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SUBJECT: RESULT OF THE 49TH SPRINTERS STAKES (G1)



The Sprinters Stakes, initially established in 1967 as a major 1,200-meter sprint race for three-year-old and up, was designated as a spring G3 event in conjunction with the new grading system implemented in 1984. It was then upgraded to G2 in 1987 before becoming a G1 sprint race in 1990 with the date of fixture also shifted to the latter part of the season. The race now positions itself as the highest mark for sprinters together with the Takamatsunomiya Kinen (G1, 1,200m) held in spring. As one of the first few races to open its doors to foreign entries, the race became part of the Global Sprint Challenge (GSC), an international six-sprint series on turf jointly held in three countries; Australia, England and Japan, which later expanded into a ten-race series held in six countries with the addition of Hong Kong, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates.

Silent Witness (AUS, by *El Moxie*) from Hong Kong played the starring role in its inaugural year in 2005 while Australia's *Takeover Target* (AUS, by *Celtic Swing*) won the 2006 Sprinters Stakes, coming off a runner-up effort in the previous Centaur Stakes (G2, 1,200m), and ultimately earned the Global Sprint Challenge Champion title. Native Hong Kong trainer Poon Fai Yiu and jockey Hoi Wing Lai claimed the 2010 Sprinters Stakes title with *Ultra Fantasy* (AUS, by *Encosta de Lago*) who gave a tenacious performance to fend off some of the best G1 sprinters that were among the 16-horse field, and the race has continued to enjoy the company of some of the top sprinters from overseas in recent years.

Hong Kong's **Rich Tapestry** made his visit to Japan for the first time. The late developing *Holy Roman Emperor* gelding was a runner-up in the 2014 Dubai Golden Shaheen won by fellow Hong Kong runner Sterling City (AUS) before becoming the first Hong Kong-trained horse to claim a victory in the USA when winning the G1 Santa Anita Sprint Championship in October that year, proving successful on both dirt and all-weather tracks. Seeking to claim a G1 title on turf, he came off a fifth-place finish in the KrisFlyer International Sprint in May for the G1 sprint event in Japan.

The opposing field from Japan was without Snow Dragon (JPN, by Admire Cozzene) who won the title last year but unable to defend his title due to a leg problem. **Mikki Isle**, who finished 0.1 second-third to Aerovelocity (NZ, by Pins) in the Takamatsunomiya Kinen (G1, 1,200m) on March 29, came directly from his summer break following his 15th-place finish in the Yasuda Kinen (G1, 1,600m) on June 7. 2014 Takamatsunomiya Kinen winner **Copano Richard** hoped to bounce back from being heavily defeated to 14th in his last start in the Hakodate Sprint Stakes (G3, 1,200m) on June 21.

Bel Canto, who scored back-to-back wins in two of the Summer Sprint Series, the Ibis Summer Dash (3rd leg, G3, 1,000m) on August 2 and the Kitakyushu Kinen (4th leg, G3, 1,200m) on August 23, attempted to improve on her fifth-place finish in the Sprinters Stakes last year. Lucky Nine's half-brother **Teehaff** was the winner of the first leg of the same series, the Hakodate Sprint Stakes while **Uliuli**, **Ukiyono Kaze** and **Active Minoru** each claimed the second leg, the CBC Sho (G3, 1,200m) on July 5, the fifth leg, the Keeneland Cup (G3, 1,200m) on August 30 and the last leg, Centaur Stakes (G2, 1,200m) on September 13, respectively, in preparation for their major G1 target.

Straight Girl, who was runner-up in last year's edition of the Sprinters Stakes, claimed a G1 title in the Victoria Mile (G1, 1,600m) on May 17 this year and came off a fourth-place finish in the Centaur Stakes while Takamatsunomiya Kinen runner-up **Hakusan Moon** finished eighth in the same race (Centaur).

The race record of 1:06.7 was set by *Lord Kanaloa* (JPN, by King Kamehameha) in the first of his consecutive victories in this race in 2012 and 2013.

