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SUBJECT: RESULT OF THE 17TH CHAMPIONS CUP (G1)



Formally run under the name Japan Cup Dirt until 2013, the Champions Cup is no longer an invitational race and takes place at Chukyo Racecourse which is situated in Chubu region between Tokyo and Osaka. The Japan Cup Dirt, which began as the dirt version of the Japan Cup in 2000 at Tokyo Racecourse held over the 2,100-meter left-handed course until 2007, was temporarily shifted to Nakayama Racecourse over the 1,800-meter right-handed course in 2002, then held at Hanshin Racecourse, also a right-handed track and over 1,800 meters, between 2008 and 2013. The G1 dirt race continues as one of four G1 events comprising the Japan Autumn International (JAI) along with the Queen Elizabeth II Cup (G1, 2,200m), the Mile Championship (G1, 1,600m) and the Japan Cup (G1, 2,400m).

Lord Sterling (USA, by *Black Tie Affair*), who finished third in the inaugural year, was one of the first foreign contenders, while *Fleetstreet Dancer* (USA, by *Smart Strike*) became the first foreign winner in 2003. In the past, 28 runners from not only North America but also from France, Germany, Great Britain and Hong Kong have participated in the race. Gun Pit (AUS, by Dubawi), last year's only overseas contender and the first runner from Hong Kong in 13 years, though coming off three consecutive victories with seven wins out of seven starts on all-weather track at Sha Tin, was unfortunately last to cross the wire. This year, Melatonin (USA, G5, by Kodiak Kowboy) and Bradester (USA, H6, by Lion Heart) from the United States were initially entered to run in the race but both entries were withdrawn.

Last year, 12th pick *Sambista* (JPN, by *Suzuka Mambo*) pulled an upset victory by angling out in the stretch after hugging the rails in mid-division and pinning the leaders 200 meters out to win by 1-1/2 lengths. She became the first mare to win a JRA-G1 dirt race and was retired after the race. Third favorite **Nonkono Yume** and fifth choice **Sound True** closed in with their powerful late drives but finished second and third, respectively, followed by **Roi Jardin** in fourth and defending champion Hokko Tarumae (JPN, H7, by King Kamehameha) in fifth. Odds-on-favorite **Copano Rickey** was seventh.

This year's contenders included four horses coming off the JBC Classic (dirt, 2,100m) held at NAR (National Association of Racing; local public racing) Kawasaki Racecourse on November 3: winner **Awardee** who was unbeaten in all his six starts after being switched to dirt; **Sound True** (3rd) who registered his first G1 title in the year-end Tokyo Daishoten (G1, dirt, 2,000m) last year and was second and third, respectively, in this year's Kawasaki Kinen (dirt, 2,100m) in January and the Teio Sho (dirt, 2,000m) in June; **Nonkono Yume** (4th) who was runner-up in this year's February Stakes (G1, dirt, 1,600m) and the Teio Sho; and **Copano Rickey** (5th) who accumulated a total of eight G1 titles by adding three this year in the Kashiwa Kinen (dirt, 1,600m) in May, the Teio Sho and the Mile Championship Nambu Hai (dirt, 1,600m) in October. Runner-up Hokko Tarumae, who registered his 10th G1 title when winning the Kawasaki Kinen for the third consecutive year in January, was ruled out of this year's Champions Cup due to lameness in his left foreleg, and the connections decided to retire him to stud.

Five runners came off the Miyako Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,800m) held at Kyoto Racecourse on November 6: **Apollo Kentucky** who marked his first grade-race title by winning the race, following a third in his first graded attempt in the Sirius Stakes (G3, dirt, 2,000m) in October; defending champion **Roi Jardin** (3rd) who was fifth in the February Stakes; **Monde Classe** (4th) who, though still without any graded title, was runner-up in the Tokai Stakes (G2, dirt, 1,800m) in January and third in the Elm Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,700m) in August; **Lani**, (13th), half-brother to **Awardee**, who won the UAE Derby (G2, dirt, 1,900m) in March and was ninth, fifth and third, respectively, in the American Triple Crown; and **Asukano Roman** (14th) who landed two graded titles this year in the Tokai Stakes and the Heian Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,900m) in May and was third in the February Stakes.

