

Exclusive Topics for JAPAN AUTUMN INTERNATIONAL 2020 - 1st Edition -



October 2020

The Japan Racing Association

Welcome back to our annual series of newsletters leading up to the 2020 Japan Cup (G1, 2,400m). The fall racing season is heading towards the Japan Autumn International Series, which will be held over a period of four weekends between November 15 and December 6 and comprise four prestigious G1 races: the Queen Elizabeth II Cup (G1, 2,200m), the Mile Championship (G1, 1,600m), the Japan Cup and the Champions Cup (G1, dirt, 1,800m). Total prize money for the four G1 events will amount to ¥1.37 billion (US\$12.5m), with additional bonuses for winners of designated overseas G1 events who also finish within the top three in any of the four races. Also, winners of designated overseas races who finish outside the top three places in the Japan Cup will still be guaranteed an incentive of US\$200,000. The Queen Elizabeth II Cup and the Mile Championship will be transferred to Hanshin Racecourse from Kyoto Racecourse, which will close after the last race on November 1 to undergo a major renovation prior to reopening in 2023.



Suave Richard in the 2019 Japan Cup



Lucky Lilac
in the 2019 Queen Elizabeth II Cup



Indy Champ
in the 2019 Mile Championship



Chrysoberyl
in the 2019 Champions Cup

Last year's Japan Cup was absent of foreign contenders for the first time since its inauguration in 1981. The quality of Japanese-trained horses has improved tremendously and chances for foreign



contenders to beat them on home turf evidently have slimmed. Similarly, the Tenno Sho (Autumn), held four weeks prior to the Japan Cup, had 10 G1 horses at the gate but only four G1 winners among the 15-horse field in this once top international event.



Curren Bouquetd'or (left)
in the 2019 Shuka Sho

Suave Richard (JPN, by Heart's Cry), winner of last year's Japan Cup, retired after being beaten to 12th in the yearend Arima Kinen, while runner-up **Curren Bouquetd'or (JPN, F4, by Deep Impact)** headed for her first overseas challenge earlier this year. After finishing second in the Kyoto Kinen (G2, 2,200m) in February, the filly was denied a chance in the Dubai Sheema Classic when the Dubai World Cup Night was cancelled less than a week before its scheduled holding due to COVID-19. Twenty Japanese-trained entrants were in Dubai for the event, so their racing schedules have been impacted by the sudden change in plans. **Curren Bouquetd'or** sat out the rest of the spring and then, in the second start of her four-year-old campaign, the All Comers (G2, 2,200m) on September 27, she was beaten by a nose by winner **Centelleo (JPN, M5, by Deep Impact)** to mark her fourth consecutive second-place finish.

Wagnerian (JPN, H5, by Deep Impact), the 2019 Japan Cup third-place finisher, has raced twice this year, first in the Osaka Hai (G1, 2,000m) in April and then in the Takarazuka Kinen (G1, 2,200m) in June, finishing fifth and 13th, respectively. The son of Deep Impact, winless since claiming the Tokyo Yushun (Japanese Derby, G1, 2,400m) and the Kobe Shimbun Hai (G2, 2,400m) in 2018, was heavily defeated in this year's Takarazuka Kinen when a sudden downpour right before the race softened the going, sapping his stamina and energy by the last corner. It is hoped he will bounce back to kick off his autumn campaign in the Tenno Sho (Autumn) (G1, 2,000m) on November 1.



Wagnerian in the 2018 Tokyo Yushun

Makahiki (JPN, H7, by Deep Impact), who was fourth in the 2019 Japan Cup and 11th in his seasonal debut, the Osaka Hai, was suddenly withdrawn from the Sapporo Kinen (G2, 2,000m) on August 23 with no further plans. **You Can Smile (JPN, H5, by King Kamehameha)**, fifth in the 2019 Japan Cup, captured his third grade-race win in March's Hanshin Daishoten (G2, 3,000m) and then was fourth in the Tenno Sho (Spring) (G1, 3,200m) in May. He is bound to challenge the Japan Cup again this year after a bid in the Copa Republica Argentina (G2, 2,500m) on November 8. The 2019 Japan Cup pacesetter and sixth-place finisher, **Daiwa Cagney (JPN, H6, by King Kamehameha)**, notched his first grade-race win in the Epsom Cup (G3, 1,800m) in June, which was his fourth start of the season. With eight wins on the Tokyo course, the six-year-old will most likely run in Tokyo after commencing his autumn campaign in the Mainichi Okan (G2, 1,800m) on October 11.



