

# Exclusive Topics for JAPAN AUTUMN INTERNATIONAL 2017 - 4th Edition -



November 2017  
The Japan Racing Association

The Champions Cup (G1, dirt, 1,800m), formally the Japan Cup Dirt and transferred to Chukyo Racecourse in 2014, is one of two dirt G1 events held by the JRA. One of the main step races is the JBC Classic (dirt, 2,000m), a designated JRA-NAR (National Association of Racing; local public racing) exchange grade event, which was held at Ohi Racecourse on November 3. Seven horses from JRA and six from NAR made the field and the top six spots were dominated by JRA runners.

The winner, **Sound True (JPN, G7, by French Deputy)**, had been winless in five starts after a victory in the Champions Cup last year but had consistently finished within fourth place, except in the February Stakes (G1, dirt, 1,600m), where he was stuck behind a group at the straight and finished eighth. In the JBC Classic, he exerted a fine turn of foot from behind to prove age had not caught up with him yet. While the pace and development of the Champions Cup will be an important factor due to his racing style, if the race works his way he has the form to pull off a consecutive victory in the 2017 edition of this dirt G1.



Sound True  
in the 2016 Champions Cup



K T Brave in the 2016  
Three-Year-Olds (Allowance)

The JBC Classic runner-up was **K T Brave (JPN, C4, by Admire Max)**, one of the few emerging talents in the dirt category. Landing his first major title in the Teio Sho (dirt, 2,000m) in June, the *Admire Max* (JPN, by *Sunday Silence*) colt showed great potential in the JBC Classic, making his bid from close up and taking a brief lead at the stretch before being outrun by the winner in the end. With just four JRA-race starts out of 14 since May last season, the chestnut colt has yet to prove himself

against tough competition and fast finishes, but he will soon have a chance to show off his versatile racing style at the highest level.

**Mitsuba (JPN, H5, by Kane Hekili)** is coming off an impressive third-place finish as seventh favorite in the JBC Classic. Gradually stepping up in distance since his career debut, the son of *Kane Hekili* (JPN, by *Fuji Kiseki*) has proved best suited to middle distances, scoring seven of his nine career wins, including his first major title in the Mercury Cup (dirt, 2,000m, July), at distances between 1,800m and 2,100m. He has been consistent in his 32 career starts, having finished worse than sixth just five times, so hopes are high towards his JRA-G1 debut in the Champions Cup.



Mitsuba in the 2017 Brilliant Stakes



Awardee in the 2016 Antares Stakes

**Awardee (USA, H7, by Jungle Pocket)**, who finished second as race favorite in the 2016 Champions Cup, has been winless for some time. He was a distant (10 lengths) fifth to Arrogate (USA, C4, by Unbridled's Song) in the Dubai World Cup (G1, dirt, 2,000m) in March. Coming off a third-place finish in his comeback start in the Teio Sho, he finished fourth while attempting to defend his title in the JBC Classic. While still yet to find his true form, he has consistently finished within the first five over three seasons. Having excelled on left-handed courses, he is an eligible candidate for the dirt G1 title.

**Glanzend (JPN, C4, by Neo Universe)** scored his second grade-race victory last January in the Tokai Stakes (G2, dirt, 1,800m)—the February Stakes trial—run over the same course and distance as the Champions Cup. Despite his win in the trial, the *Neo Universe* (JPN, by *Sunday Silence*) colt passed up the spring dirt G1 and was below form in his following two grade-race starts, finishing ninth and tenth. He was given a five-month plus spell but was still not himself in his comeback start in the JBC Classic, finishing fifth. He is hoped to bounce back for the Champions Cup, run on a left-handed dirt track where he has a career record of 3-0-1 out of four starts.



Glanzend in the 2017 Tokai Stakes



Apollo Kentucky (left) in the 2016 Miyako Stakes

**Apollo Kentucky (USA, H5, by Langfuhr)** won the year-end Tokyo Daishoten (G1, dirt, 2,000m) following his fifth-place finish in last year's Champions Cup. He kicked off his 2017 campaign in the Dubai World Cup, where he finished ninth, then made his comeback start in the Teio Sho, finishing fifth. In September, the son of *Langfuhr* (CAN, by *Danzig*) won his fall kick-off start, the Nippon TV Hai (dirt, 1,800m), beating **Sound True** and **K T Brave**, but then he disappointed to eighth in the

JBC Classic. While somewhat inconsistent despite his talent on dirt, he could very well bounce back to form in his next start.