Also five runners came off the Musashino Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,600m) held at Tokyo Racecourse on November 12: **Gold Dream** (2nd) who won the Unicorn Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,600m) in June and was third in the Japan Dirt Derby (dirt, 2,000m) in July; **Kafuji Take** (3rd) whose six career wins were over 1,200-1,400 meters and was raced over 1,800 meters for the second time; this year's February Stakes champion **Moanin** who finished seventh in the race while carrying 59kg; **Brightline** (11th) who has graded wins on both turf and dirt and was fourth in the 2013 Japan Cup Dirt; and **Meisho Sumitomo** who finished 13th in his first graded challenge on dirt but whose six career wins

were won over 1,700-1,800m dirt races. Tagano Tonnerre (JPN, G6, by Came Home), who won the race, was ruled out of this year's Champions Cup, having broken his right foreleg during training.

Bright Idea, who came off an 11th-place finish in the Fukushima Minyu Cup (dirt, 1,700m) on November 20, was also one of the contestants.

THE 17TH CHAMPIONS CUP (G1) – Japan Autumn International -

3-year-olds & up, 1,800 meters (about 9 furlongs), dirt, left-handed

Sunday, December 4, 2016 Chukyo Racecourse 11th Race Post Time: 15:30

Total prize money: ¥ 209,920,000 (about US\$ 1,749,333 <US\$1=¥120>)

3-y-o: 56 kg (about 124 lbs), 4-y-o & up: 57 kg (about 126 lbs)

2 kg allowance for Fillies & Mares, 2kg allowance for Southern Hemisphere-bred born in 2013

Safety factor: 16 runners



FP	BK	PP	Horse	Sex Age	Wgt (kg)	Sire Dam	Jockey Trainer	Owner Breeder	Margin (L3F)	Odds (Fav)
1	5	8	Sound True (JPN)	G6	57.0	French Deputy Kyoei Truth	T. Ono N. Takagi	Hiroshi Yamada Okada Stud	1:50.1 (35.8)	15.9 (6)
2	2	2 B	Awardee (USA)	H6	57.0	Jungle Pocket Heavenly Romance	Y. Take M. Matsunaga	Koji Maeda North Hills Management	Neck (37.0)	2.2 (1)
3	3	4	Asukano Roman (JPN)	H5	57.0	Agnes Digital Asukano Himiko	R. Wada Y. Kawamura	Chiro Toyoda Chiro Toyoda	1/2 (37.4)	40.4 (10)
4	1	1	Kafuji Take (JPN)	C4	57.0	Precise End Take the Cake	A. Tsumura S. Yukubo	Mamoru Kato Hidaka Farm	Neck (36.0)	54.8 (11)
5	8	14	Apollo Kentucky (USA)	C4	57.0	Langfuhr Dixiana Delight	F. Matsuwaka K. Yamauchi	Apollo Thoroughbred Club Doug Branham	1-1/4 (36.9)	21.0 (7)
6	5	9	Nonkono Yume (JPN)	G4	57.0	Twining Nonko	R. Moore Y. Kato	Kazumasa Yamada Shadai Farm	Neck (36.6)	7.5 (4)
7	8	15	Moanin (USA)	C4	57.0	Henny Hughes Giggly	K. Tosaki S. Ishizaka	Yukio Baba Empire Equines LLC	3/4 (37.3)	8.3 (5)
8	3	5	Roi Jardin (JPN)	H5	57.0	King Kamehameha Agnes Chocolat	N. Yokoyama H. Toda	Shadai Race Horse Co., Ltd. Shadai Farm	Nose (36.8)	39.6 (9)
9	4	7 B	Lani (USA)	C3	56.0	Tapit Heavenly Romance	H. Uchida M. Matsunaga	Koji Maeda North Hills Co., Limited	Nose (37.0)	29.3 (8)
10	4	6	Monde Classe (JPN)	H5	57.0	Agnes Digital Cookie Kitty	G. Maruyama H. Shimizu	Sanko Bokujo Co., Ltd. Sanko Bokujo	Neck (38.3)	86.3 (12)
11	6	10	Meisho Sumitomo (JPN)	H5	57.0	Gold Allure Mugen	Y. Furukawa K. Minai	Yoshio Matsumoto Fujiwara Farm	2-1/2 (37.9)	264.7 (14)
12	7	12	Gold Dream (JPN)	C3	56.0	Gold Allure Mon Vert	M. Demuro O. Hirata	Katsumi Yoshida Northern Farm	1-3/4 (38.5)	5.7 (2)
13	6	11	Copano Rickey (JPN)	H6	57.0	Gold Allure Copano Nikita	C. Lemaire A. Murayama	Sachiaki Kobayashi Yanagawa Bokujo	1-1/2 (38.8)	6.3 (3)
14	7	13	Bright Idea (JPN)	H6	57.0	Gold Allure Mighty Collar	H. Miyuki T. Miya	Isao Ogawa Isao Ogawa	1/2 (38.3)	369.0 (15)
15	2	3	Brightline (JPN)	H7	57.0	Fuji Kiseki Cherie's Smile	H. Tanabe I. Sameshima	North Hills Co., Ltd. North Hills Management	8 (40.6)	255.5 (13)

FP=Final Position / BK=Bracket Number / PP=Post Position / B=Blinker / Wgt=Weight / L3F=Time of Last 3 Furlongs (600m)

NOTE 1: No Foreign Contenders

NOTE 2: Figures quoted under **Odds** are Win Odds, which show the amount of money you get back per single unit (100yen), and **Fav** indicates the order of favorites.

