

Exclusive Topics for Horse Racing in Japan

– Summer Edition –

July 2025

The Japan Racing Association

Earlier this season, Japanese-bred contenders turned in some outstanding performances overseas. In February, **Forever Young (JPN, C4, by Real Steel)** outdueled Romantic Warrior to claim the Saudi Cup (G1, dirt, 1,800m) title, the first overseas G1 title for a Japanese horse since Ushba Tesoro won the Dubai World Cup in 2023. Although beaten to third in the following Dubai World Cup (G1, dirt, 2,000m), **Forever Young's** connections plan to race the Real Steel colt for a second time in the Breeders' Cup Classic (G1, dirt, 2,000m) on November 1, following his third-place effort last year. The four-year-old has had plenty of rest since returning to Japan and will kick off his autumn campaign with the Nippon TV Hai (Listed, dirt, 1,800m) on October 1, prior to flying to the USA.



Forever Young, winner of 2025 Saudi Cup



Soul Rush (front), winner of 2025 Dubai Turf

In the Dubai Turf (G1, 1,800m) during the Dubai World Cup day in April, **Soul Rush (JPN, H7, by Rulership)** crossed the wire a nose in front of multiple G1 winner Romantic Warrior for his second G1 victory. Back home in the Yasuda Kinen (G1, 1,600m) on June 8, the 2024 Mile Championship (G1, 1,600m) victor was third by a neck and another 1-1/2 lengths behind the winner.

However, he sustained a fracture in the fourth metacarpal bone of his left foreleg, forcing his connections to cancel his trip to Great Britain for the Sussex Stakes (G1, 1,600m) on July 30. **Soul Rush** may target the Breeders' Cup Mile (G1, 1,600m) on November 1, in which case he would commence his autumn campaign in the Mainichi Okan (G2, 1,800m) on October 5. Or he may stay in Japan and start with the Fuji Stakes (G2, 1,600m) on October 18 before aiming for the Mile Championship on November 23.

Danon Decile (JPN, C4, by Epiphaneia), the 2024 Tokyo Yushun (Japanese Derby, G1, 2,400m) victor, claimed his second G1 title this year in the Dubai Sheema Classic (G1, 2,410m). After returning to Japan, the Epiphaneia colt has been given ample rest. He will fly to Great Britain for the International Stakes (G1, 2,050m) on August 20—the same race in which Japan-bred Durezza finished fifth last year. After that, **Danon Decile** will



Danon Decile,
winner of 2025 Dubai Sheema Classic

likely aim for the Japan Cup (G1, 2,400m).



Tastiera,
winner of 2025 Queen Elizabeth II Cup

Tastiera (JPN, H5, by Satono Crown), the 2023 Tokyo Yushun champion, claimed his second G1 victory in Hong Kong in April in the Queen Elizabeth II Cup (G1, 2,000m). He is the seventh Japanese-trained horse to win this title. The five-year-old will likely start in the Tenno Sho (Autumn) (G1, 2,000m) on November 2 and then the Hong Kong Cup (G1, 2,000m) in December, after finishing second and third respectively in these races last year.

Panja Tower (JPN, C3, by Tower of London), who scored an upset victory as the ninth pick in the NHK Mile Cup (G1, 1,600m) in May, will take on tougher competition in his first overseas challenge, the AUS\$10-million Golden Eagle (1,500m) at Rosehill Gardens on November 1. But prior to that, the son of Tower of London will begin the latter half of his season with the Keeneland Cup (G3, 1,200m) in Sapporo on August 24.



Panja Tower,
winner of 2025 NHK Mile Cup



Ascoli Piceno, winner of 2025 Victoria Mile

Ascoli Piceno (JPN, F4, by Daiwa Major), the 2023 Best Two-Year-Old Filly, won her second G1 title in the Victoria Mile (G1, 1,600m) this past May. Three weeks later, the Daiwa Major filly had to withdraw from the Yasuda Kinen due to health issues, but on August 17 she is expected to run in the Prix Jacques Le Marois (G1, 1,600m), previously won by Japanese-trained Taiki Shuttle in 1998. **Ascoli Piceno** will be joined in the Prix Jacques Le Marois

by **Go to First (JPN, H5, by Rulership)**, who has registered four wins between 1,600 and 2,000 meters and was eighth in his last start, the Lord Derby Challenge Trophy (G3, 1,600m) in April.

