

Japan Racing Journal

December 2010

Vol.18 No.6

Published by Japan Association for International Racing and Stud Book

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QUEEN ELIZABETH II COMMEMORATIVE CUP



JAPAN CUP



MILE CHAMPIONSHIP



JAPAN CUP DIRT

Japan Autumn International 2010

Interview with Yutaka Take

(interview by JAIRS)



Brief biography of Yutaka Take*

Born on March 15th, 1969 (currently 41 years old)

170cm / 51kg

Father: Kunihiko Take (former trainer and jockey), younger brother: Koshiro Take (jockey)

Debut: March 1, 1987

Records held in Japan (JRA races only)

Most career wins	3,370 (first JRA jockey to pass 3,000)
Most G1 race wins	65
Most graded race wins	266

Overseas record

Wins	20 graded races (G1: 7, G2: 5, G3: 8), career total 108 wins
First G1 win	Ski Paradise (1994 Prix du Moulin de Longchamp, FRANCE)
First G1 win on a Japanese horse	Seeking the Pearl (1998 Prix Maurice de Gheest, FRANCE)
First graded race win	El Senor (1991 Seneca Stakes (USA, G3))

*As of November 29, 2010

Q. What's your view of Japanese racing these days?

A. I've been a jockey for about 23 years now, but when I first started, I hardly ever heard people in the racing community talking about other countries. I myself was quite interested, but at that stage I could never have imagined that, one day, I would be taking part in major overseas races. Looking back, things seem to have changed incredibly quickly. I think that's particularly true of the "internationalization" of Japanese horseracing. I think the Japanese racing community as a whole has become more aware of overseas racing.

Q. What stands out most about horseracing in Japan?

A. The sheer enthusiasm for the sport. The number of fans at racecourses. Betting sales are great, but I think we can be really proud of the number of spectators

who come to watch the races. Overseas jockeys are green with envy, they really are. Then there's also the technology developed for betting sales and the promotions to encourage the Japanese racing fans to bet on races. I've ridden in a number of countries, and in some of them the betting aspect is far more distant from the actual racing. In Japanese racing, I think much emphasis is placed on betting sales.

Q. What about the races themselves?

A. Well, there's not so much difference in the actual races. There will of course be differences in tracks and weather, but I think the races themselves are more or less the same in any country, basically.

Q. How does it feel when you're riding in a prestigious race overseas?

A. Well, it certainly feels a bit different compared to riding in Japan. I tend to feel as if I'm representing my



1998 Japanese Derby



2006 Arima Kinen (Grand Prix)

country. If I have a good race, I feel proud. I don't usually have any strong awareness of being Japanese, but when I'm racing in another country, I feel my identity as a Japanese. When I ride overseas, I notice the positives of Japanese racing, and conversely what we may be lacking. I feel various things. In the process, I learn a lot.

Q. What about when you win a big overseas race?

A. The idea of winning big overseas races has certainly come closer to reality in recent years. Even about 20 years ago, I could never have imagined a Japanese horse winning the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe or the Breeders Cup. But now there are plenty of Japanese horses that win prestigious races in other countries. So I don't think anyone in Japanese racing takes the attitude of just taking part in these races any more. They want to choose the right race, and the right horse for that race; they want to win. And so a lot has changed about the horses that go to compete abroad, as well.

Q. There must be quite a few disadvantages when you're competing away from home? Or is it a level playing field?

A. At first, we were all groping in the dark. Looking back now, I feel we made a lot of mistakes or unproductive at times. But then as we kept trying again and again, we started to realize that we should do less of this or more of that; we gradually learned little details like that. And in the process, I think Japanese horseracing as a whole has gradually raised its level. By accumulating on the ins and outs of competing overseas, we've now reaped results, and I think we're at the stage where we can compete on the same terms even away from home.

Q. The Japan Cup is the pinnacle of Japanese racing, but how does it compare to other 2,400m races, like the Breeders Cup or the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe?

A. They're difficult to compare, but the Japan Cup is 30 years old this year, isn't it. In the beginning years, Japanese horses just couldn't keep pace with the horses from other countries, but now it's the Japanese horses that are dominating the race. I think the level of Japanese horses has definitely improved as a result of holding the Japan Cup, and we now know more about overseas racing. That has been extremely valuable for Japanese racing.

