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JRA "Summer 2000 Series" with "Summer Sprint Series" and Up-and-coming Japanese Horses for this autumn into the Future

By Takao Suda

JRA's "Summer 2000" series and "Summer Sprint" series that began in 2006 have become quite the favorite to both horserace fans and stable personnel. The promotion for this series of races has so motivated the horse owners/trainers that all of the races have had full starting gates. The one exception being, a single cancelation in the Kitakyushu Kinen (GIII) this year. The average number of runners has also significantly increased compared to 2005 and earlier.

Miyabi Ranveli, the winner of the last year's series, won the opening race of the Summer 2000 series, Tanabata-sho (GIII), but was unable to link consecutive victories, finishing in 14th in the second race, the Sapporo Kinen (GII). On behalf of Miyabi Ranveli, Hokko Pas de Chat, who won Summer 2000 series this year, continued to show ability, finishing second in the Kokura Kinen (GIII), winning the Niigata Kinen (GIII) and finishing a strong third in the Tanabata-sho (GIII). Along with waiting until the ripe old age of seven to log his first victory in a graded race, his achievements for this year



The winner of the Summer 2000 Series in 2009, Hokko Pas de Chat.



The winner of the Satsuki Sho (Japanese 2000 Guineas) in 2008, Captain Thule. Will he target the mile, or go after the middle-distance races in autumn?



Buena Vista, now a challenger for the JRA Fillies' Triple Crown after canceling out of the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe for 2009.



The winner of the February Stakes (G1) in 2009, Success Brocken. He is good at dirt courses and is best at 1600-1800m.

have been very remarkable.

The most impressive race of the five races in the series is the Kokura Kinen. The five races in the Summer 2000 series feature four handicap races. It was noted that the handicap weight system worked well, which was displayed nicely in this year's Kokura Kinen, where the first seven horses crossed the finishing line within 0.1 seconds of each other. Also, the race was won by a long shot, 16th ranked favorite, Dance a Joy, which was an additional big surprise.

The race with the most notable runners was the Sapporo Kinen. Buena Vista, who had been planned for the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, was entered and that filled Sapporo Racecourse to the brim with fans. Although she finished second to Yamanin Kingly in the race, the results should not have been that discouraging; However, canceled her trip to France on the same day. Her connections stated that they felt her pre-

requisites for the trip including her condition were not sufficient enough to make the overseas challenge.

The Summer Sprint series saw Kanoya Zakura achieve the first consecutive victories since the last year. She began with a win in the Ibis Summer Dash (GIII) over the 1000m turf course at Niigata Racecourse, which has the only straightaway course in Japan. She went on to add more points by finishing third in the Kitakyushu Kinen (GIII) and fourth in the Centaur Stakes (GII) without significant loss in form.

This series was topped by fillies, Ultima Thule (winner of the Centaur Stakes (GII) and the second in the overall in point standings), Grand Prix Angel (winner of the Hakodate Sprint Stakes (GIII) and third overall) as well as Kanoya Zakura. It is worthy of note that fillies and mares have scored high results in Japanese sprint races for these two years.

Next, I will look at up-and-coming horses for the big races in autumn.

Japanese fans have great expectations for a match between the old and new queens, Vodka and Buena Vista. Buena Vista's cancelation of her trip to France, made fans very sad on one hand, however, they are very happy on the other, as this makes this big match possible.

This autumn, Vodka looks to start in consecutive races held at Tokyo Racecourse where she's displayed great performance in the past, while Buena Vista will be in the hunt to earn the JRA Triple Crown for fillies, trying to match the achievement of Still in Love in 2003. This would probably mean that the match between these two horses would likely occur in the Japan Cup (GI) if it is to happen. They even have chances to finish first and second beating colts and horses because there is no champion colt, or horse, at the same level as the likes of Deep Impact for 2400m races in Japan. There are a good many horses competing with only slight differences



The winner of the Satsuki Sho (Japanese 2000 Guineas) in 2009, Unrivaled. He will be one of leading candidates for the autumn long distance races.



The winner of the 2009 Takarazuka Kinen (G1), Dream Journey. Will he present a warm welcome for the overseas runners for the Japan Cup?



