

FROM: Masahiro Usuda

General Manager, Media & Publicity Department, THE JAPAN RACING ASSOCIATION (JRA)

DATE: June 24, 2018

**SUBJECT: RESULT OF THE 59TH TAKARAZUKA KINEN (G1)**



The Takarazuka Kinen, established in 1960, opened its doors to foreign-trained horses in 1997 and became the first international grade-one race designated by the International Cataloguing Standards Committee (ICSC) held in western Japan in 2001. The race also joined the Breeders' Cup Challenge Series in 2011, enabling its winners to earn automatic starting position in the Breeders' Cup Turf (G1, 2,400m). This year's race welcomed 2015/16 Horse of the Year **Werther** from Hong Kong who is the second foreign contender to challenge the race since Australian-trained *Seto Stayer* (AUS, by *Bellotto*; 9th) in 1997.

It is a Grand Prix (all-star) race, along with the year-end Arima Kinen (G1, 2,500m), in which racing fans select the runners from all distances by votes, and the last G1 race of the spring season to determine the seasonal champion.

This year's contenders that were among the top ten horses voted included: **Satono Diamond** (1st), winner of 2016 Kikuka Sho (Japanese St. Leger, G1, 3,000m) and Arima Kinen who came off a seventh in the Osaka Hai (G1, 2,000m; Apr.1); defending champion **Satono Crown** (5th) who finished seventh in his only start this season, the Dubai Sheema Classic (G1, 2,410m; Mar.31); and 2017 Kikuka Sho champion **Kiseki** (7th) who was 9th in his previous outing, the Nikkei Sho (G2, 2,500m; Mar.24).

Horses that were ranked among the top ten but passed up their entry were: Suave Richard (JPN, C4, by Heart's Cry; 2nd); Cheval Grand (JPN, H6, by Heart's Cry; 3rd); Rey de Oro (JPN, C4, by King Kamehameha; 4th); Rainbow Line (JPN, H5, by Stay Gold; 6th); Al Ain (JPN, C4, by Deep Impact; 8th); Almond Eye (JPN, F3, by Lord Kanaloa; 9th); and Mozu Katchan (JPN, F4, by Harbinger; 10th).

Other notable contenders included; 2017 Dubai Turf (G1, 1,800m) victor **Vivlos** (15th); this year's American Jockey Club Cup (G2, 2,200m) champion **Danburite** (17th); four-time graded winner **Smart Layer** (25th); three-time G1 runner-up **Staphanos** (27th); 2017 Nikkei Shinshun Hai (G2, 2,400m) victor **Mikki Rocket** (29th); 2015-2017 Stayers Stakes (G2, 3,600m) champion, **Albert** (59th); and this year's Nikkei Shinshun Hai winner **Perform a Promise** (75th).

The race record of 2:10.1 was set by *Earnestly* (JPN, by *Grass Wonder*) in 2011.

**THE 59TH TAKARAZUKA KINEN (G1)**

3-year-old & up, 2,200 meters (about 11 furlongs), turf, right-handed

Sunday, June 24, 2018

Hanshin Racecourse

11th Race

Post time: 15:40

Total prize money: ¥ 325,000,000 (about US\$ 2,955,000 <US\$1=¥110>)

3-y-o: 53kg (about 117 lbs), 4-y-o & up: 58kg (about 128 lbs), 2kg allowance for Fillies & Mares,

