

FROM: Masahiro Usuda

General Manager, Media & Publicity Department, THE JAPAN RACING ASSOCIATION (JRA)

DATE: September 30, 2018

**SUBJECT: RESULT OF THE 52ND 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.

One of the first few JRA races to open its doors to foreign entries, the Sprinters Stakes has enjoyed the participation of many outstanding sprinters from North America, Europe, Asia, and Oceania. Hong Kong raiders have taken home the title twice so far—*Silent Witness* (AUS, by *El Moxie*) was the first foreign contender to win the title in 2005 along with *Ultra Fantasy* (AUS, by *Encosta de Lago*) in 2010—while Australia's *Takeover Target* (AUS, by *Celtic Swing*) won the 2006 version. While foreign contenders have not been seen in the winner's circle since, the race has continued to enjoy the company of some of the top sprinters from overseas in recent years.

This year's only foreign runner, Hong Kong's 2017 Chairman's Sprint Prize (G1, 1,200m) champion **Lucky Bubbles**, kicked off the 2018/19 season in Japan after finishing the previous season with a close third in the Premier Cup (G3, 1,400m; Jun.24).

The Japanese line-up featured defending champion **Red Falx** aiming for his third consecutive Sprinters Stakes triumph after finishing his spring campaign in ninth in the Yasuda Kinen (G1, 1,600m; Jun.3), and this year's Takamatsunomiya Kinen victor **Fine Needle** and 2017 champion of this race **Seiun Kosei**, who came off their wins in the Centaur Stakes (G2, 1,200m; Sep.9) and the Hakodate Sprint Stakes (G3, 1,200m; Jun.17), respectively. **Ares Barows** was entered after claiming back-to-back grade-race wins—the CBC Sho (G3, 1,200m; Jul.1) and the Kitakyushu Kinen (G3, 1,200m; Aug.19)—while **Nac Venus** also came off a graded win in the Keeneland Cup (G3, 1,200m; Aug.26). The Ibis Summer Dash (G3, 1,000m; Jul.29) winner **Daimei Princess** was second in the Kitakyushu Kinen, while **Let's Go Donki**, who has marked three runner-up efforts in JRA's sprint G1 events, came off a fifth in the Keeneland Cup.

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 52ND SPRINTERS STAKES (G1)**

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

Sunday, September 30, 2018 Nakayama Racecourse 11th Race Post time: 15:40

Total prize money: ¥ 238,600,000 (about US\$ 2,170,000 <US\$1=¥110>)

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

2kg allowance for Fillies & Mares, 2kg allowance for Southern Hemisphere-bred born in 2015

Safety factor: 16 runners

FP	BK	PP	Horse	Sex Age	Wgt (kg)	Sire Dam	Jockey Trainer	Owner Breeder	Margin (L3F)	Odds (Fav)
1	4	8	Fine Needle (JPN)	H5	57.0	Admire Moon Needlecraft	Y. Kawada Y. Takahashi	Godolphin Darley Japan K. K	1:08.3 (34.5)	2.8 (1)
2	5	9	Love Kampf (JPN)	F3	53.0	Shonan Kampf Love Heart	R. Wada N. Morita	Yoichi Masuda Yoichi Masuda	Neck (35.1)	31.7 (11)
3	1	1	Rhein Spirit (JPN)	H7	57.0	Swept Overboard Ribbon Stripe	Y. Take M. Matsunaga	Shigemasa Osawa Fujiwara Breeding Stud	1/2 (35.0)	63.7 (13)
4	3	6	Daimei Princess (JPN)	M5	55.0	King Halo Daimei Dark	S. Akiyama N. Morita	Koichi Miyamoto Koichi Miyamoto	Neck (34.4)	30.8 (10)
5	5	10	Let's Go Donki (JPN)	M6	55.0	King Kamehameha Marutoku	Y. Iwata T. Umeda	Hirosaki Toshihiro HD Co., Ltd. Shimizu Bokujo	3/4 (34.3)	11.8 (4)
6	2	3	Once in a Moon (JPN)	M5	55.0	Admire Moon Two Days Notice	S. Ishibashi M. Saito	Yukihiro Moroe Okada Stud	Neck (35.7)	10.8 (3)
7	6	12	Nac Venus (JPN)	M5	55.0	Daiwa Major Ready to Please	J. Moreira H. Sugiura	Kinya Komatsu Shadai Farm	Head (35.3)	3.4 (2)
8	4	7 B	Campbell Junior (AUS)	H6	57.0	Encosta De Lago Melito	H. Tanabe N. Hori	Kazumi Yoshida Katom Chelsaus Wynaus & China Horse Club Investment Holdings Ltd	1-1/4 (34.9)	55.3 (12)