THE 49TH SPRINTERS STAKES (G1) -the 8th leg of the Global Sprint Challenge-

3-year-old & up, 1,200 meters (about 6 furlongs), turf, right-handed

Sunday, October 4, 2015 Nakayama Racecourse 11th Race Post time: 15:40

Total prize money: ¥ 197,600,000 (about US\$ 1,647,000 <US\$1=¥120>)

3-y-o: 55kg (about 121 lbs), 4-y-o & up: 57kg (about 126 lbs),

2kg allowance for Fillies & Mares, 1kg allowance for Southern Hemisphere-bred born in 2012

Safety factor: 16 runners



| FP | BK | PP | Horse | Sex Age | Wgt (kg) | Sire Dam | Jockey Trainer | Owner Breeder | Margin (L3F) | Odds (Fav) |
|----|----|----|------------------------|---------|----------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--|------------------|------------|
| 1 | 1 | 2 | Straight Girl (JPN) | M6 | 55.0 | Fuji Kiseki Never Period | K. Tosaki H. Fujiwara | Hirosaki Toshihiro HD Co., Ltd. TH Co., Ltd. | 1:08.1 (33.1) | 4.4 (1) |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------|---------------------------|----|------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|--|-----------------|---------------|
| 2 | 2 | 4 | Sakura Gospel (JPN) | H7 | 57.0 | Sakura President Sakura Blues | N. Yokoyama T. Ozeki | Sakura Commers Sakura Commerce Co., Ltd. | 3/4 (33.4) | 28.8 (11) |
| 3 | 3 | 6 | Ukiyono Kaze (JPN) | M5 | 55.0 | On Fire Admire Dash | H. Shii T. Kikuzawa | Jun Kokubu Jun Kokubu | Neck (32.8) | 19.6 (9) |
| 4 | 7 | 13 | Mikki Isle (JPN) | C4 | 57.0 | Deep Impact Star Isle | S. Hamanaka H. Otonashi | Mizuki Noda Northern Racing | Head (33.8) | 6.5 (4) |
| 5 | 6 | 12 | Uliuli (JPN) | M5 | 55.0 | Deep Impact Wikiwiki | Y. Iwata H. Fujiwara | Kaneko Makoto Holdings Co., Ltd. Kaneko Makoto Holdings Inc. | Neck (33.1) | 5.0 (3) |
| 6 | 1 | 1 B | Rich Tapestry* (IRE) | G7 | 57.0 | Holy Roman Emperor Genuine Charm | C. Lemaire C. Chang | S S Silas Yang, T W Wong, C K Ho&Y T Cheung Moyglare Stud Farm Ltd | Head (33.4) | 14.7 (6) |
| 7 | 6 | 11 | Red Oval (JPN) | M5 | 55.0 | Deep Impact Caught Out | M. Ebina T. Yasuda | TokyoHorseRacingCo., Ltd Shadai Farm | 1/2 (33.6) | 31.5 (12) |
| 8 | 3 | 5 | Sugino Endeavour (JPN) | H7 | 57.0 | Sakura Bakushin O Shining Pierce | K. Matsuyama H. Asami | Tadakuni Sugiyama Mie Sugiyama | 1-1/2 (33.4) | 126.3 (15) |
| 9 | 5 | 9 | Active Minoru (JPN) | C3 | 55.0 | Statue of Liberty Piena Amazon | K. Fujioka Y. Kitade | Minoru Yoshioka Fujiwara Farm | Neck (34.2) | 16.6 (8) |
| 10 | 8 | 16 | Teehaff (JPN) | H5 | 57.0 | Storming Home Birjand | Y. Kokubun K. Nishiura | HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Darley Japan K.K | 1/2 (33.1) | 15.0 (7) |
| 11 | 2 | 3 | Little Gerda (USA) | M6 | 55.0 | Closing Argument Bijoux Miss | Y. Kawada I. Sameshima | Yoshiko Kuriyama Dapple Bloodstock | Nose (33.7) | 89.8 (14) |
| 12 | 4 | 8 | Hakusan Moon (JPN) | H6 | 57.0 | Admire Moon Ciliege | M. Sakai M. Nishizono | Goichi Kawasaki Shirai Stud Farm | Neck (34.7) | 11.8 (5) |
| 13 | 4 | 7 | Bel Canto (JPN) | F4 | 55.0 | Sakura Bakushin O Celebrar | Y. Take K. Tsunoda | Koji Maeda Tadayoshi Doi | Neck (34.2) | 4.6 (2) |
| 13 | 8 | 15 | Copano Richard (JPN) | H5 | 57.0 | Daiwa Major Higashi Lynx | M. Demuro T. Miya | Sachiaki Kobayashi Yanagawa Bokujo | DH (33.9) | 27.5 (10) |
| 15 | 7 | 14 | Fra Angelico (JPN) | H7 | 57.0 | Neo Universe Curly Angel | H. Kitamura M. Saito | Sunday Racing Co., Ltd. Northern Farm | 1-3/4 (33.4) | 87.3 (13) |
| | 5 | 10 | Majin Prosper (JPN) | H8 | 57.0 | Admire Cozzene Hollywood Dream | K. Miura H. Nakao | Kazuhiro Sasaki Hashimoto Farm | Scratched | |

