FROM: Media & Publicity Department, THE JAPAN RACING ASSOCIATION (JRA)

DATE: February 18, 2024

SUBJECT: RESULT OF THE 41ST FEBRUARY STAKES (G1)



Japanese horse racing, which is influenced by British racing, is held mainly on turf. However, dirt tracks that were popular in the U.S., quickly became widely used around the country since the Tokyo Racecourse implemented a new dirt track in 1960. While the mainstream of major JRA races remained over turf, the February Stakes (then called February Handicap), which was established in 1984 in conjunction with the new grading system, was one of just three graded dirt races at the time—the current number of graded dirt events is 15. The race was upgraded to G2 in 1994 and then to G1 in 1997, and stood as the highest-prized event until the Japan Cup Dirt (called the Champions Cup from 2014) took over in 2000. The race also joined the Breeders' Cup Challenge Series in 2016, enabling its winners to earn automatic starting position in the Breeders' Cup Classic (G1, dirt, 2,000m).

Past winners include Wing Arrow (JPN, by Assatis; '00), Agnes Digital (USA, by Crafty Prospector; '02), Gold Allure (JPN, by Sunday Silence; '03), Admire Don (JPN, by Timber Country; '04), Kane Hekili (JPN, by Fuji Kiseki; '06), Vermilion (JPN, by El Condor Pasa; '08), Espoir City (JPN, by Gold Allure; '10), Transcend (JPN, by Wild Rush; '11), Copano Rickey (JPN, by Gold Allure; '14&'15), Gold Dream (JPN, by Gold Allure; '17), Cafe Pharoah (USA, by American Pharoah; '21&'22) and Lemon Pop (USA, by Lemon Drop Kid; '23)—all twelve are winners of multiple-G1 races as well as JRA Award winners.

Last year's edition welcomed the first foreign participant in the race's history, Shirl's Speight (USA, by Speightstown) from North America, who finished ninth.

Although defending champion Lemon Pop was pointed towards the Saudi Cup (G1, dirt, 1,800m) to be held a week later instead, this year's lineup included proven dirt specialists such as **Omega Guiness** who came off a second in the trial Tokai Stakes (G2, dirt, 1,800m), marking 3-2-0 out of all his five career starts, as well as last year's Champions Cup (G1, dirt, 1,800m) runner-up **Wilson Tesoro**, 2022 Hopeful Stakes (G1, 2,000m) winner **Dura Erede** and 2023 JBC Classic (dirt, 2,000m) champion **King's Sword** who finished second, third and fifth, respectively, in the year-end Tokyo Daishoten (G1, dirt, 2,000m, Dec.29). The field also included two-time graded victor **Don Frankie**; last year's runner-up **Red le Zel**; 2022 St. Lite Kinen (G2, 2,200m) victor **Gaia Force** who ran over dirt for the first time in this race; 2023 Kashiwa Kinen (dirt, 1,600m) runner-up **Tagano Beauty**; and three contenders from the NAR—**Igniter**, **Mick Fire** and **Speedy Kick**.

Post time: 15:40

THE 41ST FEBRUARY STAKES (G1)

4-year-olds & up, 1,600 meters (about 8 furlongs), dirt, left-handed

Sunday, February 18, 2024 Tokyo Racecourse 11th Race

Total prize money: ¥ 259,200,000 (about US\$ 1,839,000 <US\$1=¥141>)

4-y-o & up: 58kg (about 128 lbs), 2kg allowance for Fillies & Mares,

1 kg allowance for Southern Hemisphere-bred born in 2020

Course Record: 1:33.5 Race Record: 1:33.8 [Cafe Pharoah (USA, by American Pharoah), 2022]

Safety factor: 16 runners Going: Standard Weather: Fine

FP	вк	PP	Horse Jockey	S&A Color Wgt	Odds (Fav)	Margin (L3F)	Sire Dam (Dam's Sire)	Owner Breeder Trainer
1	5	9 B	Peptide Nile (JPN) Yusuke Fujioka	H6 b. 58.0	38.0 (11)	1:35.7 (37.5)	King Kamehameha Queen Olive (Manhattan Cafe)	Kazuhiko Numakawa Kineusu Bokujo Hidenori Take
2	4	7	Gaia Force (JPN) Yoshihito Nagaoka	H5 g. 58.0	13.0 (5)	1-1/4 (37.2)	Kitasan Black Natale (Kurofune)	KR Japan Oiwake Farm Haruki Sugiyama
3	4	8	Sekifu (JPN) Yutaka Take	H5 ch. 58.0	48.2 (13)	Neck (36.4)	Henny Hughes Siyabona (Kingmambo)	Akira Nakatsuji Bamboo Stud Koshiro Take
4	5	10 B	Tagano Beauty (JPN) Shu Ishibashi	H7 b.	17.1 (7)	Nose (37.0)	Henny Hughes Special Dinner	Ryoji Yagi Ryoji Yagi

