

**SUBJECT: RESULT OF THE 43RD 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-priced 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.

Defending champion **Costa Nova** was winless in three starts following his victory last year and had come off a second in the Musashino Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,600m; Nov.15). **W Heart Bond** was highly backed as the 2025 Champions Cup (G1, dirt, 1,800m; Dec.7) winner, the race in which **Wilson Tesoro** registered his third consecutive runner-up in the race with the 2024 Tokyo Derby (Listed, dirt, 2,000m) victor **Ramjet** in third and three-time turf graded winner **Sixpence** and 2024 February Stakes champion **Peptide Nile** finishing 11th and 12th, respectively. The field also included **Lord Couronne**, winner of the Procyon Stakes (G2, dirt, 1,800m; Jan.25), and **Natural Rise** who dominated two of the Dirt Triple Crown series—the Haneda Hai (Listed, dirt, 1,800m) and the Tokyo Derby last year.

THE 43RD FEBRUARY STAKES (G1)

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

Sunday, February 22, 2026

Tokyo Racecourse

11th Race

Post time: 15:40

Total prize money: ¥ 260,400,000 (about US\$ 1,669,000 <US\$1=¥156>)

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

1 kg allowance for Southern Hemisphere-bred born in 2022

Course record: 1:32.9

Race record: 1:33.8 [Cafe Pharoah (USA, by American Pharoah), 2022]

Safety factor: 16 runners

Going: Standard

Weather: Fine



FP	BK	PP	Horse Jockey	S&A Color Wgt	Odds (Fav)	Margin (L3F)	Sire Dam (Dam's Sire)	Owner Breeder Trainer
1	6	12 B	Costa Nova (JPN) Christophe Lemaire	H6 b. 58.0	3.4 (2)	1:35.4 (35.2)	Lord Kanaloa Colorful Blossom (Heart's Cry)	Katsumi Yoshida Northern Racing Tetsuya Kimura
2	7	14	Wilson Tesoro (JPN) Yuga Kawada	H7 b. 58.0	5.4 (3)	1/2 (35.7)	Kitsan Black Chesutoke Rose (Uncle Mo)	Ryotokuji Kenji Holdings Co., Ltd. Ryoken Farm Noboru Takagi
3	5	9	W Heart Bond (JPN) Ryusei Sakai	M5 b. 56.0	3.0 (1)	1/2 (36.0)	Kizuna Persistently (Smoke Glacken)	Silk Racing Co., Ltd. Northern Farm Ryuji Okubo
4	2	3	Brian Sense (JPN) Mirai Iwata	H6 d.b. 58.0	40.6 (10)	3/4 (35.6)	Hokko Tarumae Hiraboku Bijin (Brian's Time)	Masamichi Hayashi Tanikawa Stud Makoto Saito
5	1	1	Omega Guinness (JPN) Yasunari Iwata	H6 ch. 58.0	28.6 (8)	3 (36.7)	Logotype Start Up (Harbinger)	Reiko Hara Shadai Farm Shogo Yasuda
6	8	15 B	Peptide Nile (JPN) Akatsuki Tomita	H8 b. 58.0	53.6 (11)	Nose (36.9)	King Kamehameha Queen Olive (Manhattan Cafe)	Kazuhiko Numakawa Kineusu Bokujo Hidenori Take

7	7	13	Natural Rise (JPN) Takeshi Yokoyama	C4 b. 58.0	21.4 (7)	Neck (35.7)	Kizuna Lady Madonna (Distorted Humor)	Hiroyuki Yoshioka Grand Stud Keizo Ito
8	3	6 B	Ramjet (JPN) Kosei Miura	H5 d.b. 58.0	7.8 (4)	1/2 (35.7)	Majestic Warrior Nefertiti (Gold Allure)	Koji Maeda North Hills Co., Ltd. Shozo Sasaki
9	3	5	Sixpence (JPN) Keita Tosaki	H5 b. 58.0	17.4 (6)	3/4 (37.2)	Kizuna Finley'sluckycharm (Twirling Candy)	Carrot Farm Co., Ltd. Northern Farm Sakae Kunieda
10	2	4	Perriere (JPN) Daisuke Sasaki	H6 b. 58.0	32.9 (9)	3/4 (36.8)	Henny Hughes Soft Rime (Fuji Kiseki)	Yuji Hasegawa Champions Farm Yoichi Kuroiwa
11	5	10	Lord Couronne (JPN) Kazuo Yokoyama	H5 d.b. 58.0	14.7 (5)	3/4 (37.5)	Leontes Lilas Corsage (Brian's Time)	Lord Horse Club Co., Ltd. K. I. Farm Hirofumi Shii
12	6	11	Sunrise Hawk (JPN) Masami Matsuoka	G7 br. 58.0	346.3 (16)	3 (36.5)	Leontes Roman Bridge (Brian's Time)	Life House Co., Ltd. Shimokobe Farm Mitsunori Makiura
13	4	8	Sakura Toujours (JPN) Rachel King	G9 br. 58.0	74.1 (13)	3-1/2 (37.6)	Neo Universe Sakura Reine (Symboli Kris S)	Sakura Commerce Co., Ltd. Tanioka Stud Noriyuki Hori
14	4	7	Long Run (JPN) Kiwamu Ogino	G8 b. 58.0	235.1 (15)	Neck (37.4)	Victoire Pisa Notte Bianca (Kendargent)	Akira Umezawa Shadai Farm Yusuke Wada
15	8	16	Saimon Xanadu (JPN) Kenichi Ikezoe	H6 ch. 58.0	66.6 (12)	Nose (37.8)	Asia Express True Romance (Agnes Digital)	Akinori Sawada Chiyoda Farm Shizunai Shinya Kobayashi
16	1	2	Happy Man (JPN) Riki Takasugi	C4 d.b. 58.0	98.1 (14)	8 (39.5)	Danon Legend Belle Mure (King Kamehameha)	Shigehisa Tanabe Kuwata Bokujo Ryo Terashima