Makahiki (right)
in the 2016 Tokyo Yushun



You Can Smile
in the 2020 Hanshin Daishoten



Daiwa Cagney
in the 2020 Epsom Cup



Deirdre in the 2019 Nassau Stakes

G1-winner **Deirdre (JPN, M6, by Harbinger)** will challenge the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe (G1, 2,400m) on October 4 due to her being stationed in Europe since last year. Conversely, the global pandemic is making it difficult for Japanese horses to travel abroad, so national G1 races in Japan this autumn are bound to feature fierce competition by dominant runners who have had to pass on overseas endeavors.

Almond Eye (JPN, M5, by Lord Kanaloa), who returned to Japan as one of the Dubai Turf's unraced runners, will continue to attract interest in her potential landmark eighth G1 title. In May, after returning home, the superstar mare easily claimed the Victoria Mile (G1, 1,600m) by four lengths. Three weeks later, however, her Yasuda Kinen (G1, 1,600m) performance was far from stellar, 2-1/2 lengths behind 2019 Oka Sho (Japanese 1000 Guineas, G1, 1,600m) winner **Gran Alegria (JPN, F4, by Deep Impact)**. Last autumn, following a convincing win in the Tenno Sho (Autumn), she ran a fever and then was sent to the Arima Kinen instead of the Hong Kong Cup, which resulted in her worst setback ever, a disappointing ninth, when she had nothing left in the tank down the stretch. A tight schedule may have been **Almond Eye's** excuse, but the mare is clearly entering a new phase in her career. Nevertheless, she is expected to try for a fifth G1 victory in the Tenno Sho (Autumn) at Tokyo Racecourse, her favorite track, after which her connections will decide whether to run her in the Japan Cup four weeks later or the Arima Kinen another four weeks after that.



Almond Eye in the 2020 Victoria Mile



Chrono Genesis
in the 2020 Takarazuka Kinen

This year, aside from the Tenno Sho (Spring), all G1 turf races open to four-year-olds and up have been claimed by female runners, as was the case with **Gran Alegria** in the Yasuda Kinen. In the Takarazuka Kinen, the last G1 event of the spring campaign, last year's Shuka Sho victor **Chrono Genesis (JPN, F4, by Bago)** romped to a powerful six-length victory against a stellar field of G1 winners. Rain just before the race worked in the filly's favor, allowing her to display a most impressive performance. The filly kicked off her 2020 campaign in



February by claiming the Kyoto Kinen and then came in second in the Osaka Hai. The Bago filly will start the fall season in the Tenno Sho (Autumn), aiming to improve on faster tracks and once again thrash her male opponents.

Back-to-back Tenno Sho (Spring) winner **Fierement (JPN, H5, by Deep Impact)** was unable to recover his form so did not start in the Takarazuka Kinen as initially planned. Due to a fever, plans to run him in the All Comers were switched to the Tenno Sho (Autumn) and then a second challenge in the Arima Kinen in December. An accomplished stayer with three G1 titles in distances of 3,000m or more, the five-year-old is now polishing his skills for races between 2,000 and 2,500m.



Fierement
in the 2020 Tenno Sho (Spring)



Saturnalia in the 2019 Satsuki Sho

Saturnalia (JPN, C4, by Lord Kanaloa), last year's Satsuki Sho (Japanese 2000 Guineas, G1, 2,000m) champion and Arima Kinen runner-up, claimed the Kinko Sho (G2, 2,000m) in March and was sent off favorite in the Takarazuka Kinen but was unable to overcome the soft ground, finishing fourth. The colt's slow recovery may affect plans to run him in the Tenno Sho (Autumn).

Kiseki (JPN, H6, by Rulership), who set a fast and formidable pace in the 2018 Japan Cup to push **Almond Eye** to a race record, was seventh in his Arc challenge last autumn and had not shown much since due to temperament issues. However, the six-year-old was strong in the Takarazuka Kinen, hitting the wire in second with his nearest pursuer five lengths back. He is scheduled to run in the Kyoto Daishoten (G2, 2,400m) on October 11 with hopes of claiming his second grade-race win.