1kg allowance for Southern Hemisphere-bred born in 2014,

3kg allowance for Southern Hemisphere-bred born in 2015

Safety factor: 18 runners

FP	BK	PP	Horse	Sex Age	Wgt (kg)	Sire Dam	Jockey Trainer	Owner Breeder	Margin (L3F)	Odds (Fav)
1	2	4	Mikki Rocket (JPN)	H5	58.0	King Kamehameha Moneycantbuymelove	R. Wada H. Otonashi	Mizuki Noda Northern Racing	2:11.6 (35.8)	13.1 (7)
2	7	13	Werther* (NZ)	G7	58.0	Tavistock Bagalollies	H. Bowman J. Moore	Johnson Chen C D Allison C V & J A Barnao et al	Neck (35.3)	14.9 (10)
3	1	2	Noble Mars (JPN)	H5	58.0	Jungle Pocket I and You	R. Takakura H. Miyamoto	Nobuhiko Yoshiki Tagami Farm	3 (36.1)	40.0 (12)
4	5	10	Vivlos (JPN)	M5	56.0	Deep Impact Halwa Sweet	Y. Fukunaga Y. Tomomichi	Kazuhiro Sasaki Northern Racing	Neck (36.0)	6.5 (3)
5	4	8	Danburite (JPN)	C4	58.0	Rulership Tanzanite	Y. Take H. Otonashi	Sunday Racing Co., Ltd. Northern Farm	1-1/4 (36.4)	10.3 (5)
6	2	3	Satono Diamond (JPN)	H5	58.0	Deep Impact Malpensa	C. Lemaire Y. Ikee	Satomi Horse Company Co., Ltd. Northern Racing	1/2 (36.6)	3.9 (1)
7	1	1	Staphanos (JPN)	H7	58.0	Deep Impact Kokoshnik	Y. Iwata H. Fujiwara	U. Carrot Farm Northern Racing	Nose (36.2)	39.5 (11)
8	8	16	Kiseki	C4	58.0	Rulership	M. Demuro	Tatsue Ishikawa	Neck	5.7

			(JPN)			Blitz Finale	K. Sumii	Shimokobe Farm	(35.9)	(2)
9	4	7	Perform a Promise (JPN)	H6	58.0	Stay Gold I'll Be Bound	K. Tosaki H. Fujiwara	Sunday Racing Co., Ltd. Northern Farm	3/4 (36.2)	8.5 (4)
10	7	14	Smart Layer (JPN)	M8	56.0	Deep Impact Snow Style	K. Matsuyama R. Okubo	Toru Okawa Okada Stud	Head (36.8)	55.9 (13)
11	3	5	Strong Titan (USA)	H5	58.0	Regal Ransom Titan Queen	Y. Kawada Y. Ikee	Silk Racing Co., Ltd. Northern Racing	1 (37.0)	14.5 (8)
12	5	9	Satono Crown (JPN)	H6	58.0	Marju Jioconda	S. Ishibashi N. Hori	Satomi Horse Company Co., Ltd. Northern Racing	Neck (36.8)	11.9 (6)
13	3	6	Albert (JPN)	H7	58.0	Admire Don Folklore	K. Fujioka N. Hori	Masamichi Hayashi Northern Farm	3-1/2 (36.9)	138.2 (15)
14	8	15	Seewind (JPN)	H5	58.0	Deep Impact Silky Lagoon	K. Ikezoe T. Kimura	Silk Racing Co., Ltd. Northern Farm	7 (38.6)	14.6 (9)
15	6	12	Tatsu Gogeki (JPN)	H6	58.0	Marvelous Sunday Nishino Plumeria	S. Akiyama I. Sameshima	Takayuki Suzuki Kawakami Bokujo	Neck (38.9)	166.0 (16)
16	6	11 B	Saimon Ramesses (JPN)	H8	58.0	Black Tide Copano Marcolini	F. Komaki T. Umeda	Akinori Sawada Yanagawa Bokujo	7 (40.5)	69.4 (14)

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

**NOTE 1:** \*Foreign contender

**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: 2:11.6

GOING: Good

WEATHER: Fine

TURNOVER FOR THE RACE ALONE: ¥ 19,219,287,700

TURNOVER FOR THE DAY: ¥ 27,325,396,100

ATTENDANCE: 65,800

#### PAY-OFF (for ¥100)

WIN	No.4	¥1,310	BRACKET QUINELLA	2-7	¥2,110	QUINELLA	4-13	¥9,200
PLACE	No.4	¥390	QUINELLA PLACE	4-13	¥3,450	EXACTA	4-13	¥19,630
	No.13	¥550		2-4	¥3,540	TRIO	2-4-13	¥93,450
	No.2	¥790		2-13	¥7,160	TRIFECTA	4-13-2	¥492,560