Q. You're due to ride Rose Kingdom in this year's Japan Cup; what's your view of the level of this race?

A. I rode in this year's Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, and I have to say it's a wonderful race, no matter how many times you take part in it. I've never won the Arc, and it makes me think how strong a horse has to be to win it.





Actually, I don't think we need to go that far to find a Japanese winner for this race. It's a race that everyone in the horseracing community wants to win, and only one horse in the whole community can win it. On the other hand, Japanese horses are inevitably favored in the Japan Cup, since it's held in Japan. But with Japanese horses being so successful in the Japan Cup recently, foreign-trained horses that might have come to take part are tending to stay away, as they have little chance of winning.

Q. Could you give your thoughts on overseas racing and your ideal image of what a jockey should be?

A. Actually, I don't think Japanese racing is any different from overseas racing. That's simply because Japanese racing is now part of the global racing. I see Japanese racing in the same terms as American racing, or European racing. I don't see it as "Japanese racing" and "overseas racing." For that reason, though I'm riding mainly in Japan at the moment, if I got a call from an overseas racing connection, I would go immediately.



Really, I'd go anywhere to ride, and that, I think, is the style for a jockey today. After all, I've spent all this time in the profession in the hope that, one day, I'll be the kind of jockey who's always getting calls from other parts of the world. That's something that has not and will not change in future years.



Q. Would you like to see your profession – "jockey" – expand more broadly to the general public, to non-racing fans?

A. Well, I think there are a lot of people who don't know about racing, and a lot more people who have never been to the races. Of all the people in the racing industry, jockeys are the most visible personalities for the fans and general public, and we are the ones in closest contact with them. So I think that we, as jockeys, need to have a positive attitude to spread the joys of racing to racing and non-racing fans alike. After all, an increase in the popularity of racing will greatly benefit us jockeys as well; in fact, we often talk seriously among ourselves to see what we can do to that end. This is partly driven by the wish to make horseracing a major sport and to make "jockey" an occupation that children will want to become.

Q. From a global standpoint, what do you envision as the future of horseracing?

A. At the moment, racing is said to be in a slump all over the world. But for us (jockeys), there's only one way out of it, and that's to show people "great" races. By great races, I mean by races that are seriously contested at the highest level and make people feel passionate about the races themselves. Not everyone will go home with a winning bet. But the one thing we can do is to put on races that make people feel glad they came to the racecourse and witnessed something special, even if their bets ended in nothing. That's what we're thinking about. I think it would be great if horseracing became a subject of common conversation and if the general public talked about racecourses and racing as a matter of course. In fact, it makes me very happy and proud when I hear people talking like that on the street.

Q. And what about your personal goals for the future?

A. The same as always – to keep getting better and better as a jockey. There are still a lot of big races I want to win, in Japan as well as abroad. The dream just keeps getting bigger and bigger (laugh). I still want to keep aiming higher.

Q. For the rest of your life?

A. Of course. For as long as I can take part. After all, racing is the only thing I can do half right (laugh).

Q. As Chairman of the Japan Jockey's Association, what do you want to hand down to the younger jockeys?

A. Well, I myself was born and brought up in the racing community, my father was a jockey, and so I've got an

affection, a sense of attachment to horseracing. At the end of the day, I really love horseracing. So obviously, I want to keep spreading the word about how great this community is. We certainly don't take a complacent attitude, as if we've made it and that that's all that matters. I want to help up-and-coming young jockeys feel the same way as I do.

(interview on November 24)

2010 Hokkaido Autumn Sale (Yearling Sale)

Mr. Masayuki Itoh, The Japan Bloodhorse Breeders' Association (JBBA)

Gross sales pass 1 billion yen for the first time in 3 years, sales ratio 49.5%

The thoroughbred yearling market in the Hokkaido Autumn Sale, hosted by the Hidaka horse Breeders' Association (HBA), was held over 4 days from Oct. 18 (Monday) to 21 (Thursday) at the JBBA Hokkaido Sales Complex in Shinhidaka-cho. Unlike in previous years, the Hokkaido Autumn Sale focused solely on the yearlings and did not catalogue any foals. A total of 823 horses were catalogued (381 colts, 442 fillies), 407 of which were sold (226 colts, 181 fillies). This was an increase of 61 horses compared to last year, with a sales ratio of 49.5% (up by 4.7 percentage points), taking the number to its highest level since the start of the Autumn Sale. Gross sales turnover was JPY 1,123,153,500 (up by 17.8% from the previous year), reaching the JPY 1 billion mark for the first time in 3 years. The average sale price was JPY 2,759,591, up by 0.1%, and the median was JPY 2,100,000, the same as last year.

