

Exclusive Topics for Horse Racing in Japan

- Summer Edition

July 2018

The Japan Racing Association

The Spring Season in JRA racing concluded with the All-Star “Grand Prix” Takarazuka Kinen (G1, 2,200m) on June 24, thereby shifting horse racing from metropolitan racecourses to JRA’s regional tracks for the summer. With many of the top talents taking summer breaks after turning in a number of enthralling performances in the first half of the 2018 season, we take this opportunity to update you with the latest news about horses that are planning to embark on overseas challenges or have earned berths in major G1 events abroad after outstanding performances during the spring.

The Prix de l’Arc de Triomphe (G1, 2,400m) on October 7 has become a must-see annual event for horse racing fans in Japan, who have been delighted to watch at least one Japanese runner every year since 2010, except in 2015. Wagering on the race will be possible in Japan through JRA under a system that began in 2016.

Clincher (JPN, C4, by Deep Sky) was the first to submit an entry to the Arc. Last year, he was consistent in his three-year-old classics despite being regarded an outsider – fourth in the Satsuki Sho (Japanese 2000 Guineas, G1, 2,000m) as the 13th favorite and runner-up in the Kikuka Sho (Japanese St. Leger, G1, 3,000m) as the 10th choice. The *Deep Sky (JPN, by Agnes Tachyon)* colt then claimed his first grade-race title in this year’s Kyoto Kinen (G2, 2,200m), where he turned the tables on last year’s Satsuki Sho winner Al Ain (JPN, C4, by Deep Impact) and Tokyo Yushun (Japanese Derby, G1, 2,400m) victor Rey de Oro (JPN, C4, by King Kamehameha).



Clincher
in the 2018 Kyoto Kinen

Coming off a third in the Hanshin Daishoten (G2, 3,000m), **Clincher** ran in the Tenno Sho (Spring) (G1, 3,200m) and finished an impressive third, just 0.1 second behind the winner. Notably, this came despite having to change jockeys due to a suspension that prevented regular rider Yutaka Take from taking the reins. His connections immediately announced their plan to target the colt for the Arc following the Tenno Sho. He is set to leave Japan on August 23 for Pascal Bary’s yard to prepare for the Prix Foy (G2, 2,400m) on September 16, prior to the Arc. Yutaka Take is booked to ride in both races.



Kiseki
in the 2017 Kikuka Sho

Kiseki (JPN, C4, by Rulership), who out-finished Clincher by two lengths when claiming the Kikuka Sho last year, finished ninth in the Hong Kong Vase (G1, 2,400m) last December and ninth again in his four-year-old kick-off start in the Nikkei Sho (G2, 2,500m). He was still short of regaining his form in the Takarazuka Kinen, failing to contend from behind and finishing eighth, which makes his overseas challenge in France appear unlikely.

Three three-year-olds are registered to run in the Arc, including 2017 Best Two-Year-Old Filly **Lucky Lilac (JPN, F3, by Orfevre)**, who kicked off her 2018 campaign with her third grade-race victory in the Tulip Sho (G2, 1,600m). Sent off as the heavy favorite in the Oka Sho (Japanese 1000 Guineas, G1, 1,600m), the daughter of *Orfevre (JPN, by Stay Gold)* tasted her first defeat by finishing second behind the record-breaking Almond Eye. In the following Yushun Himba (Japanese Oaks, G1, 2,400m), she was third to Almond Eye and Lily Noble. Her fall campaign will resume in Japan with a focus on claiming the last of the fillies' triple, the Shuka Sho (G1, 2,000m) on October 14.



Lucky Lilac
in the 2017 Hanshin Juvenile Fillies



Satono Walkure
in the 2018 Flora Stakes

Satono Walkure (JPN, F3, by Deep Impact) entered the Yushun Himba coming off a victory in the Flora Stakes (G2, 2,000m) but finished sixth, 7-3/4 lengths behind the winner, so will concentrate on racing in Japan this fall.

Meanwhile, **Gendarme (USA, C3, by Kitten's Joy)**, runner-up in the Hopeful Stakes (G1, 2,000m) as a two-year-old, generated high expectations for his three-year-old classics but was beaten to ninth in the Satsuki Sho and 17th in the Tokyo Yushun. He will likely step down in distance and pass up the Arc in favor of the shorter Breeders' Cup Mile (G1, 1,600m) on November 3, the same distance at which he won a G2 title in the Daily Hai Nisai Stakes last year.



Gendarme
in the 2017 Daily Hai Nisai Stakes

While there was no Japanese entry in Australia's Melbourne Cup (G1, 3,200m) last year, Japan sent runners for three consecutive years between 2014 and 2016 and will resume this year with

Chestnut Coat (JPN, C4, by Heart's Cry), who is set to challenge for the title on November 6.



Chestnut Coat
in the 2018 Soshun Stakes

(2,400m) on October 20.

