

SUBJECT: RESULTS OF THE 41ST HOPEFUL STAKES (G1)

Established in 1984 under the name of Radio Tampa Hai Sansai Himba Stakes as a G3 race for two-year-old fillies run over 1,600 meters at Hanshin Racecourse, the race held in December has undergone various changes in its status over the years. The distance was extended to 2,000 meters while the runners were limited to colts and geldings in 1991, opened its doors once again to fillies and mares in 2000 and acquired international status in 2010. In 2014, the race was given the Hopeful Stakes name, upgraded to G2, excluded geldings and shifted to a new venue, the Nakayama Racecourse where the first leg of the three-year-old Triple Crown, the Satsuki Sho (Japanese 2000 Guineas, G1), is held over the same distance. In 2017, the race made its final elevation in grade and has become JRA's 24th G1 flat race.

Even before becoming a G1 race, the Hopeful Stakes was highly regarded as the championship event for two-year-old middle-distance prospects aiming for the three-year-old classics and chosen as the main target in place of the traditional two-year-old G1 championships, the Asahi Hai Futurity Stakes and the Hanshin Juvenile Fillies run over 1,600 meters. As a result, the 2,000-meter race attracted many talented runners and subsequent G1 title holders such as 2010 Satsuki Sho and 2011 Dubai World Cup (AW, 2,000m) winner Victoire Pisa (JPN, by Neo Universe), 2013 Kikuka Sho (Japanese St. Leger, 3,000m) and 2014 Japan Cup (2,400m) victor Epiphaneia (JPN, by Symboli Kris S), 2017 Tokyo Yushun (Japanese Derby, 2,400m) champion Rey de Oro (JPN, by King Kamehameha), 2019 Satsuki Sho winner Saturnalia (JPN, by Lord Kanaloa) and 2020 Triple Crown victor Contrail (JPN, by Deep Impact).

Coming off their second wins into this year's edition were **Magic Sands** (Sapporo Nisai Stakes [G3, 1,800m, Aug.31]), **Jet Magnum** (Fuyo Stakes [Open Class, 2,000m, Sep.28]), **Masquerade Ball** (Ivy Stakes [Listed, 1,800m, Oct.19]), **Shonan Macbeth** (Hyakunichiso Tokubetsu [1 Win Class, 2,000m, Nov.3]) and **Croix du Nord** (Tokyo Sports Hai Nisai Stakes [G2, 1,800m, Nov.16]). The field also included **Ask Stein**, winner of the Cosmos Sho (Open Class, 1,800m) in August as well as **Giovanni** and **Claudia**, respective runner-up and third-place finisher in the Kyoto Nisai Stakes (G3, 2,000m) in November.

THE 41ST HOPEFUL STAKES (G1)

2-year-olds, Colts & Fillies, 2,000 meters (about 10 furlongs), turf, right-handed

Saturday, December 28, 2024 Nakayama Racecourse 11th Race Post time: 15:40

Total prize money: ¥ 152,200,000 (about US\$ 1,080,000 <US\$1=¥141>)

2-y-o: 56kg (about 123-124 lbs), 1 kg allowance for Fillies, 3 kg allowance for Southern Hemisphere-bred born in 2022

Course Record: 1:58.9

Race Record: 2:00.2 [Regaleira (JPN, by Suave Richard), 2023]

Safety factor: 18 runners

Going: Good to Firm

Weather: Fine



FP	BK	PP	Horse Jockey	S&A Color Wgt	Odds (Fav)	Margin (L3F)	Sire Dam (Dam's Sire)	Owner Breeder Trainer
1	3	6	Croix du Nord (JPN) Yuichi Kitamura	C2 br. 56.0	1.8 (1)	2:00.5 (34.9)	Kitasan Black Rising Cross (Cape Cross)	Sunday Racing Co., Ltd. Northern Racing Takashi Saito
2	1	1	Giovanni (JPN) Kohei Matsuyama	C2 b. 56.0	19.1 (6)	2 (34.8)	Epiphaneia Barefoot Lady (Footstepsinthesand)	KR Japan Taihei Stud Farm Co. Ltd Haruki Sugiyama
3	6	11 B	Faust Rasen (JPN) Makoto Sugihara	C2 b. 56.0	303.3 (17)	1-1/4 (36.0)	Mozu Ascot Peisha Felice (Special Week)	Toshiya Miyazaki Tomoda Bokujo Masayuki Nishimura
4	8	16	Tjuta (JPN) Ryusei Sakai	C2 b. 56.0	26.5 (8)	1 (35.3)	Duramente Champagne Anyone (Street Sense)	La Mere Co., Ltd. Shunsuke Yoshida Yoshito Yahagi
5	2	4	Claudia (JPN) Atsuya Nishimura	C2 br. 56.0	67.2 (13)	1-1/2 (35.5)	Saturnalia Mon Coeur (Deep Impact)	K's Japan Kasamatsu Bokujo Shinsuke Hashiguchi
6	5	10	Ask Stein (JPN) Takeshi Yokoyama	C2 ch. 56.0	65.7 (12)	1/2 (35.3)	Duramente Victoria's Wildcat (Bellamy Road)	Hirosaki Toshihiro HD Co., Ltd. Kosho Bokujo Hideaki Fujiwara
7	2	3	Jet Magnum (JPN) Yuji Tannai	C2 d.b. 56.0	46.2 (10)	Nose (36.0)	Henry Barows Vivid Orange (Rulership)	Him Rock Racing Holdings Co., Ltd. Him Rock Racing Holdings Ltd Akio Adachi