Kiseki in the 2017 Kikuka Sho



Contrail in the 2020 Tokyo Yushun

Two unbeaten three-year-old stars, a colt and a filly, are grabbing attention this year after claiming the first two legs of the Triple Crown and Triple Crown for fillies, respectively. **Contrail (JPN, C3, by Deep Impact)**, after capping off his two-year-old campaign with a G1 Hopeful Stakes (2,000m) victory, outdueled the Asahi Hai Futurity Stakes (G1, 1,600m) winner **Salios (JPN, C3, by Heart's Cry)** in the Satsuki Sho this spring. He then went on to an even stronger finish in the Tokyo Yushun, where he crushed the same rival by a good three lengths. With three consecutive G1 titles in his pocket, he prepped in the G2 Kobe Shimbun Hai on September 27 and gave another solid performance, easily bursting out in the early stretch from mid-field for a

two-length victory. The colt's flawless record now stands at six consecutive victories. He will now aim at the last leg of the Triple Crown, the Kikuka Sho (Japanese St. Leger, G1, 3,000m) on October 25, prior to a possible run in the Japan Cup.

The celebrated filly is **Daring Tact (JPN, F3, by Epiphaneia)**, who was not highly targeted as a two-year-old. Nevertheless, after dominating the Elfin Stakes (Listed, 1,600m) in February, she outclassed the field in the Oka Sho by closing strongly from way off the pace on yielding ground to grab the first jewel of the Triple Crown for fillies by 1-1/2 lengths. Her second classics victory was on a firm track in the Yushun Himba (Japanese Oaks, G1, 2,400m), where she displayed incredible speed in the last furlong after overcoming traffic in the upper stretch. The double-crowned princess will head straight for the Shuka Sho on October 18 and then may challenge the Japan Cup, where three-year-old fillies have the advantage of a lighter impost. If both **Contrail** and **Daring Tact** enter the Japan Cup after sweeping their respective classics, and if **Almond Eye** also makes an appearance, the dream match between three Triple Crown winners would be the season's highlight.



Daring Tact
in the 2020 Yushun Himba

(contributed by Kenichi Nomoto, Nikkei)



World Premiere in the 2019 Kikuka Sho

World Premiere (JPN, C4, by Deep Impact), last year's Kikuka Sho champion, finished third in the year-end Arima Kinen but was unable to recover as planned and withdrew from his scheduled start, the Tenno Sho (Spring). The colt, after being sent to pasture, is likely to make his belated 2020 season debut in the Japan Cup. **Glory Vase (JPN, H5, by Deep Impact)**, who had capped off his four-year-old season with a powerful victory in the 2019 Hong

Kong Vase (G1, 2,400m) but returned to Japan after the Dubai Sheema Classic was cancelled in spring, was a disappointing 17th, his first double-digit finish, in the Takarazuka Kinen in June. Hopes are high he will bounce back in the Kyoto Daishoten and go on to claim his much-awaited first G1 title in Japan. Candidates intending to start their autumn campaigns in the Tenno Sho (Autumn) will include 2017 Best Two-Year-Old Colt **Danon Premium (JPN, H5, by Deep Impact)** and **Blast Onepiece (JPN, H5, by Harbinger)**.



Glory Vase
in the 2019 Hong Kong Vase



Danon Premium
in the 2017 Asahi Hai Futurity Stakes



Blast Onepiece
in the 2018 Arima Kinen



This year's Queen Elizabeth II Cup for fillies/mares three years old and up will include **Lucky Lilac (JPN, M5, by Orfevre)**, who is seeking back-to-back titles. After claiming her title last year, she reconfirmed her ability against male opponents by coming in second in the Hong Kong Vase and capturing her third G1 title in this year's Osaka Hai. She followed up by finishing sixth in the Takarazuka Kinen, where she weakened after making an early bid, and then was third in the Sapporo Kinen despite being posted race favorite. Nevertheless, she will aim to defend her title and reign over her female contestants.



Lucky Lilac in the 2020 Osaka Hai



Loves Only You
in the 2019 Yushun Himba

Last year's Yushun Himba winner, **Loves Only You (JPN, F4, by Deep Impact)**, after returning from Dubai where her intended race was called off due to COVID-19, finished seventh in the Victoria Mile after being boxed in at the top of the stretch despite having saved ground from the innermost draw. She followed up nicely, however, with a nose second in the Naruo Kinen (G3, 2,000m).

The Deep Impact filly will launch her fall campaign in the Fuchu Himba Stakes (G2, 1,800m) on October 17 and then head for the Queen Elizabeth II Cup, aiming to revenge her third-place finish last year.