WINNING TIME: 1:50.1

GOING: Standard

WEATHER: Cloudy

TURNOVER FOR THE RACE ALONE: ¥ 14,365,851,600

TURNOVER FOR THE DAY: ¥ 19,518,166,000

ATTENDANCE: 33,500

PAY-OFF (for ¥100)

WIN	No.8	¥1,590	BRACKET QUINELLA	2-5	¥520	QUINELLA	2-8	¥1,390
PLACE	No.8	¥250	QUINELLA PLACE	2-8	¥490	EXACTA	8-2	¥4,800
	No.2	¥130		4-8	¥3,420	TRIO	2-4-8	¥11,180
	No.4	¥650		2-4	¥1,530	TRIFECTA	8-2-4	¥85,980

1. Sound True (JPN), chestnut, gelding, 6-year-old

French Deputy / Kyoei Truth (Fuji Kiseki)

Owner: Hiroshi Yamada

Breeder: Okada Stud

Trainer: Noboru Takagi

Jockey: Takuya Ono

38 Starts, 9 Wins

Added money: ¥ 100,234,000

Career earnings: ¥ 455,788,000

Principal Race Performances:

'15 Tokyo Daishoten (G1, dirt, 2,000m) 1st
 '15 Nippon TV Hai (dirt, 1,800m) 1st
 '16 Kawasaki Kinen (dirt, 2,100m) 2nd
 '15 JBC Classic (dirt, 2,000m) 2nd
 '16 JBC Classic (dirt, 2,100m) 3rd
 '16 Teio Sho (dirt, 2,000m) 3rd
 '15 Champions Cup (G1, dirt, 1,800m) 3rd

2. Awardee (USA), bay, horse, 6-year-old

Jungle Pocket / Heavenly Romance (Sunday Silence)

Owner: Koji Maeda

Breeder: North Hills Management

Trainer: Mikio Matsunaga

Jockey: Yutaka Take

3. Asukano Roman (JPN), chestnut, horse, 5-year-old

Agnes Digital / Asukano Himiko (Tabasco Cat)

Owner: Chiro Toyoda

Breeder: Chiro Toyoda

Trainer: Yoshihiko Kawamura

Jockey: Ryuji Wada

Sixth Favorite Sound True Revenges Last Year's Third-Place Finish by Holding off Race Favorite in This Year's Champions Cup

Sixth-favorite dirt specialist **Sound True** revenged last year's third-place finish by stealing away the title from race favorite **Awardee** in the last two strides with his powerful late drive that renewed the race record set by Sambista last year by 0.3 second to 1:50.1. The six-year-old gelding captured his third graded victory and his second G1 title following his win in the year-end Tokyo Daishoten last year. This was also his first win of this season though he had been consistent with a second and three thirds out of five starts prior to this race. He is the third horse to claim the first win of the season in the race following Kane Hekili in 2008 when the race was run under the name Japan Cup Dirt, and the second gelding to capture the title following Fleetstreet Dancer in 2003. He is also the fourth six-year-old champion following Sambista. This victory marked the second JRA-G1 victory for both trainer Noboru Takagi and jockey Takuya Ono following the 2014 Sprinters Stakes with Snow Dragon.

Breaking smoothly from stall eight, six-year-old **Sound True** partnered with Takuya Ono eased back to second from the rear and maintained the rearward position while taking an economic route by the rails. The French Deputy gelding, still hugging the rails turning for home, angled out to find space outside the front horses that spread wide to make bid in the homestretch. Switching his gear on from the outside route, the chestnut unleashed his usual late charge that timed the fastest last three furlong and flew passed all his rivals to pin the leader right before the wire for a neck victory.

"We had to race toward the rear as the pace was fast, but I concentrated on keeping good rhythm. I raced him along the rails through the last two corners as planned and was able to find space entering the homestretch. It seemed that the horses in front tired somewhat in the last 100 meters. I was unable to race him smoothly in the stretch last year

but the ride was perfect this year. The horse seems to be in good form during this time of the year so I am looking forward to defending the title in the year-end Tokyo Daishoten,” commented Takuya Ono.