Well-known queen, Vodka. Her meeting with the young and powerful filly, Buena Vista in the autumn races should result in memorable racing!



Kanoya Zakura, a consecutive winner in the Summer Sprint Series since last year.

in ratings. Screen Hero, which won the Japan Cup last year as the least fancied horse colt in the field, is back, but his struggle in later races shows that it is quite chaotic for the middle and long distance races.

If I were to name a colt or horse to advance out of the period of lull, one would be the winner of the Takarazuka Kinen (GI), Dream Journey, which I think would be most likely to demonstrate even better ability. I would also mention a new star that has appeared from the three-year-old colt. Logi Universe, already won the Japanese Derby, does not have enough time for the Japanese St. Leger, but it is quite possible that we may see him in the Japan Cup. If Unrivaled which, who won the Japanese 2000 Guineas, and Reach the Crown, second place runner in the Japanese Derby finish high in the Japanese St. Leger, they would also be leading candidates for the Japan Cup.

Obviously, it is also possible for horses trained overseas to win the Japan Cup. Since Japan has no outstanding, or overpowering runners which would easily overwhelm the field, horses coming from overseas should have a great chance. I personally hope some top grade runners will come to Japan.

As for one-mile races, Super Hornet, which has come close but has yet to grab the big title, will likely join the Mile Championship (GI) determined to get that first GI. However, the winner of last year's Japanese 2000 Guineas, Captain Thule, will be a strong competitor if he runs in this race.

Captain Thule was away from the races for over a year because of a fracture, but made his comeback on his second race after the long break, the Asahi Challenge Cup (GIII). During that race, he was passed in the straight, but came back to win, proving that he is indeed, extraordinary. Regardless of the race he chooses to run, Captain Thule will be a horse to keep an eye on this autumn.

The dirt races may bring us a transition to the next generation, considering Vermilion – the most successful dirt horse of the immediate past – will be running as a 7-year-old this autumn.

We can expect Success Brocken, the winner of the February Stakes (GI), as the leading candidate among the younger generation. He is best suitable for 1600-1800m races, so he should perform well in the Japan Cup Dirt (GI) which will now be held on the 1800m course at Hanshin Racecourse, whereas, in the past, the race was run over 2100m at Tokyo Racecourse.

We can also look for four-year-old Espoir City to perform well, as he has not suffered any so-called "terrible" losses in dirt races. Also, attention should be paid to Smart Falcon who shows a unique character for a dirt horse. Instead of aiming for a grade title or prestige, he has entered in races where he can surely win for the past year and it is highly possible for him to advance to the top-class of the runners in dirt races. This autumn his training seems to be a little behind schedule. However, fans will be paying close attention to how he performs in the race if he chooses to enter the Japan Cup Dirt, or the Tokyo Daishoten.

Finally, I would like to talk about the two-year-old colts and fillies. The popularity of the 2-Y-O races has been growing in Japan for several years, so today's fans often take notice of any talented/well-bred horses in the early stages, sometimes even before their debut.

If I had to pick one colt from amongst all the winners, it would be San Diego City. In the Sapporo Nisai Stakes, he won his three consecutive race since his debut. He can hold his own pace without being affected by other horses, which proves a perfected ability not found in most standard 2-y-o horses.

Otherwise, I would also want to look at L'Ile d'Aval, a nephew of Deep Impact, who won two races in convincing

fashion. Unfortunately, he will have to be away from racing for about six months due to a fracture. However, there is no question about his ability, so I would like racing people overseas to remember this name for upcoming years.

Also, one of the highly-regarded fillies is Shimmei Fuji. She is a granddaughter of Shinko Lovely, the winner of the Mile Championship in 1993. She finished first in the Niigata Nisai Stakes, surprisingly coming from the rear and overtaking all of the other 17 horses in the field. She should next appear in the Hanshin Juvenile Fillies in December.

(Note) This article was completed on 7, October 2009.

