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SUBJECT: RESULTS OF THE 12TH NAKAYAMA GRAND JUMP (J-G1)



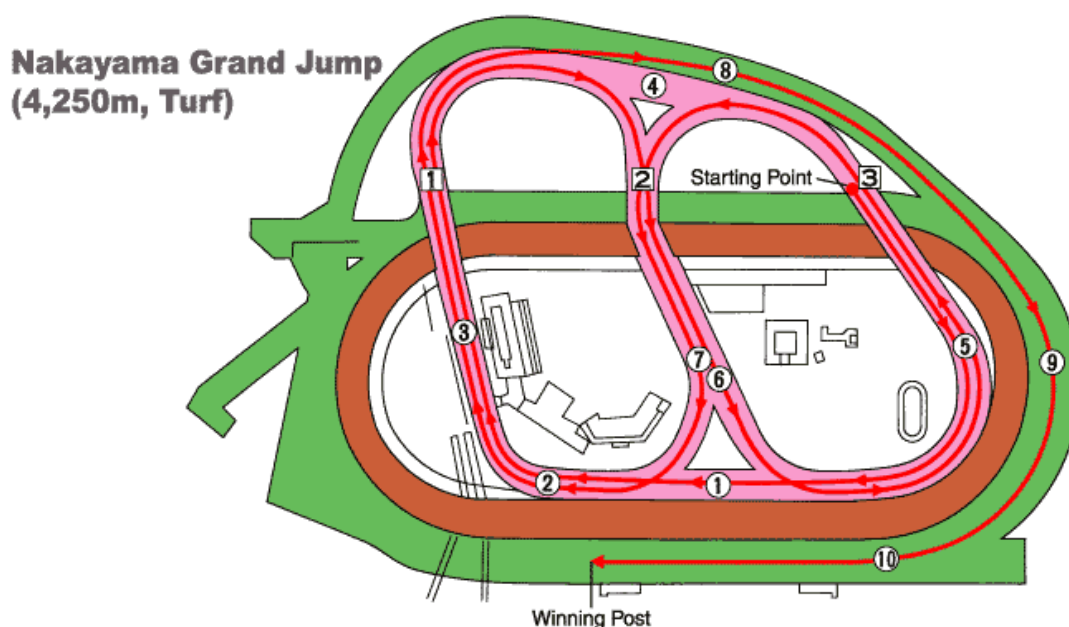
JRA launched a new project for holding an international invitational event for steeplechasers in 2000, aiming to enhance the standards of Japanese steeple-chasing through the exchange on international level and also to bring more excitement in obstacle races for the Japanese horse racing fans. In 2009, obstacle races accounted for 134 races—of which ten were graded—out of a total of 3,453 JRA races held; an average of 13.2 runners per race. Of the 160 JRA-registered jockeys, 117 jockeys were also licensed to ride obstacle races and 1 jockey specializes only in jump races.

The Nakayama Grand Jump features 12 jumps over the figure-of-eight-shaped course, which includes five up-and-downs over the banks and three hurdles set on the outside turf towards the final stretch. The 310-meter uphill stretch before the wire also is quite a test for many of the runners especially after running at a solid pace throughout the race. Since its inaugural year as an international race, the event successfully attracted first-class contenders from many countries. **Boca Boca** (IRE, by Mandalus) from France was second in the first year, while **St Steven** (NZL, by Hula Town) beat **Gokai** (JPN, by Judge Angelucci), who was the winner of the 2nd and 3rd Nakayama Grand Jump, to become the first foreign-trained winner of the event in 2002. Australian contender **Karasi** (IRE, by Kahyasi) became the only horse to win three consecutive titles in 2005, 2006 and 2007. **Ginolad** (AUS, by Perugino), who replaced Karasi to represent Australia last year, finished sixth after coming off a tenth place in his prep race (the Pegasus Jump Stakes) in Japan—he was the only foreign contender in the race.

This year, **Pentiffic** (NZL, by Pentire) answered JRA's call to participate in the Nakayama Grand Jump after accomplishing a rare feat of winning three major titles, back-to-back, in the Hiskens, Crisp and the Grand National steeplechases. However, the seven-year-old jumper strained his tendon during training after having finished fifth in the Pegasus Jump Stakes in March. With the withdrawal of fellow Australian trained **Mazzacano** (AUS, by King Ivor), Ireland's **Jumbo Rio** (IRE, by Captain Rio) and **Kalahari King** (FRA, by Kahyasi) of Great Britain, the 2010 Nakayama Grand Jump started without a foreign contender for the first time since its inaugural year as an international invitational race 10 years ago.