The highest priced horse was a filly sired by Daiwa Major out of Arctic Silk (GB), bought by Mr. Seiichi Iketani for JPY 16,905,000. The most expensive colt was sired by Jungle Pocket out of Rainbow Desire and was sold to Northern Farm for JPY 14,700,000. A total of eight horses were sold for more than 10 million yen, two more than last year. In the average prices for horses by sire, Authorized (IRE) was top with JPY 14,700,000. Visitors from Singapore bought three fillies for a total of JPY 10,290,000, while Mr. Zhang Yuesheng from China snapped up 18 horses for a total of JPY 47,355,000.

(Note: All sale prices at the auction include consumption tax)



The filly sired by Daiwa Major out of Arctic Silk (GB) fetched the highest price of ¥16,905,000



The colt sired by Jungle Pocket out of Rainbow Desire got the highest price among colts (¥14,700,000)

Review of the 30th Japan Cup and the JAI (Japan Autumn International 2010)

Masanori Ariyoshi

Sports Department, Asahi Shimbun Tokyo Head Office



1981 Mairzy Doates (left)



1990 Better Loosen Up



1998 El Condor Pasa



2000 The 20th Japan Cup

The Japan Cup, inaugurated in 1981 as Japan's first international race, celebrated its 30th anniversary this year. The original aim of this race was to make Japanese horses more competitive by allowing them to test their mettle against top foreign horses. And more competitive they certainly have become.

In fact, no foreign horse has won this race since the UK-trained Alkaased in 2005; Deep Impact's victory in 2006 was followed by further triumphs for Admire Moon, Screen Hero and Vodka, marking four successive victories for Japanese runners on home soil. That brought the number of wins by Japanese horses to 15 out of 29, taking Japan's balance of wins into the black for the first time.

But while the increasing prominence of Japanese horses gives us good cause to celebrate, the waning presence of foreign horses in the race has been a worry. There have been a number of reasons for their increasing absence; not only do they have to endure long journeys to get here, followed by the inevitable quarantine procedures, but now they also face stiff competition from all those "strong Japanese horses" when they arrive. In 2003, there were nine foreign-trained entrants; in 2006, only two. In the following three years, there were four, three and five, respectively – still not enough. So to raise the profile of the race for its 30th anniversary, the Japan Racing Association (JRA) pulled out all the stops to boost the quota of overseas horses this year. The result was a success: eight foreign-trained horses took part in the race.

France was represented for the first time in four years – not by one, but by four horses: Cirrus des Aigles, Marinous, Mores Wells and Timos. From Ireland came Joshua Tree, the first entrant from the Emerald Isle in 6 years. Voila Ici was the first Italian-trained horse to appear since Falbrav's victory in 2002. A Canadian presence had been missing for even longer, Fifty Proof being the first Canadian-trained horse in 12 years since Chief Bearhart finished fourth in 1998. The UK's representative Dandino brought the total number of foreign horses to eight.

The Japanese contingent, for its part, was practically the strongest it could be. There were the older horses – notably Buena Vista, fresh from victory in the Tenno Sho (Autumn), and Nakayama Festa, runnerup in the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, but also Jaguar Mail and Oken Bruce Lee. There were the 3-year-olds – Japanese Derby winner Eishin Flash, Satsuki Sho (Japanese 2000 Guineas) winner Victoire Pisa, and Rose Kingdom. In all, there were seven previous winners of G1 races. And as for the other three – Pelusa, Shingen and Meisho Beluga – the absence of a G1 win was compensated by victories at G2 level. This strong lineup of Japanese horses was expected to occupy the top positions at the finishing line.

Without a runaway leader, the race was unpredictable. Shingen took an early lead, with Victoire Pisa, Eishin Flash, Rose Kingdom and others in hot pursuit. The time at 1,200

meters, the midway point, was 1 minute, 13.4 seconds – slow considering that the track condition was firm. The favorite Buena Vista had stumbled just before the 1st corner and was still positioned 5th from last.

