

Japan Cup (G1) - Comment from Japanese runner's connection

Almond Eye (Mare, 5)

Christophe Lemaire, Jockey

"I was very happy with the horse's condition. Riding Almond Eye is always very special for me. Today was the last fast work of her career and she was very focused and she was enjoying herself the whole time."

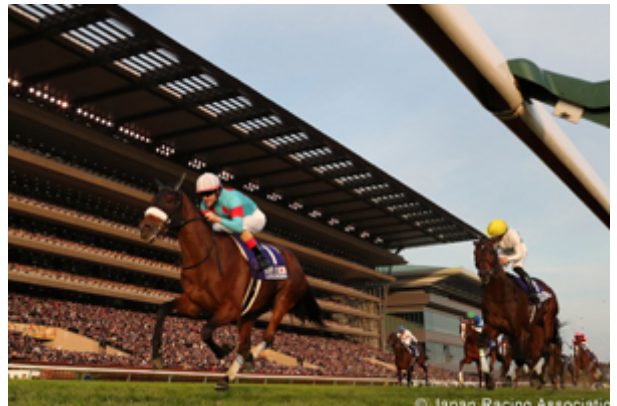
"The only difference between her fast work today and her work before the Tenno Sho (Autumn) was the pace. Today, I didn't want her to overdo it, but wanted her to keep some power in reserve. She has gotten stronger and looks to be in good condition."

"Two years ago she was 3 years old and she only carried 53 kg in the Japan Cup. This time she's 5 and it's quite a different race. The 3-year-olds this year are incredibly strong and I think it's going to be a good race."

"Both Contrail and Daring Tact are amazing horses and they've given us some very good races. They showed us both speed and stamina. The two of them are very talented. So, I think this year's Japan Cup is going to be quite difficult. It's very hard to tell who will win. I'll think about my strategy two days before the race."

"For three years, Almond Eye and I have worked together in the top races. It's been quite an adventure. She is an incredibly strong horse. The pressure has been on for every race but I've always felt very good working with her. Her speed and the way she moves are fantastic and for me, it felt amazing. It was like a dream."

"I never feel worried before the Japan Cup but I do get tense. It's one of the world's biggest races and I want to do well. Almond Eye is a very popular horse so there is some pressure. But, she set a new record last time in the Tenno Sho (Autumn) with her eight Grade 1 wins, so this time I want to be able to enjoy her final race. The most important thing is that she has a safe trip and comes out of the race well. Of course, I'll be very happy if she wins. After the Japan Cup, I think she's going to give us some wonderful foals. She'll be able to relax at the farm and I think that's very good."



Almond Eye