Odds-on-favorite **Awardee**, mounted by Yutaka Take who had just claimed his 71st JRA-G1 victory when winning the Japan Cup with Kitasan Black a week ago, hugged the rails in mid-division, around sixth from the front. The six-year-old bay by Japanese Derby winner Jungle Pocket took a wide route rounding the corners and steadily advanced forward to assume command 100 meters out, and just when the crowds were convinced of his seven-race winning streak, he was overtaken and succumbed to second.

“I knew that the horse tends to lose his concentration when taking the front but he was more so today than usual. He also seemed a bit difficult during the race,” said Yutaka Take.

Tenth pick **Asukano Roman** broke sharply and rallied to take command but settled behind **Monde Classe** to press the pace in second. Entering the lane in second, the son of Agnes Digital persistently closed in and, although overtaken by **Awardee** then by **Sound True** in the last 100 meters, passed the tiring frontrunner and fended off the strong late charge by **Kafuji Take** to cross the wire a neck in front in third.

“He lost his concentration at the first corner, which disrupted his rhythm. He held on really well despite the difficult race development (fast pace). I think he was in his best condition coming into the race so I am really disappointed in this result,” commented Ryuji Wada.

[Other Horses]

4th: (1) **Kafuji Take**—trailed in rear, showed impressive late kick after turning widest—timed 2nd fastest over last 3 furlongs, but was belated and neck short for 3rd

Akihide Tsumura: “He exerted a powerful late kick but he had to cover extra distance compared to the winner. He was really calm and showed great performance today”

5th: (14) **Apollo Kentucky**—raced in mid-pack, showed belated charge in last 300m

Fuma Matsuwaka: “The field was strong and I had to urge him to keep up with the fast pace but he stretched well in the last stage.”

6th: (9) **Nonkono Yume**—settled toward rear in mid-division, entered 2nd from last to stretch, quickened in last 200m, but was too late

Ryan Moore: “The corners are a bit tight here so I think the horse prefers the wide track at Tokyo. I also think a longer distance will suite him better.”

7th: (15) **Moanin**—advanced to 5th from widest draw, dropped back between 3rd and 4th corner, passed tired rivals in last furlong

Keita Tosaki: “The pace was fast and he seemed to hesitate a little getting sands from the horses passing us from the outside.”

8th: (5) **Roi Jardin**—took economic trip in back of mid-group, ran gamely along rails, but outrun in last 100m

9th: (7) **Lani**—sat toward rear, traveled wide, met traffic at stretch, lost momentum

Mikio Matsunaga (trainer): “We were interrupted when entering the homestretch.”

10th: (6) **Monde Classe**—set pace, led until 100m out, outrun in final strides

11th: (10) **Meisho Sumitomo**—hugged rails in mid-division, ran willingly until 300m out, unable to reach contention

12th: (12) **Gold Dream**—broke poorly, made headway to 7th, improved position to 5th turning final corner, but weakened in last 200m

Mirco Demuro: “I was able to settle him in good position but the pace was too fast, and he weakened when overtaken by Awardee in the stretch.”

13th: (11) **Copano Rickey**—pressed pace in 2nd or 3rd, sustained bid until 300m out, then fell back

Christophe Lemaire: “We were unable to keep our own pace due to the race development that was accelerated by the horses making early bids in the backstretch. He ran out of steam in the last stage.”

14th: (13) **Bright Idea**—rated in middle of field, angled wide into stretch, but never fired

15th: (3) **Brightline**—prominent early in 4th, advanced to 2nd briefly at final corner, but soon faded

Fractional Time (sec./furlong): 12.7 - 10.7 - 12.9 - 12.5 - 11.8 - 11.8 - 12.4 - 12.3 - 13.0

Last 4 furlongs: 49.5 Last 3 furlongs: 37.7

Positions at each corner:

1st corner	(4,*6)11,3,15-(2,12)(10,13)(9,14)-(5,7)-(<u>8</u> ,1)
2nd corner	6(4,11)3,15(2,12)-(10,13)-14,9(5,7)- <u>8</u> ,1
3rd corner	6,3(4,11)12,2(10,15)13(14,7)5,9-(<u>8</u> ,1)
4th corner	6(4,3)11(10,12,2)-13(5,15)14,7(<u>8</u> ,9)1

Note1: **Underlined bold number** indicates the winning horse

Note2: Horse numbers are indicated in the order of their positions at each corner, with the first position listed first. Two or more horses inside the same parentheses indicate that they were positioned side by side. Hyphens between the horse numbers indicate that there is distance between the former and the latter. The asterisk indicates a slight lead.