

Japan Racing Journal

June 2006

Vol. 14 No. 2

Published by The Japan Association for International Horse Racing

2

"Putting the Sport Back into Racing"
- Interview with Dr. Koike, new President of JAIR

4

Two Japanese Horse Win on Dubai World Cup Day

6

2006 Sales Dates in Japan

Microchips to be Mandatory for Japanese Racehorses Born from 2007

7

-NAR Topics- Derby Week

8

Japanese Graded Race Results



Dubai World Cup Day
March 25, 2006
at Nad Al Sheba Racecourse, UAE

Heart's Cry won Dubai Sheema Classic (GI, Turf, 2400m)

(c)Kiichi Yamamoto



Utopia won Godolphin Mile (GI, Dirt, 1600m)

“Putting the Sport Back into Racing”

– Interview with Dr. Koike, new President of JAIR

by Barbara Bayer



Japan has, says Dr. Naoaki Koike, reached “a memorial year.” It is a year that sees the country poised to attain the coveted “Part 1” status as determined by the International Cataloguing Standards Committee. Japan is under review and the new President and CEO of the JAIR, feels confident the country’s racing will be recognized as the top-level endeavor it is.

“Being designated Part 1 means a country’s racing is a model for the industry,” explains Koike, “and our racing

and breeding ranks up there with the best.”

light. More than a sudden rise in level, however, Koike sees the recent success as a result of many factors. “In addition to a lot of good breeding, there has been progress in pre-training, training, the logistics of transportation, how to transport horses with the least amount of stress to them, etc. Japanese have gotten good at this and are seeing the cumulative effect of their efforts,” Koike says. Also, “Japanese horsemen have become very Westernized in their thinking. Trainers realize they’re making athletes.”

and breeding ranks up there with the best.”

A sticking point for Japan, however, had been the number of races open to foreign-based horses. Next year will see a total of 110 races open to runners from overseas, which should be sufficient for the final nod.

High-profile wins by Japanese horses abroad have recently brought Japan racing into the world spot-

Global Racing Championship

The 62-year-old Koike, a seasoned veteran with 40 years experience in the JRA, not only believes Japan’s racing system has much to boast of, he wants the world to become better acquainted with Japan’s horses and horsemen.

In addition to more information coming out of Japan through the printed word, websites and race simulcasts, Koike sees increased interaction in the international arena as a key objective, not only for Japan, but for the industry as a whole.

He envisions a global racing championship akin to soccer’s World Cup for racing. “Who is the top horse in the world? Who is the top jockey or trainer? In racing, you don’t know and the fans don’t know. I want fans to be able to say, ‘Our horse is fantastic, let’s root for him.’ Get the national pride behind them as they do in other sports,” he urges.

“Racing still lags far behind other sports as far as international competition is concerned,” Koike says, pointing out that present global series, though an important start, are often unwieldy, with races scheduled in such a way as to make it impossible for one horse to participate in all.

Koike admits a type of World Cup for horses would not be easy. A number of problems exist, not only the cost of

transporting horses and, naturally, the difficulty in maintaining top condition for the animals, but bigger obstacles such as quarantine and a lack of standardization of racing rules, stewarding, handicapping and drug laws. “We’ve got to lower the hurdles worldwide and make it easier to go,” he says.

Doping is a big problem. “Take the Olympics. You don’t have different drugs allowed in different countries that hold the Games. Track and field doesn’t allow this and that, period, no matter where you are.” Quarantine is another obstacle, and Koike hopes that governments will also be willing to move on making certain changes to facilitate racing. “Race horses are some of the cleanest animals around,” he says. “How many of us get checked nearly daily?”

Koike acknowledges that certain races, such as the 3-year-old classics, are better suited to national competitions alone, but sees the races for older horses as offering a great opportunity for heated international competition.

International Betting

The increasing number of simulcasts of Japan’s top-level races (currently 15) is something Koike considers good for promotion of the country’s racing. He also hopes to some day see local fans able to place wagers on overseas events, such as the Breeder’s Cup in the U.S. or the Prix de l’Arc de Triomphe, in which a Japanese horse is participating. Japan’s strict racing law, which strives to keep a check on gambling while still earning revenue from it, prohibits the sale of racing tickets for any races other than those sponsored by the JRA. A revision would be necessary to open the betting windows to fans for races held abroad. “The limit on racing here now is 288 days a year and the thinking is that if there is

too much gambling, there will be no time to work,” says Koike.

