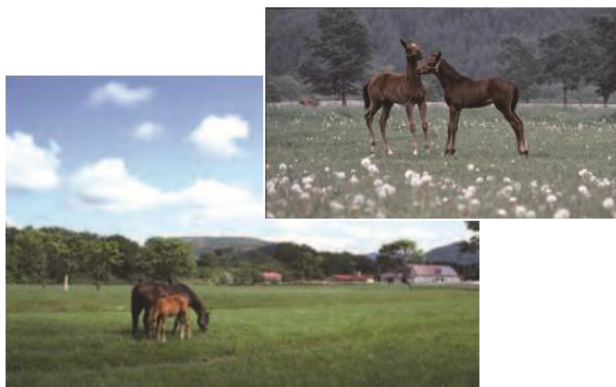


# Horse Racing-Related Activities

When Western-style horse racing was first introduced to Japan by the foreign residents of Yokohama during the 1860s, most racehorses were domestic breeds, with some imports from Shanghai and other parts of China. During the 1870s, a few thoroughbreds were imported from the United States for the first time for use as breeding stock. The breeding industry in Japan began in earnest in 1907 when, with the assistance of the Mitsubishi Conglomerate, a thoroughbred stallion and 20 broodmares were imported from the United Kingdom to stand at Koiwai Farm. With the subsequent authorization of horse racing and the regulation of racing programs and other racing related affairs, horse racing in Japan started to take off, and the number of domestically bred racehorses increased as the thoroughbred breeding industry developed. Although the breeding industry suffered a near fatal blow during the closing days of World War II, horse racing along with society started on the long road to recovery after the war. As racing activities surpassed their pre-war prosperity, the number of foals bred increased to over 10,000, an unequaled number in the history of horse racing in Japan.

Since 1995, however, the industry has been in a gradual decline. In 1997, the number of thoroughbred foals fell to around 8,000, and its number in 2012 was just about 6,800 - the ninth consecutive year of decline.

Bloodstock Sales in Japan are conducted by the Japan Bloodhorse Breeders' Association (JBBA) in cooperation with various local breeders' associations, and by the Japan Racing Horse Association (JRHA) who conducts the famous public auction, "JRHA Select Sale." As the number of thoroughbreds born decreases, horses are sold at a higher price at the sales, and the number of unsold racehorses has gradually begun to decrease.



Although the number of thoroughbreds has decreased, the breeding standards - as well as their expectations for the foals - have been getting higher every year. The establishment of the Japan Cup in 1981 resulted in the breeding industry setting a goal for producing faster and stronger horses that could hold their own worldwide. One of the goals of the Japan Cup was to bring forth steady improvement of the domestic-bred horses through the introduction of superior stallions and broodmares from overseas. This program has borne fruit to a point where the winners of GI races in some of the world's leading racing nations have been produced in Japan. As a result Japanese-bred horses are increasingly drawing attention on the global racing stage.

## Breeding

### Breeding Regions and Number of Farms

Breeding regions are located from the island of Hokkaido up north to the island of Kyushu in the south. Traditional breeding areas include Tokachi, Hidaka and Iburi in Hokkaido and Aomori, Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima, Tochigi, Chiba, Miyazaki and Kagoshima prefectures throughout the rest of Japan.

As of 2013, there were 959 farms with thoroughbred broodmares stabled. The Hidaka area of Hokkaido is home to the most at 794. If the Tokachi and Iburi areas are included, Hokkaido's total comes to 862, which accounts for some 90% of the nationwide total.

Breeding is expanding in Hokkaido, which has a cool, dry climate and plenty of space, while the industry has been shrinking in areas near tracks and in warm, humid Kyushu. The emphasis in these areas has turned to training.

### Stallions

During 2013, there were 223 thoroughbred stallions registered at stud in Japan. 78 of these were foreign-bred and 145 Japanese-bred. Approximately 89% of these stallions are standing in the main Hokkaido breeding region.

The great racehorse and stallion Sunday Silence (USA),

who died in August 2002, was Japan's leading sire for 13 consecutive years from 1995 to 2007. His influence as a stallion has been passed on to his foals. Of domestic stallions, 59 of those sired by Sunday Silence were used for covering 2,441 mares in 2013. The number increases to 85 (and 4,816 mares) when including stallions with a Sunday Silence bloodline in the second generation pedigree, which accounts for 43% of all mares covered in 2013. The top four sires, in terms of the number of mares covered, in 2013 were Deep Impact (JPN) with 246, Kurofune (USA) 216, Daiwa Major (JPN) 209 and Rulership (JPN) 208. Deep Impact and Daiwa Major are foals of Sunday Silence.

## Broodmares

If we look at the number of broodmares in Japan, the figures reached a peak of about 15,287 in 1991. These figures underwent a transition in the late 1990s, when it fell to 12,000 and remained around that level until 2003. The

numbers began to gradually decrease from that point up until 2013, when the actual number of broodmares reached 9,092.

## Foals

Japan bred fewer than 1,000 thoroughbreds a year through the 1940s and 50s. However, as the economy grew rapidly and horse racing developed, the number rose steadily to reach 10,188 foals during 1992.

An annual level in the upper 8,000s for foal crop had been maintained since 1997, but a declining trend began in 2003 and, as a result, 6,828 thoroughbred foals were registered in 2013. This is approximately the same number of foals as that of the late 1970s. This is a result of shifting from quantity to quality, as well as the steep decline in the demand for thoroughbreds caused by the closure of a number of Racing by Local Governments racecourses.



*Deep Impact ©J.Fukuda*



*Johannesburg ©JBBA*



*King Kamehameha ©M.Ueda*



*Empire Maker ©JBBA*