

Exclusive Topics for JAPAN AUTUMN INTERNATIONAL 2025 - 1st Edition -



September 2025
The Japan Racing Association

Welcome back to our annual series of newsletters leading up to the 2025 Japan Cup (G1, 2,400m) on November 30. The fall racing season is building towards the Japan Autumn International Series in the four weekends between November 16 and December 7, comprising 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 ¥2.02 billion (US\$13.5 million), with additional bonuses for winners of designated overseas G1 events who also finish within the top three in any of the four races in Japan. Also, winners of designated overseas races who finish fourth, fifth, or sixth or below in the Japan Cup are guaranteed incentives of US\$450,000, US\$300,000 and US\$200,000, respectively, while other invitational runners receive US\$100,000.

Featured Runners in Tenno Sho (Autumn), Japan Cup and Arima Kinen

The 2024 Japan Cup was won by five-year-old Do Deuce (JPN, by Heart's Cry), who was coming off another G1 victory four weeks earlier in the Tenno Sho (Autumn) (2,000m). **Durezza** and **Shin Emperor** tied for second place. Do Deuce, who dominated the race with a strong finish, covering the last 600 meters in 32.7 seconds for his fourth career G1 victory, was due to make his final start in the Arima Kinen (G1, 2,500m), but he was withdrawn at the last minute and retired to stud. Two other Japanese runners in the Japan Cup—Stars on Earth (JPN, by Duramente; 7th) and Karate (JPN, by To the Glory; 13th)—also retired, but the remaining eight continued training into the 2025 season.



Do Deuce,
winner of 2024 Japan Cup

Durezza (JPN, H5, by Duramente) kicked off this season in April in the Dubai Sheema Classic (G1, 2,410m), where he showed good effort to finish third, but he disappointed to ninth in his comeback start, the Takarazuka Kinen (G1, 2,200m) in June. He is scheduled to return from his summer break in the Kyoto Daishoten (G2, 2,400m) on October 5, after which he will likely make his second Japan



Cup challenge.

Shin Emperor (FR, C4, by Siyouni) also commenced his 2025 campaign in the Middle East, running in both Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The colt marked his third career win with a wire-to-wire victory in the Neom Turf Cup (G2, 2,100m)—his second graded title following the 2023 Kyoto Nisai Stakes (G3, 2,000m)—but then was seventh in the Dubai Sheema Classic. Continuing to race abroad following a summer break, the four-year-old colt flew to Europe for his second shot at the Irish Champion Stakes (G1, 2,000m) on September 13, after scoring an impressive third last year. This year, however, despite racing in a favorable position and with a good chance to gain on the leader at the straight, **Shin Emperor** failed to respond and faded to sixth at the wire. Due to his inconsistent performance, medical tests were conducted and revealed bronchiolitis, lower respiratory tract inflammation (LRTI) and a mild case of exercise-induced pulmonary hemorrhage. His connections canceled his entry in the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe (G1, 2,400m) on October 5 and began focusing on a recovery towards the Japan Cup upon his return to Japan.

Cervinia (JPN, F4, by Harbinger), the fourth-place finisher in last year's Japan Cup, struggled to find her form early this year, finishing ninth in the Kyoto Kinen (G2, 2,200m) and sixth in the Dubai Sheema Classic. She improved with a runner-up effort in the Shirasagi Stakes (G3, 1,600m) in June prior to a summer break and will begin her autumn campaign with the Mainichi Okan (G2, 1,800m) on October 5.

Fifth-place **Justin Palace (JPN, H6, by Deep Impact)** ran in four G1 events after the 2024 Japan Cup. He capped off his 2024 campaign with a fifth-place finish in the Arima Kinen and then was sixth in his first two starts in 2025, the Osaka Hai (2,000m) and the Tenno Sho (Spring). In the Takarazuka Kinen in June, the six-year-old was in the money for the first time in 20 months—since a runner-up effort in the 2023 Tenno Sho (Autumn)—charging powerfully from behind to finish third. His fall plans have not been announced but he is expected to continue racing in middle-to-long-distance G1 races.