9	1	2	Hiruno Devaro (JPN)	H7	57.0	Manhattan Cafe Deck	H. Shii M. Kon	Hiruno Co., Ltd. Kamii Stud	Nose (35.1)	127.0 (15)
10	8	16	Red Falx (JPN)	H7	57.0	Swept Overboard Vermouth	K. Tosaki T. Ozeki	TokyoHorseRacing Co., Ltd Shadai Farm	1/2 (34.7)	13.3 (5)
11	7	13	Teehaff (JPN)	H8	57.0	Storming Home Birjand	Y. Kokubun K. Nishiura	Godolphin Darley Japan K. K	Neck (34.6)	303.8 (16)
12	6	11	Seiun Kosei (JPN)	H5	57.0	Admire Moon Observant	K. Ikezoe H. Uehara	Shigeyuki Nishiyama Sakurai Bokujo	1 (35.7)	14.8 (8)
13	8	15	Moonquake (JPN)	G5	57.0	Admire Moon Rich Dancer	C. Lemaire K. Fujisawa	U. Carrot Farm Northern Racing	Neck (34.7)	14.5 (7)
14	3	5	Ares Barows (JPN)	H6	57.0	Deep Impact Taisei Etoile	Y. Fujioka K. Tsunoda	Hirotsugu Inokuma Yanagawa Bokujo	1-3/4 (35.8)	13.5 (6)
15	2	4	Snow Dragon (JPN)	H10	57.0	Admire Cozzene Meine Caprice	T. Ono N. Takagi	Makio Okada Meiwa Iwami Bokujo	5 (36.4)	100.3 (14)
	7	14 B	Lucky Bubbles* (AUS)	G7	57.0	Sebring Bubble Below	B. Prebble K. Lui	Lucky Syndicate Gilgai Farm	FF	29.8 (9)

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

FF=Fail to Finish

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: 1:08.3

GOING: Good

WEATHER: Rainy

TURNOVER FOR THE RACE ALONE: ¥ 12,608,503,700

TURNOVER FOR THE DAY: ¥ 23,861,952,400

ATTENDANCE: 24,336

**PAY-OFF (for ¥100)**

WIN	No.8	¥280	BRACKET QUINELLA	4-5	¥1,150	QUINELLA	8-9	¥4,140
PLACE	No.8	¥150	QUINELLA PLACE	8-9	¥1,340	EXACTA	8-9	¥5,260
	No.9	¥510		1-8	¥3,740	TRIO	1-8-9	¥65,370
	No.1	¥1,400		1-9	¥13,850	TRIFECTA	8-9-1	¥209,620

**1. Fine Needle (JPN)**, bay, horse, 5-year-old

Admire Moon / Needlecraft (Mark of Esteem)

Owner: Godolphin Breeder: Darley Japan K. K

Trainer: Yoshitada Takahashi Jockey: Yuga Kawada

27 Starts, 10 Wins

Added money: ¥ 113,360,000 Career earnings: ¥ 491,413,600

Principal race performances: '18 Takamatsunomiya Kinen (G1, 1,200m) 1st

'17&'18 Centaur Stakes (G2, 1,200m) 1st

'18 Silk Road Stakes (G3, 1,200m) 1st

**2. Love Kampf (JPN)**, dark bay or brown, filly, 3-year-old

Shonan Kampf / Love Heart (Meiner Love)

Owner: Yoichi Masuda Breeder: Yoichi Masuda

Trainer: Naoyuki Morita Jockey: Ryuji Wada

**3. Rhein Spirit (JPN)**, dark bay or brown, horse, 7-year-old

Swept Overboard / Ribbon Stripe (Tony Bin)

Owner: Shigemasa Osawa Breeder: Fujiwara Breeding Stud

Trainer: Masahiro Matsunaga Jockey: Yutaka Take

**Race Favorite Fine Needle Proves Himself Best Sprinter in Sprinters Stakes**

Takamatsunomiya Kinen champion **Fine Needle** captured this year's Sprinters Stakes to become the fifth horse in history to claim both JRA-G1 sprint races in the same year—the first since *Lord Kanaloa* in 2013. The *Admire Moon* horse was 12th in last year's Sprinters Stakes after claiming the Centaur Stakes but demonstrated a very

prosperous five-year-old campaign with four wins out of five starts—he was fourth in the Chairman’s Sprint Prize in Hong Kong in his first overseas endeavor. This is the first G1 win since the Takamatsunomiya Kinen for both trainer Yoshitada Takahashi and jockey Yuga Kawada, second overall for Takahashi and 12th for Kawada.