It all went down to the final stretch. Victoire Pisa moved up a gear from 2nd to overtake Shingen at the head of the pack, whereupon Rose Kingdom and Buena Vista set off on the chase. Then, with less than 200 meters to the finishing line, there was a decisive moment. With Rose Kingdom wedged between them, Buena Vista edged in from the outside while Victoire Pisa started to wander outwards. Rose Kingdom was caught between the two and his path was barred. Then Buena Vista moved further to the inside.

Buena Vista was first past the post, a length and three-quarters ahead of Rose Kingdom in second, with Victoire Pisa another nose behind in third. But the flashing horse numbers



on the electronic board meant that things were not over yet. A steward's inquiry went on for a full 24 minutes after the race. The result was that Buena Vista, though finishing in first position, was demoted to second place. That was the penalty for obstructing Rose Kingdom, now declared winner of the race.

The JRA introduced the demotion system in 1991. Yet there had only been two cases where the “winner” of a G1 race had been demoted, and this Japan Cup became the third since the introduction of the demotion system.

Rose Kingdom, a 3-year-old colt chosen as the JRA's Best Two-Year-Old Colt for 2009, has a career record of 5 wins in 9 outings. This was his second G1 win following last year's Asahi Hai Futurity Stakes. After just missing out on glory in the Triple Crown races (including a 2nd place finish in the Tokyo Yushun (Japanese Derby)), Rose Kingdom finally came good when it really mattered.

This was the third time that a Japanese 3-year-old had won the Japan Cup, following El Condor Pasa in 1998 and Jungle Pocket in 2001. It was also the third Japan Cup victory for Rose Kingdom's jockey Yutaka Take, after his success on Special Week in 1999 and Deep Impact in 2006. It brought him alongside Frankie Dettori at the top of the all-time leadings for victories in this race.

Take had been out of action for a full four months following a nasty fall at the end of March. This was his first G1 win in 2010, stretching his record of consecutive G1 winning seasons to 23 years.

As had been widely expected before the race, Japanese horses dominated the higher placings. This was the 5th successive Japan Cup won by a Japanese horse. The first foreign-trained horse past the post was Cirrus des Aigles in 9th, Japanese horses occupying all first eight places. But it

might have been different if the horses originally invited to run in the race had actually taken part.

The UK-trained Snow Fairy, for example, had already stunned Japan's racing communities and fans with her dominating performance. This 3-year-old filly had already landed an “Oaks Double” this year, cruising through both the English and Irish Oaks, before entering in the Queen Elizabeth II (QEII) Commemorative Cup, the curtain-raiser of the Japan Autumn International at Kyoto Racecourse on Nov. 14. It would have been no surprise to find her as favorite for that race, given her racing performance. But foreign-trained horses often have trouble on Japan's fast tracks with their breathless finishes. Snow Fairy was only the 4th favorite, which was underrated – to say the very least – considering her convincing victory.



Until this year, Japanese horses had marked consecutive victories against their foreign-trained rivals in G1 races on turf in Japan. The last foreign-trained runner to win a G1 turf race in Japan was the Australian horse Takeover Target, victorious in the Sprinters Stakes in 2006; since then, foreign-trained horses have failed to take up the challenge. The first to break through the barrier of Japanese horses in four years was Ultra Fantasy (Hong Kong), winner of the Sprinters Stakes (Nakayama Racecourse). Starting from the No. 7 barrier, Ultra Fantasy instantly took the lead and ran away unchallenged over 1,200 meters.



Following Ultra Fantasy's success was Snow Fairy in the QEII Commemorative Cup. After reaching the inside lane on the final stretch, Snow Fairy, ridden by jockey Ryan Moore, sped past the post like an arrow to leave all other contenders in her wake. Meisho Beluga trailed four lengths behind in 2nd place. It was the first time a foreign-trained horse had won the QEII Commemorative Cup.

Snow Fairy was invited to run in the Japan Cup, but eventually withdrew, partly because there was only a week in between the two races. If she had taken part in the Japan Cup, she would have been expected to finish in the top places. I hope she will return to Japan again as a 4-year-old in 2011.

Snow Fairy's jockey Moore had also shown his prowess in the saddle at the 24th World Super Jockeys Series, a gathering of the world's leading jockeys. Though held every year at Hanshin Racecourse, the series was moved to Tokyo Racecourse this year to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Japan Cup. Seven Japanese jockeys battled for points with eight of their peers from around the world (Europe, North America, Asia and Oceania) in a series of three races. Moore won the series, this being his first victory in three attempts.



