

## Exclusive Topics for Horse Racing in Japan - Summer Edition -

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The Japan Racing Association

### Japan's Arc Hopes Reduced to One

For the past five years, Japan has sent at least one runner to Europe's most prestigious race, the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe (G1, 2,400m), and has enjoyed favorable results, including runner-up efforts by *Nakayama Festa* (JPN, by *Stay Gold*) in 2010 and *Orfevre* (JPN, by *Stay Gold*) in 2012 and 2013. For the current 2015 edition of the Arc, no less than five entrants were registered initially. But as of now, due to a number of mishaps, it is possible that Japan could have not even one runner this year.

**Duramente** (JPN, C3, by **King Kamehameha**), as advertised, set a race record in the Tokyo Yushun (Japanese Derby, G1, 2,400m) and thereby placed the second jewel on his possible three-year-old Classics Triple Crown. In his first classic, the Satsuki Sho (Japanese 2000 Guineas, G1, 2,000m), despite displaying his greenness as he bore out going into the straight, he was still able to use his exceptional power to mow down his rivals. Partnered with Mirco Demuro, who made his official JRA debut in March, his ratings of 119 after the Satsuki Sho and 121 after the Derby exceeded those of past legends such as *Deep Impact* (JPN, by *Sunday Silence*) and *Orfevre*, themselves Triple Crown winners in 2005 and 2011, respectively.



Duramente  
in the 2015 Tokyo Yushun

Following the Tokyo Yushun, attention focused on whether **Duramente** would go for the Triple Crown in the Kikuka Sho (Japanese St. Leger, G1, 3,000m) in October, or challenge the world's best in the Arc, which is thought to be his best distance at over 2,400 meters. But suddenly he showed a hint of lameness in his left foreleg, and X-rays confirmed distal radius fractures in both forelimbs. Surgery was performed immediately to successfully remove some bone chips, but his full recovery is expected to take around six months, ruling out any further racing in his three-year-old campaign. He will also be kept away from winter racing and not make his comeback until probably next spring.



Real Steel (right) in the  
2015 Kyodo News Service Hai

**Real Steel** (JPN, C3, by **Deep Impact**) beat **Duramente** earlier this season, pinning the subsequent Classic winner for a 1/2-length victory in the Kyodo News Service Hai (G3, 1800m) in February. In their next encounter, the first leg of the Triple Crown, he was defeated to second by 1-1/2 length. Then, in the Tokyo Yushun, the *Deep Impact* colt kept a close watch on **Duramente** and made his move as they entered the homestretch, but he was unable to keep

up with the record-setting winner and finished fourth. Thereafter, however, he pulled up with an avulsion fracture in his left proximal phalanx. While he should be able to resume racing in autumn, his Arc trip had to be cancelled.

**Epiphaneia (JPN, H5, by Symboli Kris S)**, after a dominating four-length victory in the Japan Cup (G1, 2,400m) last year, was ranked second behind *Just a Way*, scoring 129 in the 2014 World's Best Racehorse Rankings. Early this year, the 2013 Kikuka Sho victor challenged the Dubai World Cup (G1, dirt, 2,000m), his first on dirt, but finished last in a nine-horse field. Upon his return to Japan, he remained in training towards the Takarazuka Kinen (G1, 2,200m), but then he strained a tendon in his left foreleg. His connections have decided to retire him to stud, making him yet another casualty among Japan's Arc hopefuls.



Epiphaneia  
in the 2014 Japan Cup



One and Only  
in the 2014 Tokyo Yushun

The 2014 Derby victor, **One and Only (JPN, C4, by Heart's Cry)**, finished third in the Dubai Sheema Classic (G1, 2,410m) and was planning to travel to England in July for the King George VI & Queen Elizabeth Stakes (G1, 2,400m). Depending on his progress, there was even a possibility of his running in the Arc. But then his owner, Koji Maeda, decided to run him in the Takarazuka Kinen instead of brother Shinji Maeda's horse, Kizuna (JPN, H5, by Deep Impact), who was withdrawn after finishing seventh in the Tenno Sho (Spring) (G1, 3,200m) in May. Kizuna's Arc entry was also cancelled. Thereafter, **One and Only**, the *Heart's Cry (JPN, by Sunday Silence)* colt, was heavily defeated in the Takarazuka Kinen, prompting his connections to announce their intention to aim at autumn G1 events in Japan following a summer break.