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

NOTE 1: *Foreign contenders

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: 1:08.1

GOING: Firm

WEATHER: Fine

TURNOVER FOR THE RACE ALONE: ¥ 12,177,217,900

TURNOVER FOR THE DAY: ¥ 20,760,827,700

ATTENDANCE: 38,249

PAY-OFF (for ¥100)

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------|------|------|------------------|-----|--------|----------|-------|----------|
| WIN | No.2 | ¥440 | BRACKET QUINELLA | 1-2 | ¥3,170 | QUINELLA | 2-4 | ¥5,550 |
| PLACE | No.2 | ¥180 | QUINELLA PLACE | 2-4 | ¥1,650 | EXACTA | 2-4 | ¥9,090 |
| | No.4 | ¥610 | | 2-6 | ¥1,520 | TRIO | 2-4-6 | ¥23,020 |
| | No.6 | ¥490 | | 4-6 | ¥4,280 | TRIFECTA | 2-4-6 | ¥106,170 |

1. Straight Girl (JPN), bay, mare, 6-year-old

Fuji Kiseki / Never Period (Taiki Shuttle)

Owner: Toshihiro Hirosaki Breeder: TH Co., Ltd.

Trainer: Hideaki Fujiwara Jockey: Keita Tosaki

28 Starts, 10 Wins

Added money: ¥ 98,402,000 Career earnings: ¥ 473,547,900

Principal Race Performances: '15 Victoria Mile (G1, 1,600m) 1st
'14 Silk Road Stakes (G3, 1,200m) 1st
'14 Sprinters Stakes (G1, 1,200m) 2nd

| | |
|--|-----|
| '14 Hong Kong Sprint (G1, 1,200m) | 3rd |
| '14 Victoria Mile (G1, 1,600m) | 3rd |
| '14 Takamatsunomiya Kinen (G1, 1,200m) | 3rd |

- 2. Sakura Gospel (JPN)**, dark bay or brown, horse, 7-year-old
 Sakura President / Sakura Blues (Cure the Blues)
 Owner: Sakura Commers Breeder: Sakura Commerce Co., Ltd.
 Trainer: Tomohiro Ozeki Jockey: Norihiro Yokoyama

- 3. Ukiyono Kaze (JPN)**, dark bay or brown, mare, 5-year-old
 On Fire / Admire Dash (Fusaichi Concorde)
 Owner: Jun Kokubu Breeder: Jun Kokubu
 Trainer: Takanori Kikuzawa Jockey: Hirofumi Shii

Six-Year-Old Straight Girl Wins Sprinters Stakes

Straight Girl avenged her runner-up effort in the same race last year and measured up to her billing as race favorite for her second G1 title this year following her victory in the Victoria Mile in May. Hideaki Fujiwara won his seventh career JRA-G1 title and the second this year following the Victoria Mile with the mare. It was the fifth career JRA-G1 for jockey Keita Tosaki who also partnered the mare in her last G1 win.