In addition to increased interaction in international events, the JAIR President says he also hopes to see more Japanese horsemen going abroad to live while working in the racing industry. Unlike the national level, the situation

continues to be dire in local, municipal-government sponsored racing in Japan. “There is a lot of talent there, though,” Koike says, and “I want to see more trainers and jockeys taking those talents abroad and working with them.”

In addition to increased participation in the global arena, and perhaps as prerequisite to it, Koike emphasizes the need to raise the Japanese public’s awareness and insight into horse-racing as a sport. “There is more to racing than gambling,” he points out, “and I want the sport on the front page.” Koike is speaking of the extreme emphasis that Japanese media, especially daily sports newspapers and racing television programs, place on gambling.

“This combination and that combination, it always comes back to betting. That’s still the big thing (in Japan), a focus on betting, the turnover, what off-track betting outlet had the highest turnover. This is important for those within the industry, but they should be recognized only as the result of other efforts. Focusing on this just fuels the gambling image. True, there are a lot of people who enjoy that, but it would be good to focus on the horse, the efforts



of the trainer, discuss what results these efforts may have and the horse’s chances of winning.” Failing to do this, Koike believes, will result in a loss of fans, and he hopes the dropping turnovers are waking JRA people up to this reality. “The JRA is not suffering. There are horses. There are fans. But, my question is, ‘Is this enough? Is it OK to be satisfied with just this?’ ”

International Mindset

The past three years have seen Koike as Japan’s representative in a number of international committees and at international conferences. “My mindset has become very international,” he says. “Something I am very grateful for. Until now I’d been focused on domestic concerns, but now see the same problems exist everywhere. We are interdependent. There are things that cannot be worked out alone, but need to be discussed and solved with others.

“It’s not enough to just promote the racing industry within one country. You need to build partnerships throughout the world and have good horses making the circuit.”

Two Japanese Horses Win on Dubai World Cup Day

by *Kazuaki Takagi*



Heart's Cry won Dubai Sheema Classic.
Owner: Shadai Race Horse Co., Ltd.
Trainer: Kojiro Hashiguchi
Jockey: Christophe Lemaire

(c)Dubai Racing Club / Andrew Watkins



Utopia won Godolphin Mile.
Owner: Makoto Kaneko
Trainer: Kojiro Hashiguchi
Jockey: Yutaka Take

The results of Dubai World Cup Day, held March 25 at Nad al Sheba Racecourse in Dubai, were renewed proof of Japanese horses' improved performances. Along with Kane Hikili, a 4-year-old colt trained by Katsuhiko Sumii, and Star King Man, a 7-year-old horse trained by Hideyuki Mori, appearing in the main GI Dubai World Cup (2,000 meters, dirt), a total of nine horses were entered in six events. Six GI horses made up a splendid group that bore no comparison to previous Japanese overseas challengers in terms of quality and quantity. Among these, two Ritto horses trained at Kojiro Hashiguchi's stable achieved success – 5-year-old horse Heart's Cry won the 2,400-meter, GI Dubai Sheema Classic

on the turf, while 6-year-old horse Utopia took the 1,600-meter, GII Godolphin Mile on dirt.

Being able to take on the challenge in a group was no doubt one factor in the two victories and a result that can be described as a successful conclusion for "Team Japan's" tour. Up to now, at most three or four horses raced overseas at the same time in the same country. There have been no previous cases in which horses traveled in a group. The merits of a multi-horse tour include not having trouble finding training partners and the ability to get into shape in the same sort of environment and atmosphere as Japan, since many Japanese staff accompany the horses. It is no exaggeration to say

that, while they were unable to produce results, having Kane Hikili and the other horses entered was linked to Heart's Cry's and Utopia's successes.

A detailed description of the two horses' marvelous triumphs follows.

Seven graded races were run on Dubai World Cup Day. The first Japanese entrant was in the second race, the Godolphin Mile. Dubai's mile course has only one turn. A long straightaway extends from the starting gate, followed by another 600-meter stretch after the rather sharp turn. Utopia has trouble running in the pack so the key point was the ease with which he could break away. He had the inside position among the 10 starters. If only because of his occasional

tendency to break slowly, jockey Yutaka Take focused his mind on the initial dash. If only for that reason, Utopia had a fantastic start. After grabbing the lead in the first 100 to 200 meters he showed off his characteristic speed to the fullest. He had enough power to spare even for final turns. Entering the stretch with 600 meters still to go, he breezed over the distance, pulling away from the pursuers. His winning time was 1:35.88. It was a crushing, 4-length victory over second-place Win River Win, a 7-year-old horse from Turkey.