JRA Official Tour

<http://japanracing.jp/tour/index.html>

All JRA Racecourses

located at the following site, if you click:

<http://japanracing.jp/course/j-racecourse.html>

All JRA Racing fixtures

located at the following site, if you click:

<http://japanracing.jp/information/schedule.html>

One for the cameras: Laurel Guerreiro wins the Sprinters Stakes (G1)

Shintaro Kano

The sixth leg of the Global Sprint Challenge produced one of the closest finishes in Sprinters Stakes history, but it did not involve the eight-race series leader **Scenic Blast**.

Takamatsunomiya Kinen champion **Laurel Guerreiro** edged **B B Guldán** by all of one centimeter to win the 43rd Sprinters Stakes on Sunday, October 4, 2009, at Nakayama Racecourse, becoming just the second horse ever to complete the Japan Racing Association's



(c) JRA

spring-autumn sprint Grade 1 double. The winning time by the sixth choice was 1 minute, 7.5 seconds over 1,200 meters on firm turf, half a second off the race record set by **Trot Star** in 2001.

Favorite and Grade 2 Centaur Stakes winner **Ultima Thule** faded on the home stretch and took fifth in her Grade 1 debut.

“I’m just glad we won today,” jockey Shinji Fujita said during the post-race press conference. “To be honest, I thought we may have been at a disadvantage at the wire. It was just really hard to tell because there was a lot of space between us and the horse on the outside.”

Australian Racehorse of the Year **Scenic Blast**, who went off as the third

pick and bidding to cash in the US\$1 million Global Sprint Challenge bonus with a third Grade 1 victory in three different countries, came in last under new partner Mark Zahra as the only foreign horse in a full field of 16, less defending Sprinters Stakes champion **Sleepless Night** who was retired earlier in the week due to injury.

The first overseas entry in the Sprinters Stakes in three years, the 5-year-old **Scenic Blast**, who still leads the Global Sprint Challenge by a comfortable 19 points after winning the Coolmore Lightning Stakes and the King’s Stand Stakes, will have to wait until December to uncork the champagne when he runs in the Cathay Pacific Hong Kong Sprint.

Before a crowd of just under 46,000

on a sunny afternoon at Nakayama, the 5-year-old **Laurel Guerreiro** jumped on to the lead from the start and pushed the pace through the first 600 meters at 32.9 seconds before turning for home along the railing, with **B B Guldán**, under veteran Katsumi Ando, closing in fast to his outside.

After clearing the hill on the 310-meter straight, the two horses appeared to crash the wire at the same time and it went to the photos to determine the new Sprinters Stakes champion. But the finish was so close that the review required almost 15 minutes before **Laurel Guerreiro** was declared the narrowest of Grade 1 winners. **Kanoya Zakura**, two-time defending champion of the JRA’s Summer Sprint Series, came in third more than a length behind the top two.



Both Fujita and trainer Mitsugu Kon had not been confident ahead of the race following the **King Halo** son’s 14th-place performance in the Centaur Stakes at Hanshin on Sept. 13.

“His last performance left a lot to be desired, and I definitely had my doubts for this race,” said Fujita, who won his first Sprinters Stakes. “He lost by too much for a Grade 1 champion, and because he is a Grade 1 champion, I didn’t want to blame it on the 59 kilograms he had carried.

“He breaks well as he always has, but he’s been really struggling to pick up the pace these last two races. I think if we went up against a pure speedster, he probably wouldn’t be able to grab the lead.

“There’s such a huge difference in his result today from the last race that I don’t know what to make of all this. He was in much better form for the Takamatsunomiya Kinen; there’s no comparison. For him, I think it’s better that he stuck to 1,200 meters rather than running in the mile. But full credit to him; he really toughed it out today.”

Added Kon, who also won his first Sprinters Stakes and after the race announced plans for **Laurel Guerreiro** to run in the Cathay Pacific Hong Kong Sprint on Dec. 13: “I would have settled for a tie. The horse was far from being in top condition, and I was just counting on him to dig deep. I think he showed a lot of pride as a Grade 1 champion today.

“There was a period of time when he couldn’t win, but now he’s got two Grade 1 titles to show for and I couldn’t be happier for him. He’ll definitely get better as the year progresses, and if he can win a Grade 1 race in the form he was in today, you have to like his chances (in Hong Kong).