The all-Japanese field running this year did not include the top two finishers of 2009, **Spring Ghent** (JPN, by Opera House), who has been sidelined with a tendon injury since October last year, and the two-time JRA Award winner (2008 and 2009) **King Joy** (JPN, by Marvelous Sunday) that has not yet begun his 2010 season since backing out of his intended start in the Hanshin Spring Jump (J-G2, 3,900m) with a stone bruise. That left reliable jumper and the JRA's award winning jumper of 2007 **Merci A Time** as the only contestant with a J-G1 title, **Towa Vega** who was unbeaten in his two previous starts this season including the Hanshin Spring Jump, and **Open Garden** who finished third in both J-G1 events at Nakayama in 2009 as the key players in the race.

Blandices (JPN, by Sakura Bakushin O) set the record when winning the 2004 Nakayama Grand Jump in 4:47.0.



THE 12TH NAKAYAMA GRAND JUMP (J-G1)

4-year-old & up, 4,250 meters (about 2 and 2/3 miles), turf

Saturday, April 17, 2010

Nakayama Racecourse

11th Race

Post time: 15:40

Total prize money: ¥ 158,250,000 (about US\$ 1,758,000 < US\$ 1 = ¥ 90>)

4-y-o: 62kg (about 137lbs), 5-y-o & up: 63.5kg (about 140lbs), 2kg allowance for Fillies & Mares

Safety factor: 16 runners

FP	BK	PP	Horse	Sex Age	Wgt (kg)	Sire Dam	Jockey Trainer	Owner Breeder	Margin	Odds (Fav)
1	7	11	Merci Mont Saint (JPN)	H5	63.5	Admire Vega Kanesho Dia	Y. Kono K. Take	Y. Nagai Mitsuiishi Farm	5:03.5	38.4 (8)
2	6	9	Open Garden (JPN)	H6	63.5	Gokai Dance Fontaine	Y. Eda H. Gohara	K. Yoshihashi K. Yosihasi	Neck	11.5 (5)
3	4	6	Towa Vega (JPN)	H6	63.5	Admire Vega Towa Destiny	S. Kitazawa M. Hashida	S. Saito S. Saito	2	4.7 (2)
4	6	10	D'Or Riviere (JPN)	H6	63.5	Helissio Tai Princess	Y. Kuroiwa H. Yoshioka	S. Hattori Meitai Bokujo	2	68.0 (12)
5	1	1	Tokai Policy (JPN)	H7	63.5	El Condor Pasa Tokai Tiara	N. Hamanoya K. Nonaka	M. Uchimura M. Uchimura	1/2	25.5 (7)
6	4	5	T M Toppazure (JPN)	H7	63.5	T.M.Opera O T.M.Charmant	H. Sakuma A. Shikato	M. Takezono M. Takezono	Neck	11.4 (4)
7	7	12	Mejiro Spider (JPN)	H8	63.5	Mejiro Desire Mejiro Dalmatian	Y. Igarashi N. Takagi	Mejiro B. Ota Bokujo	1-1/4	116.6 (13)
8	8	13	Guilty Strike (JPN)	G6	63.5	Admire Vega Shape Up	K. Yamamoto M. Wada	K. Maeda North Hills Management	1	38.6 (10)
9	8	14	Bashi Ken (JPN)	H5	63.5	Silk Justice Linda Triano	Y. Minoshima Y. Takahashi	H. Ishibashi Kamii Nojo	1-1/4	18.2 (6)
10	2	2	Mayano Stardom (JPN)	H8	63.5	Carnegie Lyphard Niece	T. Kosaka M. Sakaguchi	E. Tadokoro Chiyoda Farm Shizunai	2-1/2	38.4 (9)
11	3	4	Shoryu Ken (JPN)	H5	63.5	Black Hawk Scanning Joy	T. Ueno M. Sato	M. Murakami Okada Bokujo	1/2	8.3 (3)
12	3	3	Battle Brave (JPN)	H8	63.5	Genuine Universe	M. Nishitani M. Honda	A. Miyagawa Okada Stud	7	52.6 (11)
13	5	8B	Croisade (JPN)	H8	63.5	Tamamo Cross Takeno Pansy	J. Takada S. Sakuta	K.Hidaka Breeders Union Takeoka Bokujo	1/2	140.2 (14)
FF	5	7	Merci A Time (JPN)	H8	63.5	Chief Bearhart Machikane Carmen	Y. Shirahama K. Take	Y. Nagai H. Tanaka		1.9 (1)

FP=Final Position BK=Bracket Number PP=Post Position B=Blinkers FF=Fail to Finish

NOTE1: No Foreign Contenders.