Overseas graded race wins by Japanese horses are now no longer unusual, but this was the first walkover on dirt. Producing this result on dirt, with strong competition, particularly from American horses, can be seen as a significant harvest.

The next win delivered by a Japanese horse came in the fifth race, the Dubai Sheema Classic. Grand Prix horse Heart's Cry, who captured last year's Arima Kinen, flew away for victory against strong contenders from around the world. This was the second time a Japanese horse had won this race. Stay Gold, ridden by Yutaka Take, edged Fantastic Light by a nose in 2001. However, the race was still GII at the time. The weight is different now that it has been upgraded to GI. This was, of course, the first race in Dubai GI history in which a Japanese horse notched a victory.

Heart's Cry's preparations went exceedingly smoothly after arrival in Dubai. During the dirt track workout held with Utopia on Wednesday, turf-like times of 77.7, 61.2, 46.9, 33.9, and 11.5 in the last 200 meters were recorded at an easy gallop over 1,200 meters. Trainer Kojiro Hashiguchi was also satisfied, saying, "He produced those times easily and is in really good condition. He is also as relaxed, or more so, than when in Japan." It turned out that he maintained his excellent shape until the day of the race.

He had the 13th post position out of 14 horses. With Heart's Cry starting from an outside gate, jockey Christophe Le-

maire first guided him straight ahead. He did not strain other than to encourage the horse to speed up a bit and improved his position smoothly over the long stretch. He moved into the lead easily after finishing cutting in to the rail heading into the first turn. Hashiguchi summed it up afterward, "A 600-meter stretch is long on a turf course. I thought he could catch up even from the very rear. So when he took the lead I was more surprised than when he moved up from third position in the Arima Kinen." It was an aggressive strategy even for a seasoned trainer, but Lemaire had confidence remaining from the Arima Kinen: "Heart's Cry battles until the end." He left 13 of the world's top horses in his wake with unwavering purpose.

While it can be said that he took the lead, the race proceeded at an extremely leisurely pace. The split at the 800-meter mark was 53 seconds. The pursuers naturally also stepped up the pressure between the third and fourth turns. However, the Japanese Grand Prix horse did not break pace even when the other horses came alongside. Collier Hill made an early move into the lead just entering the final stretch, but Lemaire, running along the rail, was completely unperturbed. When his rival tried to pass, with a burst of speed, Heart's Cry maintained the pace at a leisurely gallop beside his opponent. Immediately upon grabbing the lead back he waited for the chance to spurt over the remaining 400 meters.

At that moment, Nad al Sheeba's home stretch became Heart's Cry's solo stage. Without even one touch of the whip the distance between the pursuers continued to widen. It was a 4¼-length romp over second-

place Collier Hill, an 8-year-old gelding out of the U.K. The winning time was 2:31.89.

Lemaire thrust his right index finger skyward several times to show the spectators who was No. 1. "I am glad we won going away. We were the defenders in today's race. We were able to demonstrate the power of a champion Japanese horse." The outstanding French jockey's cheeks were flushed and he patted his beloved horse's neck proudly. With two consecutive overseas wins, Hashiguchi could not hide his excitement, either. Ushering Lemaire atop the horse with a firm handshake, he responded smilingly to the local press. "Very, very happy. I would not have taken the trouble to come overseas if I had not been confident we would win." He wore the same blue necktie he had when they beat Deep Impact in the Arima Kinen. It was an indication of the even higher-than-usual hopes the normally unsuperstitious trainer had staked on this day.

The time might come when a Japanese Grand Prix horse and Triple Crown winner will strive for victory on the overseas racing stage with the most tradition and status. That the possibility itself can be discussed is likely proof that the level of Japanese horses has been substantially elevated. The world is no longer far away. These latest triumphs by Utopia and Heart's Cry in Dubai were wins that will offer the Japanese racing world large dreams and courage.