Six Japanese-trained horses were nominated in mid-May for the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe (G1, 2,400m) on October 5. **Alohi Alii (JPN, C3, by Duramente)** finished third in the Yayoi Sho Deep Impact Kinen (G2, 2,000m) to earn a berth in the first leg of the three-year-old Triple Crown: the Satsuki Sho (Japanese 2000 Guineas, G1, 2,000m). However, he finished eighth. His connections decided to pass up the Tokyo Yushun title in favor of an overseas endeavor in France. The Duramente colt was scheduled to run in the Grand Prix de Paris (G1, 2,400m) on July 13, but was withdrawn due to poor conditioning. Instead, he will continue training for the Prix Guillaume d'Ornano (G2, 2,000m) on August 16, prior to a possible Arc challenge.

Byzantine Dream (JPN, C4, by Epiphaneia), after winning his only start as a two-year-old, scored his first graded win in his three-year-old debut, the Kisaragi Sho (G3, 1,800m). He became an instant Triple Crown hopeful, but then disappointed to 13th in the 2024 Satsuki Sho and 17th in the Tokyo

Yushun. However, that autumn the Epiphaneia colt improved to fifth place in the Kikuka Sho (Japanese St. Leger, G1, 3,000m). This year, he proved his ability at longer distances by winning the Red Sea Turf Handicap (G2, 3,000m) in February and finishing second in the Tenno Sho (Spring) (G1, 3,200m) in May. The chestnut colt will fly to France for the Prix Foy (G2, 2,400m) on September 7 prior to his Arc challenge.



Byzantine Dream,
winner of 2025 Red Sea Turf Handicap



Croix du Nord,
winner of 2025 Tokyo Yushun

Croix du Nord (JPN, C3, by Kitasan Black) won all three of his starts in 2024, including the Hopeful Stakes (G1, 2,000m), to earn the title of Best Two-Year-Old Colt. In his kick-off start this season in the Satsuki Sho, his bid for a Triple Crown was denied by Museum Mile, but **Croix du Nord** lived up to expectations with a convincing victory in his next race, the Tokyo Yushun. Along with **Byzantine Dream**, he will fly to France to prep in the Prix du Prince d'Orange (G3, 2,000m) on September 14 before aiming for

the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe.

Redentor (JPN, C4, by Rulership) missed the spring classics last year but won two allowance races during the summer. He concluded his three-year-old season with a runner-up effort in his first G1 challenge, the Kikuka Sho. This year, **Redentor** has demonstrated his strength at long distances with back-to-back victories in the Diamond Stakes (G3, 3,400m) in February and the Tenno Sho (Spring) in May. The dark bay colt was withdrawn from the Arc and instead scheduled to run in the International Stakes in the UK, prior to targeting the Japan Cup but the UK trip was also cancelled due to a femur fracture in his right hind leg.



Redentor,
winner of 2025 Tenno Sho (Spring)



Regaleira, winner of 2024 Arima Kinen

Regaleira (JPN, F4, by Suave Richard) won the 2023 Hopeful Stakes against male rivals as a two-year-old. But in the following season, when she challenged males again, she was winless in the first two legs of the Triple Crown as well as in two subsequent starts against fillies and mares. However, the Suave Richard filly bounced back in the 2024 Arima Kinen (G1, 2,500m) to grab a major G1 title. But then she sustained a chip fracture in her right

foreleg and could not resume training until March of this year. After her long break, **Regaleira** came back in the Takarazuka Kinen (G1, 2,200m), but she struggled over giving ground and was well defeated to 11th. She is expected to stay in Japan and kick off her autumn campaign in either the Sapporo Kinen (G2, 2,000m) on August 17 or the All Comers (G2, 2,200m) on September 21.

Shin Emperor (FR, C4, by Siyouni), a full brother to 2020 Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe victor Sottsass, won his first two career starts as a two-year-old, including a graded victory in the 2023 Kyoto Nisai Stakes (G3, 2,000m). Although winless in his next seven starts, he was runner-up three times, including in two G1 events—the Hopeful Stakes and the Japan Cup. He notched his second graded victory this past February in the Neom Turf Cup (G2, 2,100m), but after placing seventh in his next race, the Dubai Sheema Classic, **Shin Emperor** was given a rest. If his recovery goes well, he will resume training towards his second challenge in the Irish Champion Stakes (G1, 2,000m) at Leopardstown, where he placed third last year, and then the Arc, where he was 12th last year. He will finish the year by pursuing his main target, the Japan Cup.