				58.0			(Special Week)	Masato Nishizono		
5	6	11	King's Sword (JPN) Mirai Iwata	H5 b. 58.0	9.4 (4)	1/2 (37.0)	Sinister Minister Kings Berry (King Halo)	Hidaka Breeders Union Co., Ltd. Nisshin Farm Ryo Terashima		
6	7	13	Red le Zele (JPN) Yuichi Kitamura	H8 b. 58.0	13.5 (6)	3 (36.9)	Lord Kanaloa French Noir (French Deputy)	Tokyo Horse Racing Co., Ltd. Shadai Farm Takayuki Yasuda		
7	2	3	Mick Fire (JPN) Takayuki Yano	C4 b. 58.0	34.4 (9)	Nose (37.6)	Sinister Minister Mariage (Brian's Time)	Koichi Hoshika Kazuyoshi Yamagami Kazuo Watanabe		
8	7	14	Wilson Tesoro (JPN) Kohei Matsuyama	H5 b. 58.0	3.9 (2)	Head (38.5)	Kitasan Black Chesutoke Rose (Uncle Mo)	Ryotokuji Kenji Holdings Co., Ltd. Ryoken Farm Hitoshi Kotegawa		
9	8	15	Don Frankie (JPN) Kenichi Ikezoe	H5 ch. 58.0	36.0 (10)	Head (38.7)	Daiwa Major Weemissfrankie (Sunriver)	Makoto Hayano Northern Racing Takashi Saito		
10	8	16	Alpha Mom (JPN) Rachel King	M5 b. 56.0	41.7 (12)	3/4 (37.0)	Majestic Warrior Diopside (Fuji Kiseki)	Yu Hirai Kanaishi Stud Shozo Sasaki		
11	1	1	Igniter (JPN) Atsuya Nishimura	H6 b. 58.0	34.1 (8)	Neck (38.6)	Espoir City Bianco (Warning)	Yoshiki Noda Haruki Farm Masashi Atarashi		
12	2	4	Dura Erede (JPN) Bauyrzhan Murzabayev	C4 d.b. 58.0	5.5 (3)	Neck (38.5)	Duramente Marchesa (Orfevre)	Three H Racing Co., Ltd. Northern Racing Manabu Ikezoe		
13	6	12	Speedy Kick (JPN) Norifumi Mikamoto	M5 ch. 56.0	107.0 (15)	5 (38.9)	Taisei Legend Desert Flower (Silent Deal)	Suzuyuki Kato Suzuyuki Kato Tomoyuki Fujihara		
14	3	5	Omega Guiness (JPN) Christophe Lemaire	C4 ch. 58.0	3.2 (1)	1-3/4 (39.5)	Logotype Start Up (Harbinger)	Reiko Hara Shadai Farm Naru Owada		
15	3	6	Karate (JPN) Akira Sugawara	H8 d.b. 58.0	122.1 (16)	2 (39.2)	To the Glory Lady no Punch (French Deputy)	Hikaru Odagiri Yuichi Odagiri Yasuyuki Tsujino		
16	1	2	Champagne Color (JPN) Hiroyuki Uchida	C4 ch. 58.0	61.3 (14)	1/2 (40.0)	Duramente Memorial Life (Reckless Abandon)	Yoichi Aoyama Yoichi Aoyama Tsuyoshi Tanaka		

FP: Final Position / BK: Bracket Number / PP: Post Position / B: Blinker / S&A: Sex & Age / Wgt: Weight (kg) / L3F: Time of Last 3 Furlongs (600m)

Color: b.=bay / bl.=black / br.=brown / ch.=chestnut / d.b.=dark bay / d.ch.=dark chestnut / g.=gray / w.=white

NOTE 1: No Foreign Contenders.

NOTE 2: Figures quoted under Odds are shown in form of decimal odds (single unit is ¥100), and Fav indicates the order of favorites.