2006 Sales Dates in Japan

Date	Sale	Horse Offered (Thoroughbred)	Location (Prefecture)	Sale Holder
May 8	Kyushu Training Sale	2-Y-O	JRA Miyazaki Yearling Training Farm (Miyazaki)	Kagoshima Prefecture BA
May 15	Chiba Thoroughbred Sale	Yearling, 2-Y-O	Funabashi Racecourse (Chiba)	Chiba Ryoso Agricultural Cooperative Association
May 22	Hokkaido Training Sale	2-Y-O	JRA Sapporo Racecourse (Sapporo, Hokkaido)	Hidaka Horse BA, Iburu Horse BA, Tokachi Horse BA
May 23	Hidaka Training Sale	2-Y-O	JRA Hidaka Yearling Training Farm (Urakawa, Hokkaido)	Hidaka-Higashi Agricultural Cooperative Association
Jun. 12	Kyushu Yearling Sale	Yearling	JBBA Kyushu Stallion Station (Kagoshima)	Kagoshima Prefecture BA
Jul. 4	Hachinohe Sale	Yearling	Hachinohe Sales Complex (Aomori)	Aomori Prefecture BA
Jul. 10	Select Sale	Yearling	Northern Horse Park (Tomakomai, Hokkaido)	Japan Racing Horse Association
Jul. 11-12		Foal		
Jul. 17	Hokkaido Selection Sale	Foal	Hokkaido Sales Complex (Shin-Hidaka, Hokkaido)	Hidaka Horse BA, Iburu Horse BA, Tokachi Horse BA
Jul. 18		Yearling		
Aug. 21-25	Hokkaido Summer Sale	Yearling	Hokkaido Sales Complex (Shin-Hidaka, Hokkaido)	Hidaka Horse BA, Iburu Horse BA, Tokachi Horse BA
Oct. 16	Hokkaido Autumn Sale	Foal	Hokkaido Sales Complex (Hokkaido)	Hidaka Horse BA, Iburu Horse BA, Tokachi Horse BA
Oct. 17-20		Yearling		
TBA	Premier 2-Y-O Training Sale	2-Y-O		Premier Sale Co., Ltd.

* Abbreviations: JRA=Japan Racing Association, BA=Breeders' Association, JBBA=Japan Bloodhorse Breeders' Association

For Select Sale, please contact Japan Racing Horse Association (<http://www.jrha.or.jp/eng/index.html>)

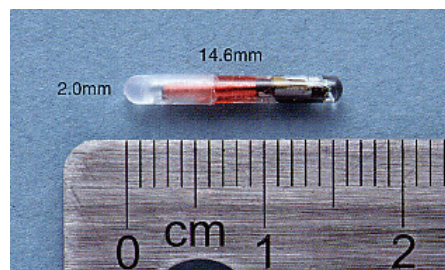
For Hokkaido Training Sale, Hokkaido Selection Sale, Hokkaido Summer Sale and Hokkaido Autumn Sale, please contact Hidaka Horse Breeders Association (<http://www.hba.or.jp/english/index.html>)

For Kyushu Training Sale, Chiba Thoroughbred Sale, Kyushu Yearling Sale and Hachinohe Sale, please contact Japan Bloodhorse Breeders' Association (E-mail: webmaster@jbba.jbis.or.jp)

For Hidaka Training Sale, please contact Hidaka-Higashi Agricultural Cooperative Association (<http://www.hidaka.or.jp/>)

For Premier 2-Y-O Training Sale, please contact Premier Sale Co., Ltd. (<http://www.premiersale.co.jp/>)

Microchips to be Mandatory for Japanese Racehorses Born from 2007



It has been decided that thoroughbreds and other racehorses born from 2007 on must have microchips implanted. Along with rules governing registration under the Japan Race Horse Registry, which handles pedigree registration, the regulations of race organizers – the JRA and NAR (local government racing) – will

also be revised and horses that don't have microchips will be unable to run as racehorses.

Identification of individual horses is a minimum prerequisite for ensuring fairness and credibility in races. In recent times, racehorses have come to be moved frequently, both within Japan and

internationally, and, as a result, ascertaining identities in a variety of situations has become important. There is also said to be a need to determine individual horses' transfer conditions from the standpoint of horse welfare and animal protection.

Individual identification techniques currently used in Japan involve verifying sex, coat color, white markings, hair whorls and other external features. It is difficult to call this a foolproof method, however, due to the existence of individuals possessing similar characteristics and cases in which identification was ambiguous. A method that would render identification simple and accurate, anytime and anywhere, was sought, because verifying

features requires well-honed skills and expertise.