Durezza,
winner of 2023 Kikuka Sho



Shin Emperor,
winner of 2025 Neom Turf Cup



Cervinia,
winner of 2024 Yushun Himba



Justin Palace, winner of
2023 Tenno Sho (Spring)

The first half of this season featured three of Japan's middle-to-long-distance G1 events for four-year-olds and up—the Osaka Hai, the Tenno Sho (Spring) and the Takarazuka Kinen. The Osaka Hai took place in April and was won by **Bellagio Opera (JPN, H5, by Lord Kanaloa)**. The speedy son of a former sprint champion won the race in a record 1:56.2 after maintaining a strong position

throughout the race. He was then sent to post race favorite in the Takarazuka Kinen, but despite being in a good position early he succumbed to second, unable to catch **Meisho Tabaru**, who scored a runaway victory by three lengths. As a highly regarded runner this autumn, **Bellagio Opera** will be among the top candidates for the Tenno Sho (Autumn) on November 2. But due to his sensitivity to hot weather, his return from a summer break could be delayed, in which case his fall comeback might be the Japan Cup.

The Tenno Sho (Spring) was won by 2024 Kikuka Sho (Japanese St. Leger, G1, 3,000m) runner-up **Redentor (JPN, C4, by Rulership)**, who seized the 3,200-meter G1 victory after racing mid-field to out-duel late charger **Byzantine Dream (JPN, C4, by Epiphaneia)** by a head. Coming off an overwhelming victory in the Diamond Stakes (G3, 3,400m) in February, the four-year-old **Redentor** validated the win at the highest level in the Tenno Sho (Spring). However, in July he sustained a femur fracture in his right hind leg and is currently recovering. In France, meanwhile, **Byzantine Dream** claimed the Prix Foy (G2, 2,400m) on September 7, prior to his expected challenge in the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe.

This year's Takarazuka Kinen victor **Meisho Tabaru (JPN, C4, by Gold Ship)** won two grade-race titles as a three-year-old—the Mainichi Hai (G3, 1,800m) and the Kobe Shimbun Hai (G2, 2,200m)—maintaining a lead from start to finish in both races, as he did in the Takarazuka Kinen. However, his limited style makes him vulnerable depending on how a race develops, as evidenced when the colt turned in double-digit finishes in two G1 attempts in 2024. But in the Dubai Turf (G1, 1,800m) in April, **Meisho Tabaru** led up to the last 200 meters and finished a respectable fifth. Furthermore, aided by rain-soaked giving ground in the Takarazuka Kinen, he pulled away from runner-up **Bellagio Opera** for a convincing three-length victory, his first G1 title. He is now scheduled to start in the Tenno Sho (Autumn).

Danon Decile (JPN, C4, by Epiphaneia) won this year's Dubai Sheema Classic for his second G1 title, following the 2024 Tokyo Yushun (Japanese Derby, G1, 2,400m). Although winless in the latter half of 2024, his three-year-old campaign, he was sixth in the Kikuka Sho and third in the Arima Kinen. The colt kicked off his four-year-old season by winning the American Jockey Club Cup (G2, 2,200m) in January, his first victory in eight months, and then turned in an impressive finish to take the Dubai Sheema Classic. After finishing fifth in the International Stakes (G1, 2,050m) in August, **Danon Decile** is expected to return to Japan for the Japan Cup.



Bellagio Opera,
winner of 2025 Osaka Hai



Redentor, winner of
2025 Tenno Sho (Spring)



Meisho Tabaru, winner of
2025 Takarazuka Kinen



Danon Decile, winner of
2025 Dubai Sheema Classic





Tastiera, winner of
2025 Queen Elizabeth II Cup

Other older contenders likely to be seen in the Tenno Sho (Autumn) and/or the Japan Cup are **Tastiera** (JPN, H5, by **Satono Crown**), **Urban Chic** (JPN, C4, by **Suave Richard**) and **Regaleira** (JPN, F4, by **Suave Richard**). In April, **Tastiera** claimed his second G1 victory—including the 2023 Japanese Derby—in the Queen Elizabeth II Cup (G1, 2,000m) in Hong Kong. The five-year-old will next run in the Tenno Sho (Autumn) and then fly back to Hong Kong for the Hong Kong Cup (G1, 2,000m) on December 14.

