

Exclusive Topics for JAPAN AUTUMN INTERNATIONAL 2018 - 2nd Edition -



October 2018

The Japan Racing Association

Japanese Racing Industry Trending Steadily

(contributed by Kenichi Nomoto, Nikkei)

Japan's horse racing industry, after hitting a low in 2011, has recovered steadily as evidenced once again in the fiscal 2018 third quarter. JRA sales reached nearly 2,037 billion yen as of October 2, up 1.5% from the year earlier. While the growth rate's gradual annual decline may be cause for concern in the long term, the current situation is sound. Municipality-run NAR (National Association of Racing) racing marked an even greater increase with a 9.4% increase in average wagering per race-day as of August.

Online betting by both JRA and NAR—JRA's PAT/IPAT (Personal Access Terminal/Internet Personal Access Terminal) online system together with telephone betting—accounted for 68.8% of total sales, up 4.4%. Within the near future, online betting is expected to amount to 70% of total betting and already accounts for 71.1% of NAR wagering.

Favorable business performance has also impacted the breeding industry that supplies the racing industry. The 2018 Select Sale held by the Japan Racing Horse Association in July set a new record in its yearling sales division, reaching a sell-through rate of 90.6% that amounted to over 9.67 billion yen, up 12%. Two-day sales grossed over 17.93 billion yen, also a record, including foal division sales of nearly 8.26 billion yen, down 5%. Thoroughbred sales organized by the Hidaka horse Breeders Association (HBA), including the Selection Sale, Summer Sale and Autumn Sale, came to over 9.31 billion yen, down 2.6% but still healthy.

Meanwhile, this year's biggest topics included the record-making achievements of JRA and NAR jockeys. First, Yutaka Take reached the unprecedented milestone of 4,000 JRA wins on September 29, showing no sign of slowing down as he approaches his 50th birthday next year. A national hero,



he is much appreciated by not only racegoers but also the general public as a long-standing JRA champion who notched 3,000 career wins in November 2007 and registered more than 200 wins annually in his prime along with many historic records. Take, however, had his share of struggles in the past decade, taking 11 years to add another 1,000 wins after 3,000. During this same period, his career took a downturn following a major injury due



Yutaka Take (center)

to a fall in March 2010, resulting in Take coming up short of 70 wins in each of his three seasons between 2010 and 2012. However, he redeemed himself in 2013 when he claimed the Tokyo Yushun (Japanese Derby) title with *Kizuna* (JPN, by *Deep Impact*), and then notched over 100 wins for the first time in six years in 2015. He was in the spotlight by scoring five G1 victories between 2016 and 2017 in partnership with Horse of the Year *Kitasan Black* (JPN, by *Black Tide*).

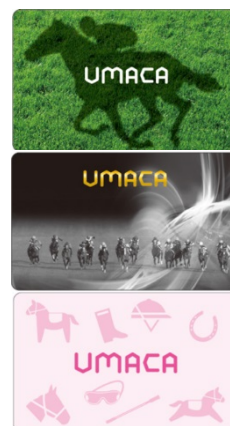
The second jockey was the NAR's veteran rider Fumio Matoba, 62, who surpassed Takemi Sasaki for most career NAR wins when registering his 7,152nd victory on August 12. Matoba continues to make his presence be felt at one of NAR's most competitive tracks, Oi, where he notched another major win less than a month ago in September and renewed his own record as the oldest jockey to claim a major title.



Nanako Fujita

Then there was Nanako Fujita, JRA's only active female jockey, who set a new record for career JRA wins by a female jockey when she scored her 35th victory on August 25. Debuting in March 2016 as the JRA's first female jockey in 16 years, she registered 6 wins in her first season, 14 wins last year and 19 as of the end of this September, giving her enough wins to ride in G1 races.

In other news, JRA wagering took a new step in September with the introduction of cashless betting machines to enable registered customers to place bets using a JRA-UMACA contactless card. The new card is linked to each user's registered palm-vein information for biometric authentication to preventative fraudulent use and for reissuing cards. As with other contactless cards used widely in Japan, money is preloaded into the card. The new system also allows card holders to wager on Pick5 "WIN5" bets and designated overseas races, which previously had been limited to users of registered IPAT accounts, making both types of bets more accessible for those wishing to wager with prepaid cash. The new system began in September at Tokyo Racecourse



and will expand to three additional racecourses between October and November as well as three off-track betting sites by the end of November.

Older Horses Begin Preparation Towards Fall G1



Aerolithe in the 2018 Mainichi Okan

The Mainichi Okan (G2, 1,800m) on October 7 was won wire-to-wire by **Aerolithe (JPN, F4, by Kurofune)**, the runner-up in the Yasuda Kinen (G1, 1,600m) this year. The *Kurofune (USA, by French Deputy)* filly will be headed towards the Mile Championship (G1, 1,600m) on November 18. **Stelvio (JPN, C3, by Lord Kanaloa)**, second by 1-1/4 lengths to **Aerolithe** in the Mainichi Okan, will also start in the Mile

Championship.

Satono Diamond (JPN, H5, by Deep Impact) scored his first win of the season in the Kyoto Daishoten (G2, 2,400m) on October 8 after struggling for over a year after an unsuccessful Arc challenge. After a three and a half month break following a sixth-place finish in the Takarazuka Kinen, the son of *Deep Impact (JPN, by Sunday Silence)* raced mid-pack in a field of 11, showed impressive effort after taking the front with more than a furlong to go and then held off the late chargers for a 1/2-length victory. 2017 Japan Cup (G1, 2,400m) victor **Cheval Grand (JPN, H6, by Heart's Cry)**, who was rated just in front of the eventual winner, lacked the needed kick and crossed the wire 3-1/4 lengths behind **Satono Diamond** in fourth. Both horses will start next in the Japan Cup on November 25.