The Fuchu Himba Stakes will also include three more notables: **Trois Etoiles (JPN, M5, by Lord Kanaloa)**, who claimed the 2020 Summer Mile Series champion title by winning the Keisei Hai Autumn Handicap (G3, 1,600m) in September, **Fairy Polka (JPN, F4, by Rulership)**, winner of this year's Nakayama Himba Stakes and Fukushima Himba Stakes (both G3, 1,800m), and **Danon Fantasy (JPN, F4, by Deep Impact)**, the 2018 Best Two-Year-Old Filly.



Trois Etoiles (second from front) in
the 2020 Keisei Hai Autumn Handicap



Fairy Polka
in the 2020 Fukushima Himba Stakes



Danon Fantasy
in the 2018 Hanshin Juvenile Fillies

Last year's Mile Championship victor **Indy Champ (JPN, H5, by Stay Gold)** scored his first win this year in the Milers Cup (G2, 1,600m) in April. Although hoping for back-to-back titles in the Yasuda Kinen (G1, 1,600m) in June, he finished third. He will pass up his first 1,200-meter attempt in the Sprinters Stakes (G1) due to an inflammation on his right hind leg, but will aim to defend his Mile Championship title if he can recover in time. **Gran Alegria (JPN, F4, by Deep Impact)**, who captured her second G1 title in this year's Yasuda Kinen following a G1 win in last year's Oka Sho



(Japanese 1000 Guineas, 1,600m), will start her fall season in the Sprinters Stakes on October 4, having validated her speed at such distances with a runner-up effort in the G1 Takamatsunomiya Kinen in March.



Indy Champ
in the 2019 Yasuda Kinen



Gran Alegria
in the 2020 Yasuda Kinen



Lauda Sion
in the 2020 NHK Mile Cup

Lauda Sion (JPN, C3, by Real Impact), this year's NHK Mile Cup (G1, 1,600m) winner, is scheduled to kick off his fall campaign in the Fuji Stakes (G2, 1,600m) on October 24. **Admire Mars (JPN, C4, by Daiwa Major)**, a G1 winner three times in Japan and once in Hong Kong, will race in the following week's Swan Stakes (G2, f1,400m), which may also include Victoria Mile runner-up **Sound Chiara (JPN, M5, by Deep Impact)**. **Salios**, runner-up to **Contrail** in the first two classics, will begin his fall campaign in the Mainichi Okan and then head to the Mile Championship instead of racing in the final leg of the Three-Year-Old Classic, the Kikuka Sho, or the Tenno Sho (Autumn).



Admire Mars
in the 2019 Hong Kong Mile



Sound Chiara
in the 2020 Hanshin Himba Stakes



Salios
in the 2019 Asahi Hai Futurity Stakes

Chrysoberyl (JPN, C4, by Gold Allure), winner of last year's Champions Cup and 2019 Best Dirt Horse, finished a disappointing seventh in his first overseas challenge, the Saudi Cup (dirt, 1,800m), but remained unbeaten in Japan by winning the Teio Sho (dirt, 2,000m) in June. His fall campaign will begin with the JBC Classic (dirt, 2,000m) on November 3, which is expected to include **Omega Perfume (JPN, H5, by Swept Overboard)** and **Chuwa Wizard (JPN, H5, by King Kamehameha)**, the Teio Sho's runner-up and third-place finisher, respectively.



Omega Perfume
in the 2019 Tokyo Daishoten



Chuwa Wizard (right)
in the 2019 JBC Classic



Mozu Ascot
in the 2020 February Stakes



Meanwhile, February Stakes (G1, dirt, 1,600m) champion **Mozu Ascot (USA, H6, by Frankel)** will head for the Mile Championship Nambu Hai (dirt, 1,600m) in October. He likely will be joined by 2017 Best Dirt Horse **Gold Dream (JPN, H7, by Gold Allure)**, this year's Kashiwa Kinen (dirt, 1,600m) winner **Wide Pharaoh (JPN, C4, by Henny Hughes)**, last year's February Stakes winner **Inti (JPN, H6, by Came Home)** and 2019 Mile Championship Nambu Hai victor **Sunrise Nova (JPN, H6, by Gold Allure)**.