With a huge typhoon closing in, the race broke in the rain on a track condition rated good. **Once in a Moon** gunned for the lead and set the pace. **Fine Needle** broke from a middle stall and was settled in mid-field and three-wide. Shifting farther out in the last turn to avoid traffic, the five-year-old bay unleashed his trademark turn of foot all the way to the wire while picking off his rivals one by one and finally catching **Love Kampf** in the final strides to win by a neck.

Sent off 11th favorite, **Love Kampf** broke sharply and chased the pace in second. Hitting the straight still in second and two-wide, the three-year-old filly took over the lead from the pacesetter while shaking off second favorite **Nac Venus** 100 meters out and dug in gamely but was pinned by the winner at the wire.

Favored 13th, **Rhein Spirit** saved ground in third to fourth, struggled for room behind the battling front runners in the stretch, but broke through chasing **Love Kampf** in the final 50 meters, stretching his neck in front of **Daimei Princess** to grab third.

**Lucky Bubbles** broke smoothly under Brett Prebble and was tracking the eventual winner in mid-division and three wide but suddenly broke away from the field approaching the final turn and pulled up with a ruptured suspensory ligament in his left foreleg.

“We were going smoothly and following the winner and felt I was going to have every conceivable chance then I heard something pop which wasn’t a nice thing to hear,” commented Brett Prebble.

#### Other Horses:

4th: (6) **Daimei Princess**—saved ground in mid-field, found opening in mid-stretch, dug in strongly last 100m

5th: (10) **Let’s Go Donki**—moderate break, sat 4th from last, closed in well with fastest stretch drive

6th: (3) **Once in a Moon**—led by more than 2 lengths early, still led entering stretch, caught with less than 200 meter to go

7th: (12) **Nac Venus**—chased leaders in 3rd position, tired from early efforts and outrun in the lasts 150 meters

8th: (7) **Campbell Junior**—rated off pace in mid-pack, advanced approaching turn but wide, no threat

9th: (2) **Hiruno Devaro**—saved ground in mid-pack, unable to quicken at the stretch

10th: (16) **Red Falx**—little to show while racing wide throughout

11th: (13) **Teehaff**—needed urging from the start, raced along the rails but failed to reach contention

12th: (11) **Seiun Kosei**—sat in 5th, sustained bid, weakened in last 100m

13th: (15) **Moonquake**—trailed in rear, turned wide, unable to reach contention

14th: (5) **Ares Barows**—traveled in mid-group, never fired at stretch

15th: (4) **Snow Dragon**—hugged rails in mid-division, dropped back at stretch

Fractional time (sec./furlong): 11.7 - 10.3 - 11.0 - 11.3 - 11.5 - 12.5

Last 4 furlongs: 46.3 Last 3 furlongs: 35.3

Positions at each corner: 3rd corner 3,9(1,12,11)(2,5,**8**)(4,7,14)6(10,16)(13,15)

4th corner 3(9,12)(1,11)(2,5)**8**(6,4)(13,10,7)(14,16)15

**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.

Post race interview of winning connections:

[Trainer: Yoshitada Takahashi]

“I am relieved to have been able to come up with the best results as the race favorite. I knew by the look of Fine Needle’s eyes at the saddling area that he had switched into racing mode. He was positioned exactly where I had imagined and I was a little concerned when the jockey was urging the horse on at the third corner, but the horse got into gear and then geared up again once entering the stretch so from there I was just hoping with all my heart that he would reach the leader in time. Fine Needle is such a professional, he seems to know exactly what it takes and executes it at the right time. He was 12th in the Sprinters Stakes last year, and coming off his break during the winter, he came back to the stables a different horse—so strong—and he’s shown that since his first time up in the Silk Road Stakes. We’ve used him over a mile before but the sprint is what he’s best at, so we’ll be sticking to 1,200 meters or 1,400 meters at the most. I’ll have to see how he pulls up from this race to determine his future starts including a choice to run in the Hong Kong Sprint, but if we do I hope to show the fans there (in Hong Kong) how much stronger he’s become.”

[Jockey: Yuga Kawada]

“He wasn’t as sharp in the first half of the race and we had to race further out than we’d hoped, but despite the unideal trip, he really made up for it with his legs at the straight and we just managed to clinch our victory at the wire. He sure validated his win in the Takamatsunomiya Kinen with this JRA-sprint-G1 double and two other grade-race victories which undoubtedly places him as the top sprinter in Japan.”