8	3	5	Reve de l'Opera (JPN) Takuya Ono	F2 b. 55.0	209.4 (16)	1 (35.2)	Maurice Reve Lucide (Deep Impact)	Lion Race Horse Co., Ltd. Hashimoto Farm Shizuya Kato
9	4	8	Del Avar (USA) Kosei Miura	C2 b. 56.0	35.1 (9)	Neck (35.3)	Frankel Amour Briller (Smart Strike)	Koji Maeda North Hills Co. Mikio Matsunaga
10	1	2	Shonan Macbeth (JPN) Kenichi Ikezoe	C2 br. 56.0	122.4 (14)	Nose (36.0)	Leontes Win Floraison (Fuji Kiseki)	Tetsuhide Kunimoto Nibutani Farm Yasuo Takeichi
11	8	18	Masquerade Ball (JPN) Keita Tosaki	C2 d.b. 56.0	9.9 (4)	Nose (35.5)	Duramente Mask Off (Deep Impact)	Shadai Race Horse Co., Ltd. Shadai Farm Takahisa Tezuka
12	7	13	Jun Asahi Sora (JPN) Kazuo Yokoyama	C2 d.b. 56.0	54.2 (11)	3/4 (36.8)	Isla Bonita Bella Rheia (Narita Top Road)	Junji Kawai Northern Racing Mizuki Takayanagi
13	7	15	Piko Chan Black (JPN) Yuga Kawada	C2 d.b. 56.0	7.6 (3)	1/2 (36.2)	Kitasan Black Trump Queen (Neo Universe)	Mieko Ishibe Champions Farm Yuki Uehara
14	4	7	Yamanin Bouclier (JPN) Yutaka Take	C2 g. 56.0	18.2 (5)	Neck (35.9)	Kitasan Black Yamanin Poudrer (Chichicastenango)	Hajime Doi Hajime Doi Mikio Matsunaga
15	7	14	Realize Aurum (JPN) Akira Sugawara	C2 b. 56.0	138.0 (15)	1-3/4 (35.7)	Orfevre Orihime (Majestic Warrior)	Yosuke Imafuku Oiwake Farm Naosuke Sugai
16	6	12	Magic Sands (JPN) Daisuke Sasaki	C2 d.b. 56.0	6.4 (2)	1-3/4 (36.6)	Kizuna Kona Brewers (King Kamehameha)	Sunday Racing Co., Ltd. Northern Racing Naosuke Sugai
17	8	17	Amakihi (JPN) Christophe Lemaire	C2 d.b. 56.0	23.5 (7)	1 (36.5)	Black Tide Apapane (King Kamehameha)	Kaneko Makoto Holdings Co., Ltd. Kaneko Makoto Holdings Inc. Sakae Kunieda
18	5	9	Arion Smile (JPN) Takuya Kowata	C2 b. 56.0	368.4 (18)	2 (36.4)	Dee Majesty Arion (Sterling Rose)	Takatoshi Sakai Yasuharu Otaki Minoru Tsuchida

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: 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: ¥ 18,555,547,700

Turnover for the Day: ¥ 33,502,595,600

Attendance: 35,933

Pay-off (for ¥100)

Win	No.6	¥ 180	Bracket Quinella	1-3	¥ 1,160	Quinella	1-6	¥ 1,100
Place	No.6	¥ 120	Quinella Place	1-6	¥ 450	Exacta	6-1	¥ 1,310
	No.1	¥ 280		6-11	¥ 15,600	Trio	1-6-11	¥ 140,500
	No.11	¥ 3,810		1-11	¥ 47,860	Trifecta	6-1-11	¥ 293,380

Winner= 3 starts: 3 wins / Added & stakes money: ¥ 71,274,000 / Career earnings: ¥ 116,789,000