Although the slow-developing colt did not make the cut in any three-year-old classic, the son of *Heart's Cry* (JPN, by *Sunday Silence*) won his first two starts this year. He followed up with a runner-up effort in the Nikkei Sho in March and then proved competitive against the best stayers when finishing a close fifth by less than two lengths in the Tenno Sho (Spring). His prep towards the Melbourne Cup may include the Caulfield Cup (G1,

Meanwhile, Tenno Sho (Spring) victor **Rainbow Line (JPN, H5, by Stay Gold)** was diagnosed with a ruptured superficial digital flexor tendon in his right foreleg and was forced to retire from racing.



Rainbow Line
in the 2018 Tenno Sho (Spring)

The Destination France series, a new JRA-French Galop partnership program that came into effect last year, has offered starts in the Prix Jacques le Marois (G1, 1,600m) in France on August 12 to the top three finishers in JRA's Victoria Mile (G1, 1,600m) for females 4yo & up in May and Yasuda Kinen (G1, 1,600m) in June. **Jour Polaire (JPN, M5, by Deep Impact)**, **Lys Gracieux (JPN, F4, by Heart's Cry)** and **Red Avancer (JPN, M5, by Deep Impact)** made the cut in the Victoria Mile, as did **Mozu Ascot (USA, C4, by Frankel)**, **Aerolithe (JPN, F4, by Kurofune)** and **Suave Richard (JPN, C4, by Heart's Cry)** in the Yasuda Kinen. All six, however, have decided to pass up their invitations and are currently on summer break.



Jour Polaire
in the 2018 Victoria Mile



Lys Gracieux
in the 2018 Victoria Mile



Red Avancer
in the 2018 Hanshin Himba Stakes

Yasuda Kinen victor **Mozu Ascot** was also eligible for the Breeder's Cup Mile in the fall, but his connections are eyeing the Hong Kong Mile (G1, 1,600m) on December 9. **Suave Richard** also earned a berth in the Irish Champions Stakes (G1, 2,000m) on September 15 following his victory in the Osaka Hai (G1, 2,000m) in April, but he is targeted to run in the Tenno Sho (Autumn) (G1,

2,000m) on October 28 and the Japan Cup (G1, 2,400m) on November 25.



Mozu Ascot
in the 2018 Yasuda Kinen



Aerolithe
in the 2017 NHK Mile Cup



Suave Richard
in the 2018 Osaka Hai



Satono Ares
in the 2016 Asahi Hai Futurity Stakes

Satono Ares (JPN, C4, by Deep Impact), who closed impressively to fourth place despite a slow break in the Yasuda Kinen, is headed for the Prix Jacques le Marois. The 2016 Best Two-Year-Old Colt is noted for his powerful turn of speed over the long homestretch at Tokyo, where he has registered 1-2-1 and a fourth from five starts, but he will have to adapt to racing straight wire to wire on the Marois' straight course. Nevertheless, his trainer Kazuo Fujisawa claimed the same race with *Taiki Shuttle (USA, by Devil's Bag)* 20 years ago, so he is well aware of what to expect.

The Destination France also offers opportunities for three-year-old fillies by automatically qualifying the Yushun Himba's top three finishers for the Prix Vermeille (G1, 2,400m) on September 16. This year, however, **Almond Eye (JPN, F3, by Lord Kanaloa)** has captured the first two jewels for three-year-old fillies and is focusing on claiming the Shuka Sho title to become the first filly since *Gentildonna (JPN, by Deep Impact)* in 2012 and the fifth filly overall to win the triple crown.



Almond Eye
in the 2018 Yushun Himba



Lily Noble
in the 2017 Shiragiku Sho

Lily Noble (JPN, F3, by Rulership) is currently nursing a minor fracture of the proximal phalanx in her right foreleg, which she sustained after her runner-up effort in the Yushun Himba, but is hoped to recover in time for the Rose Stakes (G2, 1,800m) on September 16. If all goes well, she will join Yushun Himba third-place finisher **Lucky Lilac** and **Almond Eye** in the Shuka Sho.

Mikki Rocket (JPN, H5, by King Kamehameha), who won the Takarazuka Kinen to earn an automatic berth in the Breeders' Cup Turf (G1, 2,400m) on November 3, will also stay in Japan for his fall campaign, beginning with the Kyoto Daishoten (G2, 2,400m) on October 8. His main destination will be the Japan



Mikki Rocket
in the 2018 Takarazuka Kinen



Nonkono Yume
in the 2018 February Stakes

Nonkono Yume (JPN, G6, by Twining) won the February Stakes (G1, dirt, 1,600m) to qualify for the Breeders' Cup Classic (G1, dirt, 2,000m) in the "Win and You're In" series, but the son of *Twining (USA, by Forty Niner)* will likely kick off the fall in the Mile Championship Nambu Hai (dirt, 1,600m) on October 8 and then head for the JBC Classic (dirt, 1,900m) on November 4.