Turnover for the Race alone: ¥ 16,594,747,000 Turnover for the Day: ¥ 27,588,163,900 Attendance: 48,432

Pay-off (for ¥100)

Win	No.9	¥ 3,800	Bracket Quinella	4-5	¥ 6,140	Quinella	7-9	¥ 27,850
	No.9	¥ 850		7-9	¥ 5,500	Exacta	9-7	¥ 62,030
Place	No.7	¥ 510	Quinella Place	8-9	¥ 11,050	Trio	7-8-9	¥ 197,060
	No.8	¥ 1,030		7-8	¥ 4,820	Trifecta	9-7-8	¥ 1,530,500

Winner= 20 starts: 8 wins, 1 second & 1 third / Added & stakes money: ¥ 123,612,000 / Career earnings: ¥ 262,596,000

Eleventh Pick Peptide Nile Upsets in Dirt G1 February Stakes

Lightly regarded **Peptide Nile** turned in an astonishing performance in claiming his first G1 title in this year's February Stakes. After debuting in January as a three-year-old, the son of King Kamehameha was transferred to dirt racing from his third start and immediately showed potential with a three-race winning streak, but was only able to claim a win in his four-year-old campaign. Last season, including the Onuma Stakes (Listed, dirt, 1,700m) and the Betelgeuse Stakes (Listed, dirt, 1,800m), the bay landed three wins and had just come off a sixth in his latest outing, this year's Tokai Stakes (G2, dirt, 1,800m) on January

21. The six-year-old has given his trainer Hidenori Take, who opened his yard in 2018, his seventh flat-race graded title and first G1 victory while jockey Yusuke Fujioka celebrates his second JRA-G1 win since his NHK Mile Cup triumph with Keiai Nautique in 2018.

First to enter the dirt track was **Don Frankie** who led the 16-horse field with a fast pace all the way into the stretch while **Wilson Tesoro**, **Igniter**, **Dura Erede** and **Peptide Nile** sat in close pursuit. Shifting slightly outside for room turning the final corners, **Peptide Nile** slipped into the lane in fourth in good striking position, accelerated with a good turn of foot to seize command before the furlong marker and held on well to win by a 1-1/4-length margin.

"The pace was tough but he ran a great race. We were able to sit in a better position than expected but I didn't imagine he would take over the lead that early and that easily, the wire seemed very far today. His last start didn't turn out as hoped, but as long as he's able to run in good rhythm as he did today, I'm sure we can look forward to solid performances in the future," commented Yusuke Fujioka after the race.

Fifth choice **Gaia Force**, who ran over dirt for the first time in this G1 event, settled three-wide and in eighth before switching paths to the outside entering the straight. The five-year-old gray gradually closed in on the leaders and although failing to threaten the eventual winner, showed good speed in the last 200 meters to rally with **Sekifu** and **Tagano Beauty** to secure the runner-up seat by a neck.

13th pick **Sekifu** saved ground third from the rear and angled out while still having much ground to make up but launched the fastest late kick and dug in well to the wire in a fierce rally for a photo-finish third.

Race favorite **Omega Guiness** dropped away disappointingly to finish 14th after racing prominently in seventh and two-wide up to early stretch.

Other Horses:

4th: (10) **Tagano Beauty**—raced around 11th, launched late kick in center of lane, weakened in final strides

5th: (11) **King's Sword**—settled 3-wide around 11th, met traffic 300m out, accelerated thereafter

6th: (13) **Red le Zele**—trailed in rear, circled wide, launched 2nd fastest late drive but belatedly

7th: (3) Mick Fire—hugged rails around 10th, lacked needed kick

8th: (14) Wilson Tesoro—stalked leader in 2nd, rallied for lead, outrun in last 200m

9th: (15) **Don Frankie**—set fast pace, showed tenacity until 100m out

10th: (16) Alpha Mom—positioned 2nd from rear, passed tired rivals at stretch

11th: (1) **Igniter**—chased leader in 2nd, rallied for lead up to 200m pole, weakened

12th: (4) **Dura Erede**—tracked leaders around 4th, outrun in last 200m

13th: (12) **Speedy Kick**—raced 3-wide in 9th, showed brief effort until 300m out

15th: (6) **Karate**—traveled around 11th, unable to reach contention

16th: (2) Champagne Color—broke poorly, advanced to 6th, faded after 400m pole

Fractional time (sec./furlong): 12.0 - 10.8 - 11.1 - 11.7 - 12.3 - 12.5 - 12.4 - 12.9

Last 4 furlongs: 50.1 Last 3 furlongs: 37.8

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

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

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.