**Copano Rickey (JPN, H7, by Gold Allure)**, who has maintained his place as one of the top dirt specialists over a number of seasons, will retire at the end of this season. The son of *Gold Allure* (JPN, by *Sunday Silence*) chose to run in the JBC Sprint (dirt, 1,200m) instead of the JBC Classic, his first time to step down in distance from a mile to 1,200 meters. Nevertheless, the multiple-G1 winner assumed command by steadily advancing to third from a slow break, and despite being pinned, finished second by a head at the wire. The seven-year-old chestnut won the 2015 Tokai Stakes over the same course and distance as the Champions Cup, but he has fared poorly in his past three attempts, finishing 12th, seventh and 13th.



Copano Rickey  
in the 2015 February Stakes



Gold Dream  
in the 2017 February Stakes

Another potential candidate that did not run in the JBC Classic is February Stakes victor **Gold Dream (JPN, C4, by Gold Allure)**. Outside of his favorite 1,600-meter course at Tokyo, however, the talented *Gold Allure* colt has failed to perform to his best, finishing 14th and seventh in the Dubai World Cup and the Teio Sho, respectively. Despite stepping down to his best distance in the Mile Championship Nambu Hai (dirt, 1,600m) on October 9, he fell behind after a poor break, costing him the race and resulting in a fifth-place finish. He needs to bounce back to form in the Champions Cup to make up for his 12th-place finish as second-favorite last year.

**T M Jinsoku (JPN, H5, by Kurofune)**, who landed his first grade-race victory in the Miyako Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,800m) on November 5, has been on a roll since May, registering four wins and a second out of five starts. **King's Guard (JPN, H6, by Sinister Minister)** finished behind the son of *Kurofune* (USA, by *French Deputy*) in third while Antares Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,800m) victor **Molto Bene (JPN, H5, by Deep Sky)** and Leopard Stakes (G3, dirt, 1800m) champion **Rose Princedom (JPN, C3, by Roses in May)** finished fifth and seventh, respectively.



T M Jinsoku in the 2017 Miyako Stakes





King's Guard  
in the 2017 Procyon Stakes



Molto Bene  
in the 2017 Antares Stakes



Rose Princedom  
in the 2017 Leopard Stakes



London Town in the 2017 Elm Stakes

Meanwhile, **London Town (JPN, C4, by Kane Hekili)** defeated **T M Jinsoku** when claiming the Elm Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,700m) in record time in August. He followed up with another win—the Korea Cup (Korean G1, dirt, 1,800m) held in Seoul in September. He is hoped to accomplish a father-son victory in the dirt G1 together with sire *Kane Hekili*, a two-time winner of the former Japan Cup Dirt in 2005 and 2008.

Incantation (JPN, H7, by Sinister Minister) was sent to post a lightly regarded sixth-choice in Musashino Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,600m) on November 11, but he validated his status as a top-class runner with his sixth grade-race win. After stalking the pace in second, he assumed command at the furlong pole and held off a strong charge from behind for a 1/2-length victory. The son of *Sinister Minister (USA, by Old Trieste)* has suffered a number of injuries in his career, but has come back successfully this year with three wins and a second out of four starts since March. Nevertheless, his connections have decided to pass up his entry in the Champions Cup. 2015 Champions Cup runner-up **Nonkono Yume (JPN, G5, by Twining)**, who is entered to run again in this year's Champions Stakes, finished fourth in the Musashino Stakes while **Kafuji Take (JPN, H5, by Precise End)** followed in fifth.

Completing this year's Champions Cup's 16-horse field is Sirius Stakes (G3, dirt, 2000m) winner **Meisho Sumitomo (JPN, H6, by Gold Allure)**. In case of a withdrawal, the substitutes are as follows: Unicorn Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,600m) winner Sunrise Nova (JPN, C3, by Gold Allure); Brazil Cup (dirt, 2,100m) victor Meisho Utage (JPN, H6, by Precise End); Japan Dirt Derby (dirt, 2,000m) runner-up Sunrise Soar (JPN, C3, by Symboli Kris S); 2016 Champions Cup third-place finisher Asukano Roman (JPN, H6, by Agnes Digital); BSN Sho (dirt, 1,800m) champion Top Divo (JPN, H5, by King Kamehameha); three-time graded runner-up Pionero (JPN, H6, by Neo Universe); and Three Titan (JPN, G7, by Suzuka Mambo).



Nonkono Yume  
in the 2015 Musashino Stakes



Kafuji Take  
in the 2017 Negishi Stakes



Meisho Sumitomo  
in the 2017 Sirius Stakes