Urban Chic, winner of last year's Kikuka Sho, concluded his three-year-old season with a sixth in the Arima Kinen. After starting this season with a third in the Nikkei Sho (G2, 2,500m) in March, he struggled to find his speed on soft ground in the Takarazuka Kinen and was well beaten to 14th. The son of Suave Richard may run in two or three of the featured races in the latter half of the season: the Tenno Sho (Autumn), the Japan Cup and the Arima Kinen.

2023 Hopeful Stakes (G1, 2,000m) winner **Regaleira** scored her second G1 title in the 2024 Arima Kinen, but then sustained a chip fracture in her right foreleg. She came back in this year's Takarazuka Kinen but failed to handle the giving ground and was well defeated to 11th. Following a summer break, the Suave Richard filly kicked off her autumn campaign as the race favorite in the All Comers (G2, 2,200m) on September 21, where she claimed her third graded title by an impressive 1-1/4 lengths. The main goal this year is for **Regaleira** to defend her title in the Arima Kinen, possibly after running in the Tenno Sho (Autumn), the Queen Elizabeth II Cup or the Japan Cup.

Croix du Nord (JPN, C3, by **Kitasan Black**) secured his position at the top of this year's three-year-olds by winning the Japanese Derby. Undefeated in three starts including the Hopeful Stakes as a two-year-old, which earned him the 2024 Best Two-Year-Old Colt title, the Kitasan Black colt kicked off his 2025 campaign in the Satsuki Sho (Japanese 2000 Guineas, G1, 2,000m), where he looked like a winner at the top of the stretch but was overtaken by **Museum Mile** in the last 150 meters to finish second. **Croix du Nord** promptly gained revenge in the Japanese Derby, where he took an early lead after racing in third position and then held off a powerful challenge from **Masquerade Ball** for his second G1 victory. His connections were quick to announce the colt's Arc challenge soon after the Derby. In the Prix du Prince d'Orange (G3, 2,000m) at Longchamp on September 14, **Croix du Nord** confirmed he can handle the track's soft going by patiently racing behind in fourth, then shifted out for a clear path entering the 533-meter straight, took the lead and held off a strong charge from behind to prevail by a short head.

Meanwhile, Japanese 2000 Guineas victor **Museum Mile** (JPN, C3, by **Leontes**) was unable to find his speed after racing in mid-division in the Japanese Derby, finishing sixth. In the St. Lite Kinen (G2, 2,200m) on September 15, following a summer break, he was rated further back than midfield but managed to edge closer toward the final turn, made a powerful bid on the outside and passed the

leader in his final strides for a second grade-race title. Hopes are high for the three-year-old colt in the coming Tenno Sho (Autumn)



Urban Chic,
winner of 2024 Kikuka Sho



Regaleira (center),
winner of 2024 Arima Kinen



Croix du Nord,
winner of 2025 Tokyo Yushun



Museum Mile,
winner of 2025 Satsuki Sho

Masquerade Ball (JPN, C3, by Duramente) scored three wins in four career starts, including a graded victory in the Kyodo News Hai (G3, 1,800m), then was third in the Japanese 2000 Guineas and followed up with a second in the Japanese Derby, where he made up ground impressively from an outside draw. One of the last of Duramente's crop, **Masquerade Ball** is expected to use his skill going left-handed—where he has three wins and a second in four starts—when performing on the big stage against older foes in the Tenno Sho (Autumn) and possibly the Japan Cup.

Another Japanese three-year-old, **Alohi Alii (JPN, C3, by Duramente)**, is also aiming at this year's Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe. Despite just one career win in his two-year-old debut, the colt finished third in the Yayoi Sho Deep Impact Kinen (G2, 2,000m) in March to secure a berth in the first leg of the three-year-old classics, the Japanese 2000 Guineas, where he was eighth. Then flown to France, **Alohi Alii** scored an impressive runaway victory under Christophe Lemaire in the Prix Guillaume d'Ornano (G2, 2,000m) on August 16, pulling away by almost four lengths from Prix du Jockey Club runner-up Cualificar, who was third.