Behind him in 2nd place was the Australian rider Craig Williams, followed in 3rd by Irishman John Murtagh – the first time in the history of this event that foreign jockeys dominated all top three places. At the awards ceremony, Cash Asmussen, winner of the first World Super Jockeys Series in 1987, presented the prizes.

The Japan Cup Dirt featured not a single foreign-trained horse this year, bringing the Japan Autumn International to an end.

In contrast, Japanese horses have been very successful overseas this year. Red Desire, sent to Dubai (United Arab Emirates) in March, claimed victory in the Al Maktoum Challenge R3 (G2). This was the first graded race victory by a Japanese horse overseas since Casino Drive took the Peter Pan

Stakes (G2) in 2008. Buena Vista subsequently finished runnerup in the Dubai Sheema Classic (G1), while in the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe (G1), Nakayama Festa put up a great challenge against the English Derby winner Workforce, taking 2nd place. And so, while this was a year in which Japanese horses dominated the upper placings in the Japan Cup and really showed their newfound mettle, it was also one in which they lost out to Snow Fairy and Ultra Fantasy on home turf – a painful reminder that the world is still a very big place.

It was a year in which we could palpably feel the advances being made by Japanese horses towards the pinnacle of world racing, yet were also reminded of the depth of competition in the global racing circuit.

G1 Race Results (Japan Autumn International 2010)

The 35th QUEEN ELIZABETH II COMMEMORATIVE CUP (G1)



“European double Oaks winner Snow Fairy sweeps to four-length victory”

Kyoto Racecourse, November 14, 2010
3-year-old & up, Fillies & Mares, 17 runners
2200m, Turf, Firm, 2:12.5

Winner: SNOW FAIRY (IRE) (Ryan Moore, 54.0kg) b.f.3
Intikhab – Woodland Dream by Charnwood Forest
O- Anamoine Ltd., T- Edward Dunlop,
B- Windflower Overseas Holdings Inc

http://japanracing.jp/_news2010/pdf/101114.pdf

The 27th MILE CHAMPIONSHIP (G1)



Kyoto Racecourse, November 21, 2010

3-year-old & up, 18 runners
1600m, Turf, Firm, 1:31.8 (Record)

Winner: A SHIN FORWARD (USA) (Yasunari Iwata, 57.0kg) b.h.5
Forest Wildcat – Wake Up Kiss by Cure the Blues
O- Eishindo Co., Ltd.
T- Masato Nishizono, B- Edition Farm

http://japanracing.jp/_news2010/pdf/101121.pdf

The 30th JAPAN CUP (G1)



Tokyo Racecourse, November 28, 2010
3-year-old & up, 18 runners
2400m, Turf, Firm, 2:25.2

Winner: ROSE KINGDOM (JPN) (Yutaka Take, 55.0kg) db.c.3
King Kamehameha – Rosebud by Sunday Silence
O- Sunday Racing Co., Ltd., T- Kojiro Hashiguchi,
B- Northern Farm

http://japanracing.jp/_news2010/pdf/101128.pdf

The 11th JAPAN CUP DIRT (G1)



Hanshin Racecourse, December 5, 2010
3-year-old & up, 16 runners
1800m, Dirt, Good, 1:48.9

Winner: Transcend (JPN) (Shinji Fujita, 57.0kg) b.c.4
Wild Rush – Cinema Scope by Tony Bin
O- Koji Maeda, T- Takayuki Yasuda,
B- North Hills Management

http://japanracing.jp/_news2010/pdf/101205.pdf

Information

The Japan Association for International Horse Racing (JAIR) has merged with the Japan Race Horse Registry (JRHR) on December 1, 2010 and has changed its name to **the Japan Association for International Racing and Stud Book (JAIRS)**.

By merging the two associations, JAIRS will aim to effectively consolidate and distribute information regarding Japanese horse racing and thoroughbred breeding, the latter being the primary

duties of JRHR. We hope this will contribute to the further development of the Japanese horseracing industry.

Under the new association, JAIR and JRHR will continue to conduct its respective current duties, but with further operational efficiency. JAIRS will look to expand and enrich its business line more than ever before, in hopes of contributing to the development of horseracing around the world.

JRA Official Tour <http://japanracing.jp/en/go-racing/tour/index.html>

Japan Racing Journal Vol. 18 No. 6 Issue 107



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Printed in Japan