Coming off a fourth-place finish in her last start in the Centaur Stakes, **Straight Girl** broke smoothly from stall two and settled nicely between rivals behind a rather moderate to slow pace in mid-field led by **Hakusan Moon**. She exerted a powerful turn of foot with 200 meters to go, going through an opening made by **Sakura Gospel** who split horses for the stretch run in front. Increasing speed with every stride the *Fuji Kiseki* mare swept past her rivals for a clear win while four horses were left rallying for second place.

“She’s already won a G1 (Victoria Mile) over a mile but winning a G1 in a sprint race is really special for us because I think she deserves it. Her response as well as her determination was no comparison compared to her last start so even when she seemed a little keen to go, I was confident and able to keep calm knowing that she would finish it off strongly,” commented Keita Tosaki.

“I owe it to the owner who has been so understanding as to let me keep her in training towards this long-awaited goal, and the stable staff that had put in every effort to make this happen. She’s such a special mare to be able to keep turning in such consistent results throughout her career and to win a sprint G1 at six years old. Considering her age, I know that another great task (as a broodmare) awaits her I am glad that she was able to add this to her resume. Now that she has accomplished this victory in her last run in Japan, I hope to be able to condition her and prove her ability against the world’s top sprinters in Hong Kong—that would be so cool!” said Hideaki Fujiwara.

Sakura Gospel was also rated in mid-division in front of the eventual winner and angled out a fraction before splitting horses for the stretch run. While overtaking the two front runners that were running out of steam to maintain their advantage, the son of *Sakura President* finally pinned down **Mikki Isle** who showed tremendous effort to after taking command in the last 100 meters but was soon overtaken by the winner.

Ukiyono Kaze ran three from the rear was wide throughout the 1,200-meter trip, but had plenty in the tank to exert a powerful closing speed along the outside to mark the fastest finishing time over the last three furlongs for the share.

Rich Tapestry proved he had no problem handling the turf at Nakayama but the inside draw forced him to race further back than his connections had hoped for. Nevertheless, he finished strongly in the last 200 meters to engage in the rally and finished sixth less than two lengths behind the winner.

“My horse went very well—he finished strong—but the barrier one—he was too far back. The surface was fine. I

will try to come back next year,” commented trainer Chun Wai Chang.

[Other Horses]

4th: (13) **Mikki Isle**—chased leaders in 3rd, led 100m out, outrun in final strides

5th: (12) **Uliuli**—sat wide in mid-group, dueled with winner until 100m out

7th: (11) **Red Oval**—raced in 5-6th, showed mild late charge

8th: (5) **Sugino Endeavour**—sat toward rear, passed tired rivals

9th: (9) **Active Minoru**—stalked leader in 2nd, led briefly inside furlong pole, outrun in last 100m

10th: (16) **Teehaff**—positioned near rear, angled wide, showed belated charge

11th: (3) **Little Gerda**—bumped after start, hugged rail in mid-pack, failed to respond at stretch

12th: (8) **Hakusan Moon**—set pace, gave up lead mid-stretch, faded

13th: (7) **Bel Canto**—raced in 4th, weakened after passing furlong pole

13th: (15) **Copano Richard**—traveled wide in mid-division, met traffic at last 200m

15th: (14) **Fra Angelico**—trailed in rear, no factor

Scratched: (10) **Majin Prosper**—due to tendon injury in right foreleg

Fractional Time (sec./furlong): 11.7 - 10.7 - 11.7 - 11.2 - 11.2 - 11.6

Last 4 furlongs: 45.7 Last 3 furlongs: 34.0

Positions at each corner: 3rd corner 8-(9,13)7(4,11)1(2,15)3(5,12)6(14,16)

4th corner (*8,9)13(7,11)4(1,15)(2,12)3,6(5,16)14

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.