As of now, three Japanese runners, **Byzantine Dream**, **Croix du Nord** and **Alohi Alii**, are slated to run in the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe. France Galop has made further efforts to entice more Japanese entries by moving up various Arc preps, including rescheduling the Prix Foy a week earlier on September 7. In addition, France Galop has improved track drainage at Paris Longchamp, where standing water used to soften the ground, and has also introduced travel subsidies for up to two Japanese runners entering the Arc.

Sprint, Older Fillies & Mares, Mile, Dirt, and Steeplechase

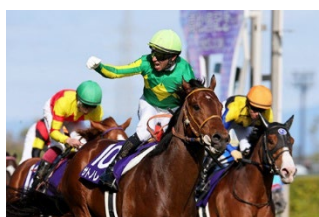
The Sprinters Stakes (1,200m), the opening G1 event of the 2025 JRA fall season on September 28, will welcome a foreign contender for the second consecutive year: **Lucky Sweynesse (NZ, G7, by Sweynesse)** from Hong Kong.

Satono Reve (JPN, H6, by Lord Kanaloa), who won this year's Takamatsunomiya Kinen (G1, 1,200m) and then gave a strong runner-up performance in the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Stakes (G1,

1,200m) in Great Britain, will commence his autumn campaign in the Sprinters Stakes. Defending champion **Lugal (JPN, H5, by Duramente)** and **Namura Clair (JPN, M6, by Mikki Isle)**, who has three seconds and two thirds in six starts in JRA G1 sprint races, will both head directly to the Sprinters Stakes after capping off their spring campaigns.

Other Sprinters Stakes runners will include, **Mama Cocha (JPN, M6, by Kurofune)**, who won in 2023 and was second in the Centaur Stakes (G2, 1,200m) on September 7, a neck ahead of third-place **Toshin Macau (JPN, H6, by Big Arthur)**, last year's Sprinters Stakes runner-up and a five-time graded winner. The Centaur Stakes was won by **Kangchenjunga (JPN, H5, by Big Arthur)**, who also won the Hankyu Hai (G3, 1,400m) in February.

The Sprinters Stakes will also include **Ka Pilina (JPN, F4, by Dunkirk)**, **Yamanin al Rihla (JPN, C4, by Isla Bonita)** and **Puro Magic (JPN, F4, by Asia Express)**, respective winners of the Hakodate Sprint Stakes (G3, 1,200m) in June, the Kitakyushu Kinen (G3, 1,200m) in July and the Ibis Summer Dash (G3, 1,000m) in August.



Satoru Reve, winner of
2025 Takamatsunomiya Kinen



Lugal, winner of
2024 Sprinters Stakes



Namura Clair,
winner of 2024 Hanshin Cup



Mama Cocha, winner of
2023 Sprinters Stakes

This year's Queen Elizabeth II Cup for three-year-olds-and-up fillies and mares will be held at Kyoto Racecourse on November 16. Defending champion Stunning Rose (JPN, by King Kamehameha) retired at the end of last season, so this year's contenders will include G1 winners such as 2023 victor **Brede Weg (JPN, M5, by Lord Kanaloa)**, the aforementioned **Cervinia** and **Regaleira**, and last year's Oka Sho (Japanese 1000 Guineas, G1, 1,600m) winner **Stellenbosch (JPN, F4, by Epiphaneia)**.



Brede Weg, winner of
2023 Queen Elizabeth II Cup

Last year's Queen Elizabeth II Cup runner-up **Ravel (JPN, M5, by Kitanan Black)** scored her second grade-race title in the following Challenge Cup (G3, 2,000m) but has been winless in four starts since. The mare will kick off her fall campaign in the Ireland Trophy (G2, 1,800m) on October 12, running against other Queen Elizabeth II Cup candidates such as **Admire Matsuri (JPN, F4, by Kitanan Black)**, winner of the Fukushima Himba Stakes (G3, 1,800m) in April, and **Lilac (JPN, M6, by Orfevre)**, runner-up in the 2022 Queen Elizabeth II Cup.

