a winning an allowance race. She demonstrated a terrific turn of speed racing second from last early and zoomed to a 1-1/2-length

victory, as well as a ticket to run in the Shuka Sho. She managed to hold off Yushun Himba (Japanese Oaks, G1, 2,400m) winner **Mikki Queen (JPN, F3, by Deep Impact)**, who also exerted a powerful late charge after having to trail the field from a poor break. **Let's Go Donki (JPN, F3, by King Kamehameha)**, who claimed the first leg of the Fillies' Triple Crown, the Oka Sho (Japanese 1000 Guineas, G1, 1,600m), was unable to sustain an early lead and finished fourth.

Queens Ring (JPN, F3, by Manhattan Cafe), who won the Fillies' Revue (G2, 1,400m) in March and was fourth in the Oka Sho, followed in fifth. **Sing with Joy (JPN, F3, by Manhattan Cafe)**, winner of the Flora Stakes (G2, 2,000m) in April, faded to 14th. The 2014 Best Two-Year-Old Filly **Shonan Adela (JPN, F3, by Deep Impact)**, who was diagnosed with a fractured right foreleg in March prior to her much-expected three-year-old season, was due to come back in the fall for the Rose Stakes, but had to cancel due to another injury — a sprained left foreleg.



Touching Speech
in the 2015 Rose Stakes



Mikki Queen
in the 2015 Yushun Himba



Let's Go Donki
in the 2015 Oka Sho



Queens Ring
in the 2015 Fillies' Revue



Sing with Joy
in the 2015 Flora Stakes



Shonan Adela
in the 2014 Hanshin Juvenile Fillies

Queen's Milagro (JPN, F3, by Manhattan Cafe) and **White Elegance (JPN, F3, by Kurofune)** also earned berths in the Shuka Sho by finishing first and second, respectively, in another trial race, the Shion Stakes (2,000m), on September 12.