Croix du Nord Wins Third Straight in G1 Hopeful Stakes

Heavy favorite **Croix du Nord** won this year's Hopeful Stakes in his bid to become the leading candidate for JRA's Best Two-Year-Old Colt title. The brown colt has emulated 2020 Triple Crown victor Contrail in capping off his debut campaign undefeated with three consecutive wins—the Kitasan Black colt won his debut start in June over 1,800 meters and scored a graded win in the Tokyo Sports Hai Nisai Stakes (G2, 1,800m) on November 16. Trainer Takashi Saito claimed his eighth JRA-G1 title, the first since the 2022 Queen Elizabeth II Cup with Geraldina, and second Hopeful Stakes victory following with Killer Ability in 2021. Jockey Yuichi Kitamura scored his sixth G1 title, his last being the 2020 Arima Kinen with Chrono Genesis.

Croix du Nord broke sharply from gate 6 but allowed the early leaders to pass and settled off the rails in mid-division behind a brisk pace led by **Jun Asahi Sora**. Gradually making headway soon after seeing

Faust Rasen quickly go by on his outside, the unbeaten colt found another gear soon after entering the stretch in third or fourth and continued to increase his speed as soon as he reached the top of the uphill stretch to win by a comfortable two-lengths margin.

“I can’t say that the race went exactly as planned, but I had complete faith in him and knew that he would make it through whatever situation he would be in during the race. It was his first time going right-handed and against a full gate of 18 runners, but I totally believed he would handle that too. His physical condition since his last start had improved and his movement was sharp. I wanted him to finish the last of his two-year-old start at a good note so that we would be able to focus on his three-year-old campaign which now will carry much expectation. I am so grateful for everyone who had supported me which is why I am standing here today as a G1 winner and I hope to give my best again next season,” commented Yuichi Kitamura.

Sixth pick **Giovanni** was unhurried after the break, sitting in mid-field while saving ground along the rails with the race favorite close on his outside. Keeping to the inside into the straight, the Epiphaneia colt shifted out to join the eventual winner in his stretch run for home and while unable to match the winner, showed great effort to overtake **Faust Rasen** for second.

17th choice **Faust Rasen** allowed most of his rivals go past after the break, content to sit near the rear early, but made an aggressive move along the backstretch to overtake the field reaching the pacemaker with 800 meters to go and grabbing the lead entering the stretch. Finally shaking off **Jun Asahi Sora** who continued to fight to regain the lead but tired after the furlong pole, the Mozu Ascot colt was quickly overtaken by the winner at 100-meter mark and then by **Giovanni** in the final strides to finish third.

Other Horses:

- 4th: (16) **Tjuta**—sat wide around 5th, showed effort but no match for top 3 finishers
5th: (4) **Claudiai**—traveled around 5th, needed more at stretch
6th: (10) **Ask Stein**—settled around 10th, drifted to outside at final corner, never threatened
7th: (3) **Jet Magnum**—tracked leader in 2nd, ran gamely until 100m out
8th: (5) **Reve de l’Opera**—saved ground around 13th, lacked needed kick
9th: (8) **Del Avar**—raced around 16th, checked at final corner, passed tired rivals
10th: (2) **Shonan Macbeth**—hugged rails around 3rd, checked at early stretch, lost momentum
11th: (18) **Masquerade Ball**—ran around 14th, checked at final corner, showed little
12th: (13) **Jun Asahi Sora**—set pace early, faded after 200m pole
13th: (15) **Piko Chan Black**—chased leaders around 3rd, gradually dropped position
14th: (7) **Yamanin Bouclier**—sat wide around 11th, checked at final corner, even paced
15th: (14) **Realize Aurum**—positioned around 14th, unable to reach contention
16th: (12) **Magic Sands**—raced wide around 9th, drifted to outside at final corner, showed little
17th: (17) **Amakihi**—traveled wide around 11th, dropped back after 3rd corner
18th: (9) **Arion Smile**—trailed in rear throughout, no factor

Fractional time (sec./furlong): 12.6 - 11.1 - 12.3 - 12.7 - 12.7 - 12.0 - 11.6 - 11.7 - 11.9 - 11.9
Last 4 furlongs: 47.1 Last 3 furlongs: 35.5

Positions at each corner: 1st corner 13,3(2,15)(4,16)(1,**6**)(12,17)(10,7)14(5,18)(8,11)9
2nd corner 13,3(2,15)(4,16)(1,**6**,12)10(7,17)5(18,14)(8,11)-9
3rd corner (13,*11)-3,**6**(2,15)(4,16)(1,12)7(10,18,17)8(5,14)9
4th corner (13,*11)-(3,**6**)(2,16)(1,15,4)(10,18,12)(5,8,7)(14,17)9

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.