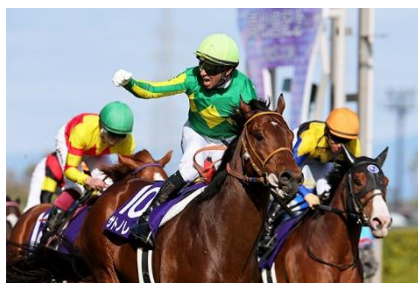
Shin Emperor,
winner of 2025 Neom Turf Cup

Other spring G1 winners scheduled to return this summer or fall include:

- **Costa Nova (JPN, H5, by Lord Kanaloa)** claimed his second graded victory in the February Stakes (G1, dirt, 1,600m) and went on to finish third in the Kashiwa Kinen (Listed, dirt, 1,600m) in May but disappointed to 11th after a poor break in the Sakitama Hai (Listed, dirt, 1,400m) in June.
- **Satono Reve (JPN, H6, by Lord Kanaloa)** notched his third graded title and first G1 victory this year in the Takamatsunomiya Kinen (1,200m), after which he was second in the Chairman's Sprint Prize (G1, 1,200m) in Hong Kong. The son of Lord Kanaloa then went to Great Britain for the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Stakes (G1, 1,200m) on June 21, where he was second, just a half-length short of a historic victory at Royal Ascot. His comeback start in autumn will be the Sprinters Stakes (G1, 1,200m) on September 28.
- **Bellagio Opera (JPN, H5, by Lord Kanaloa)** became the first horse to win the Osaka Hai (G1, 2,000m) two years in a row, but in the Takarazuka Kinen he failed to catch the runaway winner and finished three lengths back in second.



Costa Nova,
winner of 2025 February Stakes



Satono Reve,
winner of 2025 Takamatsunomiya Kinen



Bellagio Opera,
winner of 2025 Osaka Hai

- **Embroidery (JPN, F3, by Admire Mars)** won the Oka Sho (Japanese 1000 Guineas, G1, 1,600m), but then struggled with the extra 800 meters of the Yushun Himba (Japanese Oaks, G1, 2,400m), finishing ninth. The Admire Mars filly will head to the Shuka Sho (G1, 2,000m) on October 19, aiming to become the first filly since Daiwa Scarlet in 2007 and the fourth overall to win the Oka Sho–Shuka Sho double.

- **Ecoro Duel (JPN, H6, by Kitasan Black)** claimed his first J-G1 title in the Nakayama Grand Jump (J-G1, 4,260m), his fourth challenge at the highest level. He is now taking aim this season's other G1 steeplechase, the Nakayama Daishogai (4,100m) on December 27, but might make a prep run in the Tokyo High-Jump (J-G2, 3,110m) on October 19.
- **Museum Mile (JPN, C3, by Leontes)** scored his first G1 victory in the Satsuki Sho, denying the heavily favored Croix du Nord. However, in the 2,400-meter Tokyo Yushun, he faltered in the stretch and finished sixth.



Embroidery,
winner of 2025 Oka Sho



Ecoro Duel,
winner of 2025 Nakayama Grand Jump



Museum Mile,
winner of 2025 Satsuki Sho

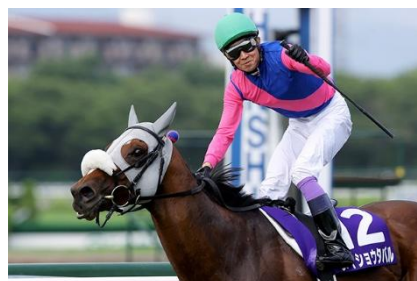
- **Kamunyak (JPN, F3, by Black Tide)** did not run in the Oka Sho, but came off a win in the Flora Stakes (G2, 2,000m) to successfully grab the Yushun Himba title. After a prep run in the Rose Stakes (G2, 1,800m) on September 14, the Black Tide filly will head to the Shuka Sho, aiming to become the sixth filly to claim both the Oaks and the Shuka Sho, following Cervinia in 2024.
- **Jantar Mantar (JPN, C4, by Palace Malice)**, the 2023 Best Two-Year-Old Colt, claimed the NHK Mile Cup last year and earned his third G1 title in this year's Yasuda Kinen. Undefeated in all four starts at a mile in Japan, the Palace Malice colt may step up to 2,000 meters in the Tenno Sho (Autumn), or he may race overseas again in the Breeders' Cup Mile. A previous plan to race in the Prix Jacques Le Marois and/or the Prix du Moulin de Longchamp in France was canceled.
- **Meisho Tabaru (JPN, C4, by Gold Ship)** followed a fifth-place finish in the Dubai Turf with a wire-to-wire victory in the Takarazuka Kinen, capturing his third graded and first G1 title. Although the victory earned him automatic berths in the Cox Plate and the Breeders' Cup Turf, the Gold Ship colt will instead focus on the Tenno Sho (Autumn).



Kamunyak,
winner of 2025 Yushun Himba



Jantar Mantar,
winner of 2025 Yasuda Kinen



Meisho Tabaru,
winner of 2025 Takarazuka Kinen