Satono Diamond
in the 2018 Kyoto Daishoten



Deirdre
in the 2018 Fuchu Himba Stakes

The Fuchu Himba Stakes (G2, 1,800m) on October 13 was won by 2017 Shuka Sho (G1, 2,000m) winner **Deirdre (JPN, F4, by Harbinger)**, who timed the fastest over the last three furlongs for a neck victory. **Lys Gracieux (JPN, F4, by Heart's Cry)**, a four-time runner-up at G1 level, had assumed command 100 meters out from racing behind early but finished second. **Deirdre** is expected to head for the Hong Kong Cup (G1, 2,000m) on December 9. **Lys Gracieux (JPN, F4, by Heart's Cry)** will be

aiming for her first G1 title in the Queen Elizabeth II Cup (G1, 2,200m) on November 11 and will face **Moza Katchan (JPN, F4, by Harbinger)**, who will attempt to defend her Queen Elizabeth II Cup title after passing up the Fuchu Himba Stakes due to a minor fever. **Jour Polaire (JPN, M5, by Deep Impact)**, fourth in the Fuchu Himba Stakes but already a G1 winner in this year's Victoria

Mile, will step down to her favorite mile distance in the coming Mile Championship.

Logi Cry (JPN, H5, by Heart's Cry) turned in a solid performance from chasing the pace in second in the Mile Championship trial, the Fuji Stakes (G3, 1,600m), and appears to be in good form coming off his second grade-race victory before the Mile Championship. **Persian Knight (JPN, C4, by Harbinger)** raced not far behind the eventual winner, but the 2017 Mile Championship victor met traffic in the early stretch and had to shift to the outside for a delayed attack and crossed the wire in fifth.



Logi Cry in the 2018 Fuji Stakes

Another Mile Championship trial, the Swan Stakes (G2, 1,400m) in which Yasuda Kinen champion **Mozu Ascot (USA, C4, by Frankel)** will be making his fall debut, is scheduled on October 27.



Le Vent Se Leve
in the 2018 Unicorn Stakes

The major races in the dirt category began with the Mile Championship Nambu Hai (dirt, 1,600m) at NAR's Morioka Racecourse. The winner was **Le Vent Se Leve (JPN, C3, by Symboli Kris S)**, the first three-year-old to win the dirt title. The *Symboli Kris S (USA, by Kris S.)* colt won impressively from racing just behind the front runners and sprinting away for to a 1-1/2 lengths victory over 2017 Best Dirt Horse **Gold Dream (JPN, H5, by Gold Allure)**. It was his third consecutive win

following the Unicorn Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,600m) in June and the Japan Dirt Derby (dirt, 2,000m) in July. He will be targeted towards the Champions Cup (G1, dirt, 1,800m) on December 2, as will defending champion **Gold Dream**, who has stayed consistent with two wins and two seconds from four dirt starts at the highest level this year. The JRA-G1 dirt championship is also expected to include **Omega Perfume (JPN, C3, by Swept Overboard)**, winner of the Sirius Stakes (G3, dirt, 2,000m) on September 29, and several runners coming off starts in the JBC Classic (dirt, 1,900m) on November 4.

Clincher (JPN, C4, by Deep Sky), who was well beaten to 17th in his overseas challenge, the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe (G1, 2,400m) on October 7, will continue training upon his return to Japan for the Arima Kinen (G1, 2,500m) on December 23. **Chestnut Coat (JPN, C4, by Heart's Cry)** and **Sole Impact (JPN, H6, by Deep Impact)** were beaten to 13th and 14th, respectively, in the Caulfield Cup (G1, 2,400m) held in Australia on October 20. Both horses continue to train towards their main target, the Melbourne Cup (G1, 3,200m) on November 6.



Clincher
in the 2018 Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe

Results of the Last Leg of the Three-Year-Old Triple



Almond Eye in the 2018 Shuka Sho

In the Shuka Sho held on October 14, **Almond Eye (JPN, F3, by Lord Kanaloa)** completed a sweep of the fillies' Triple Crown—the first since *Gentildonna (JPN, by Deep Impact)* in 2012 and fifth overall. It also was her fifth consecutive victory, including the Oka Sho (Japanese 1000 Guineas, 1,600m) and the Yushun Himba (Japanese Oaks, 2,400m). Many hope she can emulate 2012 Horse of the Year *Gentildonna* in her attempt to become the second three-year-old filly to claim the Japan Cup title.

The Kikuka Sho (Japanese St. Leger, G1, 3,000m) was held in the week after the Shuka Sho and was won by seventh-favorite **Fierement (JPN, C3, by Deep Impact)**, who claimed one of the most coveted three-year-old titles in just his fourth career start, the shortest in JRA history. Unraced as a two-year-old, the *Deep Impact* colt won his career debut in January this year and was given plenty of time to recover before each race with just two other starts in April and July prior to his big G1 challenge. After



Fierement (left)
in the 2018 Kikuka Sho

resting in the same manner following his major victory, the Arima Kinen could be a possibility as his next start. Meanwhile, Tokyo Yushun (Japanese Derby, G1, 2,400m) winner **Wagnerian (JPN, C3, by Deep Impact)**, who won impressively in the Kobe Shimbun Hai (G2, 2,400m) on September 23, was to run in the Tenno Sho (Autumn) instead of the Kikuka Sho, but the derby victor did not recover in time and is still out to pasture.