The ISO standard microchips scheduled for use in Japan have been approved by the International Stud Book Committee (ISBC) and contain a 15-digit ID number inscribed on a built-in ultra-small, 15-mm long by 2-mm thick, integrated circuit. This is implanted in the middle of the horse's neck on the left side near the border of the mane.

The Japan Race Horse Registry has designated the microchip as one of the features of a horse's body. Microchips are due to be implanted by a veterinarian at the breeder's request before the pre-



Scanning with a reader.

weaning examination. The Registry is also considering eliminating the collection of some data on features in an effort to improve the efficiency of registration operations.

NAR Topics

Derby Week

Derby Week, featuring six Derby events run at regional tracks, will be held the week of June 4-11. The eight organizations on the Derby Week Planning

Committee are the Aichi, Hokkaido, Hyogo, Iwate, Saga, and Tokyo Metropolitan Racing Associations, and the National Public Race Track Council. Local

tracks that will hold Derby races have scheduled various campaigns and events. The schedule is shown below.

2006 Derby Week Program

	June 4 (Sun)	June 6 (Tue)	June 7 (Wed)	June 8 (Thur)	June 9 (Fri)	June 11 (Sun)
Race track	Saga	Sapporo	Oi	Himeji	Nagoya	Mizusawa
Name	Kyushu Derby Eijo Sho	Sapporo Derby Hokuto Hai	Tokyo Derby	Hyogo Derby	Tokai Derby	Iwate Derby Diamond Cup
Distance	2,000m	1,700m	2,000m	1,800m	1,900m	1,600m

Derby Week will be supported by FDO, operator of Fusaichi.net, the horseracing information site of Fusao Sekiguchi, who owns Fusaichi Pegasus, and Odds Park, NAR's internet betting site.

NAR believes that the events will make it possible to encourage the stabling of superior young horses at region-

al tracks by increasing the status of the tracks' Derby events – the top races for 3-year-olds – by raising the status and awareness of Derbies held at regional tracks, and by creating fan interest.

Expectations are that the events will also have the additional benefits of raising the status of the GI Japan Dirt Derby – the peak of the spring season – by

implementing the tournament style and promoting the selection of and entry by superior horses leading up to the top fall season event, the GI Derby Grand Prix, and strengthening the links with both GI events.

<http://www.keiba.or.jp/>

Japanese Graded Race Results -2006-



Pari-mutuel handle: ¥27,228,463,800

On-course: 6.1% Off-course: 93.9%

23th Running THE FEBRUARY STAKES (GI)

Tokyo Racecourse	February 19	Value of race: ¥184,320,000	4-Year-Olds & Up
1,600m	Dirt Standard	1:34.9/10 (Course record 1:34.6)	16 Runners

- 1st Kane Hekili (Yutaka Take, 57.0 kg), ch., c.4; Fuji Kiseki - Life Out There by Deputy Minister
O-Kaneko Makoto Holdings Co., Ltd., T-Katsuhiko Sumii, B-Northern Farm, Winning money:
¥97,444,000
- 2nd Seeking the Dia (Olivier Peslier, 57.0 kg), b., h.5; Storm Cat - Seeking the Pearl by Seeking the Gold
- 3rd Utopia (Katsumi Ando, 57.0 kg), ch., h.6; Forty Niner - Dream Vision by Northern Taste
- 4th Blue Concorde (Hideaki Miyuki, 57.0 kg), b., h.6; Fusaichi Concorde - Ebisu Family by Brian's Time
- 5th Vermilion (Christophe Lemaire, 57.0 kg), dk.b., c.4; El Condor Pasa - Scarlet Lady by Sunday Silence
- Margin: 3, HD, 1-1/4, 1-1/4, THE FEBRUARY STAKES ONLY: ¥16,666,635,100, Attendance: 64,515



Pari-mutuel handle: ¥18,302,543,500

On-course: 4.2% Off-course: 95.8%

36th Running THE TAKAMATSUNOMIYA KINEN (GI)

Chukyo Racecourse	March 26	Value of race: ¥185,900,000	4-Year-Olds & Up
1,200m	Turf (firm)	1:08.0/10 (Course record 1:06.7)	18 Runners