The Queen Elizabeth II Cup will also include **Sekitoba East (JPN, F4, by Declaration of War)**, **Argine (JPN, M5, by Lord Kanaloa)**, **Shirankedo (JPN, M5, by Declaration of War)**, respective

winners of the Fuchu Himba Stakes (G3, 1,800m) in June, the Queen Stakes (G3, 1,800m) and the Niigata Kinen (G3, 2,000m) in August, and **Shinryokuka (JPN, M5, by Satono Diamond)**, the fourth-place finisher last year. The race will additionally feature three-year-old fillies from the Shuka Sho (G1, 2,000m) on October 19, the last leg of the fillies' Triple Crown.

The Mile Championship (G1, 1,600m) on November 23 will showcase defending champion **Soul Rush (JPN, H7, by Rulership)**, who made some incredible efforts abroad, including second in the Hong Kong Mile (G1, 1,600m) and his second G1 triumph in the Dubai Turf. Back in Japan, he was beaten to third in the Yasuda Kinen (G1, 1,600m) in June and then fractured the fourth metacarpal bone of his left foreleg. After sufficient rest, he will return in the Fuji Stakes (G2, 1,600m) on October 18 and then possibly the Mile Championship as well as the Hong Kong Mile on December 14.

Ascoli Piceno (JPN, F4, by Daiwa Major) registered outstanding back-to-back victories this year—the 1351 Turf Sprint (G2, 1,351m) in Saudi Arabia in February and the Victoria Mile (G1, 1,600m) in May. Although sixth in her third overseas endeavor, the Prix Jacques le Marois (G1, 1,600m) in August, the 2023 Hanshin Juvenile Fillies (G1, 1,600m) winner and Best Two-Year-Old Filly will aim for her third G1 title in the Mile Championship. **Jantar Mantar (JPN, C4, by Palace Malice)**, the 2023 Asahi Hai Futurity Stakes (G1, 1,600m) champion and Best Two-Year-Old Colt, claimed his third G1 victory in the Yasuda Kinen, his only start this season so far, but last year's NHK Mile Cup (G1, 1,600m) champion will kick off his fall campaign with the Fuji Stakes before aiming for another G1 title in the Mile Championship.

This year's Yasuda Kinen runner-up **Gaia Force (JPN, H6, by Kitasan Black)** will begin his autumn campaign with the Fuji Stakes. The field will include 2023 NHK Mile Cup victor **Champagne Color (JPN, H5, by Duramente)**; **Water Licht (JPN, C4, by Drefong)**, winner of the Tokyo Shimbun Hai (G3, 1,600m) this February; **Magic Sands (JPN, C3, by Kizuna)**, runner-up in this year's NHK Mile Cup; and defending champion **Jun Blossom (JPN, H6, by World Ace)**. This year's Mile Championship field may also feature **Elton Barows (JPN, H5, by Deep Brillante)**, **Win Marvel (JPN, H6, by I'll Have Another)** and **Brede Weg**, respectively second, third and fourth last year. Other possibles are **Queen's Walk (JPN, F4, by Kizuna)**, a three-time graded winner who was second in the Victoria Mile, **Bond Girl (JPN, F4, by Daiwa Major)**, who has finished second in six graded events including last year's Shuka Sho, and **Admire Zoom (JPN, C3, by Maurice)**, winner of last year's Asahi Hai Futurity Stakes.



Soul Rush (front),
winner of 2025 Dubai Turf



Ascoli Piceno,
winner of 2025 Victoria Mile



Jantar Mantar,
winner of 2025 Yasuda Kinen



Admire Zoom, winner of
2024 Asahi Hai Futurity Stakes



The Champions Cup, JRA's autumn dirt G1 event, will be held at Chukyo Racecourse on December 7. Last year, Lemon Pop (USA, by Lemon Drop Kid) became the first horse to defend the title since Transcend in 2010 and 2011 (when the race was known as the Japan Cup Dirt), earning him a second consecutive Best Dirt Horse title before capping off his remarkable career at the end of the season.