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: ¥ 17,366,790,800

Turnover for the Day: ¥ 29,682,163,500

Attendance: 58,224

Pay-off (for ¥100)

Win	No.12	¥ 340	Bracket Quinella	6-7	¥ 820	Quinella	12-14	¥ 890
Place	No.12	¥ 130	Quinella Place	12-14	¥ 360	Exacta	12-14	¥ 1,560
	No.14	¥ 160		9-12	¥ 290	Trio	9-12-14	¥ 1,080
	No.9	¥ 130		9-14	¥ 320	Trifecta	12-14-9	¥ 5,080

Winner= 14 starts: 8 wins, 2 seconds & 1 third / Added & stakes money: ¥ 153,486,000 / Career earnings: ¥ 426,545,000

Costa Nova Accomplish Repeat Victory in February Stakes

Second favorite **Costa Nova** became the third horse to claim the February Stakes two years in a row after Copano Rickey (2014-2015) and Cafe Pharoah (2021-2022). Last year, the son of Lord Kanaloa registered back-to-back wins in the Negishi Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,400m) and this race but was winless in the following three starts—third in the Kashiwa Kinen (Listed, dirt, 1,600m), 11th in the Sakitama Hai (Listed, dirt, 1,400m) and second in his previous Musashino Stakes (G3, dirt, 1,600m) in November. The six-year-old bay now has seven wins and a second in eight starts on dirt at Tokyo Racecourse. Trainer Tetsuya Kimura won his 15th JRA-G1 title, first since last year's Queen Elizabeth II Cup with Regaleira. Jockey Christophe Lemaire marked his 58th JRA-G1 title after his victory in last year's Tenno Sho (Autumn) with Masquerade Ball and third February Stakes win since Mozu Ascot (2020) and Cafe Pharoah (2021).

Costa Nova was rated in mid-division between horses in around 11th and came into the homestretch still well behind among the 16-horse field before picking up speed going the uphill stretch. Reaching contention at the furlong pole and joining a four-horse rally with **Wilson Tesoro**, **W Heart Bond** and **Brian Sense** as

the early runners began to tire from their early efforts, the defending champion grabbed a narrow lead in the last 100 meters and continued to power on, out-finishing his rivals by half a length for a well-deserved consecutive victory.

“I am happy to have won the first G1 of this season with Costa Nova with whom I’ve partnered for some time. He broke nicely and we were able to relax during the trip behind Wilson Tesoro. I had great response from the horse as soon as I shifted him to the outside for the stretch drive and, from then on, he was extremely strong up to the wire,” commented Christophe Lemaire.

Third favorite **Wilson Tesoro** raced in mid-field, about a length in front of the eventual winner and at the heels of the race favorite, keeping in touch with that foe as the two began to make their bid after the last corner. Creeping up on the outside of **W Heart Bond** with 200 meters to go, the son of Kitasan Black managed to stick his neck in front of **W Heart Bond** but was soon overtaken by the winner and succumbed to second place but bested the rest by 1/2-length.

Race favorite **W Heart Bond**, aiming to become the first female to win the G1 February Stakes title, settled nicely in around fourth or fifth position and had a clear path along the center lane after rounding the final corner. She gained ground impressively to engage in a four-horse rally from the furlong pole to the wire where while beaten to third, managed to cross the wire 3/4-length in front of **Brian Sense**.

Other contenders:

4th: (3) **Brian Sense**—hugged rail around 11th, launched 2nd fastest late drive

5th: (1) **Omega Guinness**—saved ground in 4th, showed tenacious run while overtaken by top 4 finishers

6th: (15) **Peptide Nile**—chased leaders in 3rd, led 300m out, weakened in last 100m

7th: (13) **Natural Rise**—sat wide in 13th, passed tired rivals

8th: (6) **Ramjet**—broke poorly, trailed in rear, showed belated charge

9th: (5) **Sixpence**—set pace after 300m, ran gamely until 100m out

10th: (4) **Perriere**—took economic trip around 7th, lacked needed kick

11th: (10) **Lord Couronne**—stalked leader in 2nd, sustained bid until 100m out

12th: (11) **Sunrise Hawk**—settled near rear, angled out, had too much ground to cover

13th: (8) **Sakura Toujours**—positioned around 11th, never fired at stretch

14th: (7) **Long Run**—raced 3rd from rear, unable to reach contention

15th: (16) **Saimon Xanadu**—traveled wide around 8th, failed to respond

16th: (2) **Happy Man**—ran near pace around 4th, outrun in stretch

Fractional time (sec./furlong): 12.7 - 10.9 - 11.5 - 12.0 - 12.1 - 11.9 - 12.0 - 12.3

Last 4 furlongs: 48.3 Last 3 furlongs: 36.2

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

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

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.