So, as of this writing, Japan's only possible Arc contender is **Rouge Buck (JPN, F3, by Manhattan Cafe)**, a highly reputed filly who is unbeaten in three starts since her two-year-old debut in September. Her record includes a strong performance against male opponents in the Kisaragi Sho (G3, 1,800m) in February. She was sent to post favorite in the Oka Sho (Japanese 1000 Guineas, G1, 1,600m) in April, but she finished ninth, struggling to make ground from traveling in the rear behind a considerably slow pace set by the eventual winner, Let's Go Donki (JPN, F3, by King Kamehameha). Positioned more forwardly in her next G1 start, the Yushun Himba (Japanese Oaks, G1, 2,400m) in May, she started to take command at the straight from 200 meters out, but then was overtaken in her last strides by Mikki Queen (JPN, F3, by Deep Impact) and succumbed to second place.



Rouge Buck  
in the 2015 Kisaragi Sho

Though **Rouge Buck** was winless in both G1 attempts, her connections have stuck to their original

plan and announced her return to training for the Sapporo Kinen (G2, 2,000m) on August 23. Last year, this same race was used as a step to the Arc by *Harp Star* (JPN, by *Deep Impact*) and *Gold Ship* (JPN, H6, by *Stay Gold*), who went on to finish sixth and 14th, respectively, in the French G1. **Rouge Buck** could fly to France if she passes her test in Sapporo, where the long-grass track resembles that found commonly in Europe.



Spielberg  
in the 2014 Tenno Sho (Autumn)

**Spielberg** (JPN, H6, by *Deep Impact*) traveled to Europe this year for the Prince of Wales's Stakes (G1, 2,000m) in June, where he showed some effort early but fell short of launching a serious threat and finished sixth to *Free Eagle* (IRE, C4, by *High Chaparral*). He returned to Japan soon after, without going on to the Eclipse Stakes (G1, 2,000m). His connections have now altered his program to allow him to race in Japan this fall. The son of *Deep Impact* had been registered for the Irish Champion Stakes (G1, 2,000m) on September 12, as had four other Japanese runners, excluding **Duramente**, who were formally intended to run in the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe.

### Increased Interest in Overseas Challenges in Australia

The Championships, a new international racing carnival held in Sydney, Australia, has been added as another choice for those targeting overseas racing. *Hana's Goal* (JPN, by *Orewa Matteruze*) finished sixth in the Doncaster Mile (G1, 1,600m) last year before her success in the All Aged Stakes (G1, 1,400m). This year, *Real Impact* (JPN, H7, by *Deep Impact*), coming off an impressive win in the George Ryder Stakes (G1, 1,500m) in March, finished second in the Doncaster Mile while carrying four kilos more than the local winner, *Kermadec* (NZ, by *Teofilo*).

Australia is well known to the Japanese for its prestigious G1 events between October and November. These include the Melbourne Cup (G1, 3,200m) in which *Delta Blues* (JPN, by *Dance in the Dark*) and *Pop Rock* (JPN, by *Helissio*) finished first and second respectively in 2006, and the Caulfield Cup (G1, 2,400m), won by *Admire Rakti* (JPN, by *Heart's Cry*) last year. In fact, Australia has become a popular destination for overseas challenges, along with the Dubai World Cup Day in March, the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe in October and the Hong Kong International Races in December.

Two runners are scheduled to represent Japan in both the Caulfield Cup and the Melbourne Cup this year. **Fame Game** (JPN, H5, by *Heart's Cry*) is a winner of four grade-race titles, including back-to-back wins in the Diamond Stakes (G3, 3,400m). He has scored three wins and a second out of five starts of 2,500 meters or over. He was impressive in his last start, the Tenno Sho (Spring) (G1, 3,200m), where he turned in the second fastest time over the last three furlongs from racing mid-field and just missed by a neck to eventual winner *Gold Ship*, who had taken the lead earlier. Zachary Purton, who rode *Admire*



Fame Game  
in the 2015 Diamond Stakes

*Rakti* last year, hopes to claim the Caulfield Cup title again this year, this time with **Fame Game**.



Hokko Brave  
in the 2014 Tenno Sho (Spring)

**Hokko Brave (JPN, H7, by Marvelous Sunday)** has yet to capture a grade-race title, but his ability was well appreciated in the 2014 Tenno Sho (Spring), where he was third to *Fenomeno (JPN, by Stay Gold)* by a neck and a nose after being sent off 12th favorite in the race. He was also a close sixth just 0.3 seconds behind Gold Ship in this year's Tenno Sho (Spring), and he has proved consistent with a record of 1-1-2 plus two fifth-place finishes out of eight starts at 2,500 meters or over.