- 1st Orewa Matteruze (Yoshitomi Shibata, 57.0 kg), ch., h.6; Sunday Silence - Curly Angel by Judge
Angelucci
O-Y. Odagiri, T-Hidetaka Otonashi, B-Northern Farm, Winning money: ¥98,780,000
- 2nd Rhein Kraft (Yuichi Fukunaga, 55.0 kg), b., f.4; End Sweep - Must Be Loved by Sunday Silence
- 3rd She is Tocho (Kenichi Ikezoe, 55.0 kg), b., m.6; Sakura Bakushin O - Jane Tocho by Tocho Fleet
- 4th Precise Machine (Yasunari Iwata, 57.0 kg), b., h.7; Mayano Top Gun - Be Silent by Sunday Silence
- 5th Native Heart (Hiroyuki Uchida, 57.0 kg), b., h.8; Star of Cozzene - Potomac Cherry by Northern Taste
- Margin: NK, 1-3/4, HD, HD, THE TAKAMATSUNOMIYA KINEN ONLY: ¥14,301,788,000, Attendance: 38,309



Pari-mutuel handle: ¥28,465,774,000

On-course: 4.0% Off-course: 96.0%

66th Running THE OKA SHO (JAPANESE 1000 GUINEAS) (GI)

Hanshin Racecourse	April 9	Value of race: ¥207,150,000	3-Year-Olds
1,600m	Turf (firm)	1:34.6/10 (Course record 1:31.9)	18 Runners

- 1st Kiss to Heaven (Katsumi Ando, 55.0 kg), b., f.3; Admire Vega - Long Virgin by Northern Taste
O-Kazuko Yoshida, T-Hirofumi Toda, B-Showa Yamamoto Bokujo, Winning money: ¥115,775,000
- 2nd Admire Kiss (Yutaka Take, 55.0 kg), ch., f.3; Sunday Silence - Kiss Pasion by Jade Robbery
- 3rd Koiuta (Norihiko Yokoyama, 55.0 kg), dk.ch., f.3; Fuji Kiseki - Violet Love by Dr Devious
- 4th Asahi Rising (Yoshitomi Shibata, 55.0 kg), b., f.3; Royal Touch - Asahi Mercury by Minagawa Manna
- 5th Shells Lei (Yasunari Iwata, 55.0 kg), gr., f.3; Kurofune - Oyster Ticket by Winning Ticket
- Margin: 3/4, NS, 1, 1-1/4, THE OKA SHO ONLY: ¥20,659,052,700, Attendance: 66,229



Pari-mutuel handle: ¥8,597,103,100

On-course: 7.0% Off-course: 93.0%

8th Running THE NAKAYAMA GRAND JUMP (J. GI)

Nakayama Racecourse	April 15	Value of race: ¥152,750,000	4-Year-Olds & Up
4,250m	Jump Firm	4:50.8/10 (Course record 4:47.0)	13 Runners

- 1st Karasi (Brett Scott, 63.5 kg), b., g.11; Kahyasi - Karamita by Shantung
O-Pearse Morgan, T-Eric Musgrove, B-His Highness the Aga Khan's Studs S.C., Winning money:
¥80,525,000
- 2nd T M Dragon (Yuzo Shirahama, 62.0 kg), b., c.4; Admire Vega - Yae Shiraoki by Maruzensky
- 3rd Telegenic (Mitsuki Kaneko, g.6 kg), b., g.6; Sakura Bakushin O - Show Up by Thrill Show
- 4th Merci A Time (Koichi Idetsu, 62.0 kg), b., c.4; Chief Bearhart - Machikane Carmen by Thrill Show
- 5th Mejiro Ervin (Nobuo Kado, 63.5 kg), b., h.7; Dance in the Dark - Mejiro Fantasy by Gay Mecene
- Margin: NK, 7, 5, 3, THE NAKAYAMA GRAND JUMP ONLY: ¥2,058,551,200, Attendance: 34,147



Japan Racing Journal Vol. 14 No. 2 Issue 79

The Japan Association for International Horse Racing

JRA Bldg., 1-19, Nishi Shimbashi 1-Chome, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-0003, Japan Tel. +81-3-3503-8221 Fax. +81-3-3503-8226
http://www.jair.jrao.ne.jp/ Horse Racing in Japan website: http://japanracing.jp/

All Rights Reserved

Printed in Japan