Gold Dream
in the 2017 Champions Cup



Wide Pharaoh (right)
in the 2019 Unicorn Stakes



Inti
in the 2019 February Stakes



Sunrise Nova in the 2019
Mile Championship Nambu Hai



Oju Chosan
in the 2020 Nakayama Grand Jump

Legendary jumper **Oju Chosan (JPN, H9, by Stay Gold)** will attempt to capture his eighth J-G1 title in the Nakayama Daishogai (J-G1, 4,100m) on December 26. After his fifth consecutive Nakayama Grand Jump (J-G1, 4,250m) victory in April, he was initially scheduled to start in the Tokyo High-Jump (J-G2, 3,110m) on October 18 but his connections decided to wait for the recovery of his regular rider, Shinichi Ishigami, who was injured falling off a horse. The pair will make their fall comeback in the Kyoto Jump Stakes (J-G3, 3,140m) on November 14 before heading to the Nakayama Daishogai.

Last year's Best Two-Year-Old Filly and Oka Sho runner-up **Resistencia (JPN, F3, by Daiwa Major)** was found to have a minor fracture after finishing second in the NHK Mile Cup. She is expected to pass the Shuka Sho and aim for a comeback in November. **Daring Tact**, who is aiming for her third Triple Crown title for fillies, and Yushun Himba runner-up **Win Marilyn (JPN, F3, by Screen Hero)** will both head straight to the Shuka Sho.



Resistencia
in the 2019 Hanshin Juvenile Fillies



Daring Tact
in the 2020 Oka Sho



Win Marilyn
in the 2020 Flora Stakes



Maltese Diosa in the 2020 Shion Stakes

Meanwhile, trial races were held toward the last leg of the three-year-old fillies' Triple Crown. The Shion Stakes (G3, 2,000m) on September 12 was claimed by **Maltese Diosa (JPN, F3, by Kizuna)**, who captured her second graded title following the Tulip Sho (G2, 1,600m). **Pallas Athena (JPN, F3, by Rulership)** and **Season's Gift (JPN, F3, by Epiphaneia)** came in second and third, respectively, to earn berths in the Shuka Sho. Third-place finisher of the Yushun Himba, **Win Mighty (JPN, F3, by Gold Ship)**, finished sixth.



Pallas Athena
in the 2020 Carnation Cup



Season's Gift
in the 2020 Wakatake Sho



Win Mighty
in the 2020 Wasurenagusa Sho

The Rose Stakes (G2, 2,000m) on September 20 was won by **Ria Amelia (JPN, F3, by Deep Impact)**, fourth-place finisher in the Yushun Himba, who landed her second graded victory following last year's Artemis Stakes (G3, 1,600m). Fourteenth pick **Musica (JPN, F3, by Epiphaneia)** and 11th choice **Oh My Darling (JPN, F3, by Deep Impact)** came in second and third, respectively, to earn Shuka Sho berths.



Ria Amelia in the 2020 Rose Stakes



Contrail in the 2020 Kobe Shimbun Hai

Contrail, who is aiming to become an undefeated Triple Crown winner like his female counterpart **Daring Tact**, is coming off a comfortable win in the Kobe Shimbun Hai, a Kikuka Sho trial. Tokyo Yushun third-place finisher **Weltreisende (JPN, C3, by Dream Journey)** followed two lengths behind in second and 14th pick **Robertson Quay (JPN, C3, by Rulership)** came in another neck behind in third, earning both runners berths in the Shuka Sho.

Deep Bond (JPN, C3, by Kizuna), who won the Kyoto Shinbun Hai (G2, 2,200m) in May and then finished fifth in the Tokyo Yushun, finished a length behind **Robertson Quay** in fourth. **My Rhapsody (JPN, C3, by Heart's Cry)**, the 2019 Kyoto Nisai Stakes (G3, 2,000m) victor, finished a disappointing 18th and was diagnosed with a nose bleed after the race.



Weltreisende
in the 2019 Hagi Stakes



Deep Bond (left)
in the 2020 Kyoto Shimbun Hai



My Rhapsody
in the 2019 Kyoto Nisai Stakes

Babbitt (JPN, C3, by Nakayama Festa) won the St. Lite Kinen (G2, 2,200m) on September 21 to extend his winning streak to four while also registering his second graded title following the Radio Nikkei Sho (G3, 1,800m). Yayoi Sho (G2, 2,000m) winner **Satono Flag (JPN, C3, by Deep Impact)** finished second ahead of **Galore Creek (JPN, C3, by Kinshasa no Kiseki)**, who also was third in the Satsuki Sho.



Babbitt
in the 2020 St. Lite Kinen



Satono Flag
in the 2020 Yayoi Sho



Galore Creek
in the 2020 Spring Stakes