The other G1 dirt event, the February Stakes (G1, dirt, 1,600m), was notched by **Costa Nova (JPN, H5, by Lord Kanaloa)**, who was third in May's Kashiwa Kinen (Listed, dirt, 1,600m) but 11th in the Sakitama Hai (Listed, dirt, 1,400m) in June. His autumn debut will be the Mile Championship Nambu Hai (Listed, dirt, 1,600m) at NAR's Morioka Racecourse on October 13. Joining him will be **Peptide Nile (JPN, H7, by King Kamehameha)**, last year's February Stakes champion; **Shamal (JPN, H7, by Smart Falcon)**, winner of this year's Kashiwa Kinen and Sakitama Hai; **Wilson Tesoro (JPN, H6, by Kitasan Black)**, runner-up in the 2023 and 2024 Champions Cup; **Crown Pride (JPN, H6, by Reach the Crown)**, winner of the 2023 and 2024 Korea Cup (G3, dirt, 1,800m); and **Sunrise Zipangu (JPN, C4, by Kizuna)**, a three-time graded winner over dirt.

Mikki Fight (JPN, C4, by Drefong) registered two grade-race wins last year, including the Leopard Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,800m), and was second by 1 1/4-lengths to winner **Forever Young (JPN, C4, by Real Steel)** in the Japan Dirt Classic (Listed, dirt, 2,000m). After a third in this year's February Stakes, the colt added two titles—the Antares Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,800m) and the Teio Sho (Listed, dirt, 2,000m)—and will debut this autumn in the JBC Classic (Listed, dirt, 1,800m) at NAR's Funabashi Racecourse on November 3. The same race will include two-time grade-race victor **William Barows (JPN, H7, by Mikki Isle)** and this year's Kawasaki Kinen (Listed, dirt, 2,100m) champion **Meisho Hario (JPN, H8, by Pyro)**.

Other older horses expected to target the Champions Cup are 2024 Tokyo Derby (Listed, dirt, 2,000m) champion **Ramjet (JPN, C4, by Majestic Warrior)** and last year's third-place finisher **Dura Erede (JPN, H5, by Duramente)**, who respectively were third and fifth in the Korea Cup on September 7. Joining them will be **King's Sword (JPN, H6, by Sinister Minister)**, winner of both the 2023 JBC Classic and the 2024 Teio Sho.



Costa Nova, winner of
2025 February Stakes



Peptide Nile, winner of
2024 February Stakes



Forever Young,
winner of 2025 Saudi Cup



Dura Erede,
winner of 2022 Hopeful Stakes

The Japan Dirt Classic at NAR's Oi Racecourse on October 8 will feature prominent three-year-olds including **Natural Rise (JPN, C3, by Kizuna)**, who will aim for a sweep after winning the first two legs of the "dirt triple crown"—the Haneda Hai (Listed, dirt, 1,800m) in April and the Tokyo Derby

in June. The race may also welcome JRA-based three-year-olds such as **Clay King (JPN, C3, by Nadal)**, the Tokyo Derby runner-up, and **Canal Beagle (JPN, C3, by Real Steel)**, **Don in the Mood (JPN, C3, by Asia Express)** and **Narukami (JPN, C3, by Thunder Snow)**, respective winners of the Unicorn Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,900m) in May, the Leopard Stakes in August and the Kozukata Sho (Listed, dirt, 2,000m) in September.



Ecoro Duel, winner of
2025 Nakayama Grand Jump

The Nakayama Daishogai (J-G1, 4,100m) on December 27, the second of two annual J-G1 steeplechase events, will determine the season's best jumper. Last year's champion Nishino Daisy (JPN, by Harbinger) retired and the 2023 Best Steeplechase Horse **Meiner Grand (JPN, H7, by Gold Ship)** has a sore right-foreleg tendon, so the Nakayama Daishogai will showcase last year's runner-up and this year's Nakayama Grand Jump (J-G1, 4,260m) champion **Ecoro Duel (JPN, H6, by Kitasan Black)**. Other likely participants are **Smile Through (JPN, H5, by Rulership)**, **Uncle Black (JPN, H5, by Kitasan Black)**, **June Velocity (JPN, H7, by Lord Kanaloa)** and **Impress (JPN, H6, by Kizuna)**, respective winners of the Kokura Jump Stakes (J-G3, 3,390m) in February, the Kyoto High-Jump (J-G2, 3,930m) in May, the Tokyo Jump Stakes (J-G3, 3,110m) in June and the Niigata Jump Stakes (J-G3, 3,250m) in August, as well as Nakayama Grand Jump runner-up **Neviim (JPN, H7, by Kizuna)**, who came off a win in the Hanshin Jump Stakes (J-G3, 3,140m) on September 20.