#### 1. Mikki Rocket (JPN), bay, horse, 5-year-old

King Kamehameha / Moneycantbuymelove (Pivotal)

Owner: Mizuki Noda

Breeder: Northern Racing

Trainer: Hidetaka Otonashi

Jockey: Ryuji Wada

22 Starts, 5 Wins

Added money: ¥ 153,360,000 Career earnings: ¥ 362,478,000

#### 2. Werther (NZ), bay, gelding, 7-year-old

Tavistock / Bagalollies (Zabeel)

Owner: Johnson Chen

Breeder: C D Allison C V & J A Barnao et al

Trainer: John Moore

Jockey: Hugh Bowman

#### 3. Noble Mars (JPN), chestnut, horse, 5-year-old

Jungle Pocket / I and You (Silver Hawk)

Owner: Nobuhiko Yoshiki

Breeder: Tagami Farm

Trainer: Hiroshi Miyamoto

Jockey: Ryo Takakura

### **Seventh Pick Mikki Rocket Fends off Hong Kong Raider for His First G1 Title in the Grand-Prix Takarazuka Kinen**

Seventh pick **Mikki Rocket** claimed this year's all-star Takarazuka Kinen (Grand Prix) to capture his first G1 title. The son of King Kamehameha marked a runner-up effort in his only start as a two-year-old and won three out of 10 starts which included his first G1 challenge, the Kikuka Sho (Japanese St. Leger, 5th) during his three-year-old season. While claiming his first graded victory in his first start as a four-year-old in the Nikkei Shinshun Hai (G2,

2,400m), he had been winless since, and came off a fourth in the Tenno Sho (Spring) (G1, 3,200m) in April. This win marked trainer Hidetaka Otonashi's ninth JRA-G1 win following the 2016 Mile Championship title with *Mikki Isle*. For jockey Ryuji Wada, it was his eighth JRA-G1 title, his first in 17 years since the 2001 Tenno Sho (Spring) with *T.M. Opera O*.

Quick out of the gate, **Mikki Rocket** settled in mid-division, around seventh from the front. The son of *King Kamehameha* gradually made headway along the rails in the backstretch, turned the last two corners 2nd to 3rd from the front and pulled ahead entering the lane as **Satono Diamond** also surged out from the outside. Outrunning the race favorite 200 meters out after a brief duel in the early stretch, **Mikki Rocket** accelerated strongly while managing to fend off the powerful challenge by Werther for a neck victory in front of the cheering crowd of over 60,000 fans.

"Mikki Rocket was in great shape after a good fourth in the Tenno Sho (Spring) and in training towards this race so I was secretly thinking that maybe it was time that he deserved to be a G1 winner—I am relieved and happy. He has overcome his bad habit of missing his break which gives him a better chance in the race, and his position in the race was up to my rider to decide as he knows the horse well—he does have a tendency to lean to the inside so maybe that was the reason Wada let him hug the rails and nicely covered early in the race. I just prayed that he'd make it to the finish as Werther came strongly from behind. Now that he's a legitimate member of the G1 ranks, his fall program, I think, will probably start with the Kyoto Daishoten with an aim on the Japan Cup," commented Hidetaka Otonashi.

"I was determined to choose a nice firm route as the turf dried off after the rainy weather and we were lucky to take hold of a nice position from a smooth break today. The race was running at a solid pace but we were planning to go for a long spurt from early stretch so I kept him reserved, not too close but at a striking distance, during the trip. I wasn't aware of Werther coming from behind me but I was awed by my horse's ability to maintain his speed all the way to the wire," said Ryuji Wada.