NOTE2: Figures quoted under Odds are Win Odds, which show the amount of money you get back per single unit (100yen), and Fav indicates the order of favorites.

WINNING TIME: 5:03.5

GOING: Soft

WEATHER: Fine

TURNOVER FOR THE RACE ALONE: ¥ 1,593,848,900

TURNOVER FOR THE DAY:

¥ 8,054,074,400

ATTENDANCE: 25,631

PAY-OFF (for ¥100)

WIN	No.11	¥3,840	PLACE	No.11	¥670
BRACKET QUINELLA	6-7	¥6,580		No.9	¥320
QUINELLA	9-11	¥12,730		No.6	¥200
EXACTA	11-9	¥23,750	QUINELLA PLACE	9-11	¥2,570
TRIO	6-9-11	¥21,680		6-11	¥2,310
TRIFECTA	11-9-6	¥172,980		6-9	¥930

1. **MERCI MONT SAINT (JPN)**, bay, horse, 5-year-old
 Admire Vega / Kanesho Dia (Diamond Shoal)
 Breeder: Mitsuishi Farm Owner: Yasuo Nagai
 Trainer: Kohei Take Jockey: Yosuke Kono
 21 Starts, 2 Wins
 Added money: ¥ 75,511,000 Career Earnings: About ¥ 98,111,000

2. **OPEN GARDEN (JPN)**, bay, horse, 6-year-old
 Gokai / Dance Fontaine (Dance in the Dark)
 Breeder: Kei Yosihasi Owner: K. Yoshihashi
 Trainer: Hiroyuki Gohara Jockey: Yusuke Eda

3. **TOWA VEGA (JPN)**, dark bay or brown, horse, 6-year-old
 Admire Vega / Towa Destiny (Windsor Knot)
 Breeder: Suzu Saito Owner: Suzu Saito
 Trainer: Mitsuru Hashida Jockey: Shinya Kitazawa

After days of unusual freezing rain, the sun came out at last to witness **MERCI MONT SAINT** dominating this year's Nakayama Grand Jump, a neck in front of Gokai-horse **OPEN GARDEN**, marking his first J-G1 and second win in 21 career starts. Son of Admire Vega, **MERCI MONT SAINT** was eighth pick in a field of 14, coming off a sixth place finish in the prep race Pegasus Jump Stakes after returning from a three-month layoff. He also happens to be the heaviest weighing horse to capture the title.

BASHI KEN was first over the initial fence after the field broke evenly, but immediately gave up the lead to **T M TOPPAZURE** who set the pace up to the final stages. Along with **BASHI KEN**, **GUILTY STRIKE** also traveled on the heels of the leader, while **BATTLE BRAVE** also moved up to stalk the pace as the field changed hands after obstacle no.6. **MERCI MONT SAINT** was off slow and was reserved near the rear of the field carefully taking a ground saving trip in the early stages. Sitting in fifth to sixth stalking the pace, **OPEN GARDEN** made his move after hurdle no.8 and improved position as he cleared the next jump (no. 9) right behind leader **T M TOPPAZURE** tailed by **MERCI MONT SAINT** in third on his inside. The Hanshin Spring Jump champion and second favorite **TOWA VEGA** broke sharply pressing the pace in third alongside **BASHI KEN**, and steadily traveled in mid-field in the latter half of the journey coming out of the last dip in sixth.

Although still on the lead as the field took on the last hurdle, **T M TOPPAZURE** ran out of steam in the final furlong and was pinned by **MERCI MONT SAINT** and **OPEN GARDEN**, eventually **OPEN GARDEN** outdueled by **MERCI MONT SAINT** by neck. Entering the straight and clearing the last jump in fifth, **TOWA VEGA** spurred between horses and showed an impressive drive to finish third, two lengths behind the runner-up.

Heavy favorite and stable-mate to the winner, **MERCI A TIME** was steadied in mid-pack waiting to make his bid, however unseated his rider after jumping the hurdle no. 8 on the backstretch.

- 4th (10): **D'OR RIVIERE** – raced in mid-pack, fought well but lacked final kick
- 5th (1): **TOKAI POLICY** – traveled in mid to rear division, improved position in backstretch, rallied late down straight
- 6th (5): **T M TOPPAZURE** – led the field, dropped away in the final 100m
- 7th (12): **MEJIRO SPIDER** – unhurried and sat in second from rear, showed good effort in homestretch
- 8th (13): **GUILTY STRIKE** – through early, no threat in late stages
- 9th (14): **BASHI KEN** – chased pacesetter within striking distance, used up and gave way