Final Two Legs of Three-Year-Old Triple Crown

In April, **Embroidery (JPN, F3, by Admire Mars)** claimed the Oka Sho, the first jewel of the fillies' Triple Tiara, by narrowly defeating 2024 Best Two-Year-Old Filly and Hanshin Juvenile Fillies (G1, 1,600m) winner **Arma Veloce (JPN, F3, by Harbinger)** by a neck. The second Crown jewel, the Yushun Himba (Japanese Oaks, G1, 2,400m) in May, was won by **Kamunyak (JPN, F3, by Black Tide)**, who had skipped the Oka Sho but came off a win in the Flora Stakes (G2, 2,000m). **Embroidery**, who finished a disappointing ninth in the Japanese Oaks, will head directly to the Shuka Sho on October 19, while the Oaks runner-up **Arma Veloce** was diagnosed with a tendon injury in her left foreleg and will be forced to rest for more than nine months.

Two trial races were held leading up to the Shuka Sho. In the Shion Stakes (G2, 2,000m) on September 7, **Kelly Fled Ask (JPN, F3, by Duramente)** captured her first grade-race title. **Jocelyn (JPN, F3, by Epiphaneia)** and **Danon Fair Lady (JPN, F3, by Kizuna)** followed in second and third, respectively, while Oka Sho third-place finisher **Lynx Tip (JPN, F3, by Kitasan Black)** was eighth.

The other trial, the Rose Stakes (G2, 1,800m) on September 14, was claimed by Yushun Himba winner **Kamunyak**, who was followed by **Theresa (JPN, F3, by Admire Mars)** in second and **Sena**

Style (JPN, F3, by Sottsass) in third. Yushun Himba third-place finisher **Tagano Abby (JPN, F3, by Animal Kingdom)** had to be pulled at the last minute due to a lame right foreleg and will not be able to race this year.



Embroidery,
winner of 2025 Oka Sho



Arma Veloce, winner of
2024 Hanshin Juvenile Fillies



Kelly Fled Ask,
winner of 2025 Shion Stakes



Kamunyak,
winner of 2025 Yushun Himba

On October 26, the Kikuka Sho, the last leg of the colts' Triple Crown, will not welcome three noted runners: the aforementioned Japanese 2000 Guineas victor **Museum Mile** and the Japanese Derby's champion **Croix du Nord** and runner-up **Masquerade Ball**.

In the St. Lite Kinen, the first Kikuka Sho trial on September 15, **Museum Mile**, who won the Satsuki Sho and finished sixth in the Tokyo Yushun, claimed the race but will head to the Tenno Sho (Autumn) instead of the Kikuka Sho. **Yamanin Bouclier (JPN, C3, by Kitasan Black)** followed three-quarters of a length behind in second and **Red Bande (JPN, C3, by Kizuna)** was another neck behind in third.

Japanese Derby third-place finisher **Shohei (JPN, C3, by Saturnalia)** kicked off his autumn campaign with the Kobe Shimbun Hai (G2, 2,400m) on September 21, where he traveled wide in third and briefly took command passing the 200-meter pole but crossed the wire a neck behind in second, unable to hold off the fast-closing Kyoto Nisai Stakes (G3, 2,000m) winner **Eri King (JPN, C3, by Kizuna)**, who delivered the fastest late kick. Hopeful Stakes runner-up **Giovanni (JPN, C3, by Epiphaneia)** traveled inside **Shohei** by the rails in fourth, found a narrow space between horses at the top of the stretch and chased the top two horses to secure third place.



Eri King, winner of
2025 Kobe Shimbun Hai

This year's Kikuka Sho will also include Aoba Sho (G2, 2,400m) winner **Energico (JPN, C3, by Duramente)**, who came off a second in the Niigata Kinen, **Goltzschal (JPN, C3, by Bricks and Mortar)**, who won the Nihonkai Stakes (3 Wins Class, 2,200m) against older foes in August, and **Faust Rasen (JPN, C3, by Mozu Ascot)**, winner of the Yayoi Sho Deep Impact Kinen in March.