**Werther** broke smoothly from gate 13 and was rated well off the pace, sixth from the rear, one off the rails. Advancing gradually rounding the third corner while tracking behind **Vivlos** and **Satono Crown** along the outside, the son of *Tavistock* turned in a terrific turn of speed to rapidly close the gap and caused a serious threat to the eventual winner who drew away from early stretch, just missing by a neck for second.

"With a better draw, I reckon we could have won. He lost a lot of weight but he was all heart. He knows where the winning post is and considering he was racing with the weight loss, he still showed a lot of internal fortitude to hit that line—Hugh said that at the corner when he hit that straight, he thought he was going to win but the winner just kept grinding to the line. But from a Hong Kong point of view, I think we've shown how good our best stayer is," commented John Moore.

"Although we couldn't win, I couldn't be happier with the horse's performance. At the top of the straight, I thought we had him covered, had a beautiful running transit. He enjoyed the genuine speed here in Japan and, to be honest, if he didn't have the set-back earlier in the year and had the time to prepare for this from the start, he would have won. I think that just having the one race over a mile into a Japanese 2,200-meter race, where it's really a testing race—although it suits this horse's style of racing—was why his condition gave out. But full credit to John (Moore) and the stable for getting him to come here and do so well at this level," said Hugh Bowman.

Twelfth favorite **Noble Mars** hugged the rails behind **Mikki Rocket**, around ninth from the front. The son of *Jungle Pocket* chased the eventual winner up to the wire, overtaking the race favorite along the way but succumbing to **Werther** in the last 100 meters to finish three lengths behind in third.

Race favorite **Satono Diamond** broke well and eased back to third from the rear but edged forward traveling three wide along the backstretch. The *Deep Impact*-sired bay dueled briefly with the eventual winner but weakened in the last 200 meters and dropped back to sixth.

Other Horses:

4th: (10) **Vivlos**—settled in mid-pack, gradually improved position at stretch  
5th: (8) **Danburite**—raced outside eventual winner, accelerated in last 100m, but belatedly  
7th: (1) **Staphanos**—saved ground towards rear, found little room at 200m marker, lost momentum  
8th: (16) **Kiseki**—sat near rear, passed tired rivals between horses at stretch  
9th: (7) **Perform a Promise**—ran towards rear, turned wide, lacked needed kick  
10th: (14) **Smart Layer**—positioned forwardly in 4th, failed to sustain bid at stretch  
11th: (5) **Strong Titan**—hugged rails in 3rd, ran gamely until 200m post, outrun thereafter  
12th: (9) **Satono Crown**—traveled in mid-division, showed little at stretch  
13th: (6) **Albert**—was off slow, trailed in rear, met traffic at early stretch, never fired  
14th: (15) **Seewind**—raced outside eventual winner, gradually faded  
15th: (12) **Tatsu Gogeki**—chased leader in 2nd, dropped back after 3rd corner  
16th: (11) **Saimon Ramesses**—set pace, used up after final corner

Fractional time (sec/furlong): 12.2 - 10.8 - 11.4 - 12.7 - 12.3 - 12.0 - 11.8 - 12.1 - 12.2 - 11.7 - 12.4  
Last 4 furlongs: 48.4    Last 3 furlongs: 36.3

Positions at each corner:

1st corner	11,12(5,14,15)8( <u><b>4</b></u> ,9)10(2,7)-(1,13)(3,16)-6
2nd corner	11,12(5,14)( <u><b>4</b></u> ,8,15)9(2,10,3)(1,7)13,16,6
3rd corner	11-12( <u><b>4</b></u> ,5)(8,14)2(9,15,3)(1,10)(13,7)(6,16)
4th corner	11( <u><b>4</b></u> ,3)(12,5,14)(2,8)(9,10)(1,15)(13,7)(6,16)

**NOTE 1:** **Underlined bold number** indicates the winning horse.

**NOTE 2:** 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.