“The heat got to him in the summer, and he came back to us having lost a lot of weight. He seemed to switch on when the jockey worked him this week, and that may have made the difference because he’s a horse who feeds off his emotions.”

Laurel Guerreiro, out of **Big Tenby**, is 5-for-26 for his career with earning of more than 482 million yen.

Representatives from Australia, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand and Singapore participate in the 2009 ARF Specialized Study Program.

JAIR held the 2009 ARF Specialized Study Program for the three areas: Starting, Doping Control and Marketing and Racing Related Facilities. Programs for Starters and Doping Control were offered from the 18th to the 24th of August. One

participant from Singapore Turf Club joined the program for Starters, and one from Busan Gyeongnam Race Park (Korea) joined the program for the Doping Control. Additionally, participants from the Victoria Racing Club (Australia), Selangor Turf Club

(Malaysia), and New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing, joined the program for Marketing and Racing Related Facilities, which was held from the 9th to the 16th of September. Each program was held under the following generalized schedule:

1. Program for Starter (18th – 24th Aug)

DAY 1: 18th Aug. (Tuesday)

- Orientation & Explanation of the study program in the JAIR office.
- Courtesy visit to the International Strategy Planning Committee, JRA Main office.
- Welcome luncheon hosted by JAIR President.
- Depart JAIR office for JRA Miho Training Center.

DAY 2: 19th Aug. (Wednesday)

- Observe Gate Tests & Jump Tests at the JRA Miho Training Center.
- Miho Training Center Facility Tour (slope woodchip track, stable, swimming pool, horse clinic, forest promenade).

- Visit the Japan Starting System Co., Ltd. (JSS) to study state-of-the-art starting gates and related equipment.
- Lecture on Starting at the Race Control Section, JRA Miho Training Center.

DAY 3: 20th Aug. (Thursday)

- Watch Gate Tests at the Miho Training Center North training track.
- Lecture on Starting at the Race Control Section, JRA Miho Training Center.
- Q&A Session with JRA Starters.

DAY 4: 21st Aug. (Friday)

- Travel from Tokyo to Niigata by the "Bullet" Train.

DAY 5: 22nd Aug. (Saturday)

- Observe starter's race-day duties during race meeting at the JRA Niigata Racecourse.
- Depart Niigata for Tokyo.

DAY 6: 23rd Aug. (Sunday)

- Tour JRA Tokyo Racecourse facilities and visit racing museum within the racecourse.

DAY 7: 24th Aug. (Monday)

- Critique of the Study Program.
- Certificates of Completion of Training distributed to the participant by the President of JAIR.
- Farewell luncheon hosted by President of JAIR.

2. Program for Doping Control (18th – 24th Aug)

DAY 1: 18th Aug. (Tuesday)

- Orientation & Explanation of the study program in the JAIR office.
- Courtesy visit to the International Strategy Planning Committee, JRA Main office.
- Welcome luncheon hosted by JAIR President.

- Depart JAIR office for JRA Miho Training Center.

DAY 2: 19th Aug. (Wednesday)

- Observe Morning Track Work at the JRA Miho Training Center.
- Miho Training Center Facility Tour (slope woodchip track, stable, swimming pool, horse clinic, forest promenade).

- Lecture on JRA Doping Control System at the Equine Clinic in the Training Center.

DAY 3: 20th Aug. (Thursday)

- Travel from Tokyo to Utsunomiya.
- Visit the JRA Equine Research Institute.



A participant from Korea looking relaxed against the green background at Niigata Racecourse.



The Participant from Korea (right) in the Doping Control program learns about various testing devices, and methods, at the LRC.



A participant from Singapore in the Starter program observes the horses as they are about to enter the gates.

DAY 4: 21st Aug. (Friday)

- Visit the Laboratory of Racing Chemistry (LRC) & Facility Tour.
- Lecture on Doping Control Test at LRC.
- Q&A Session with chemists in the LRC.
- Travel from Utsunomiya to Niigata.

DAY 5: 22nd Aug. (Saturday)

- Observe general race-day duties at JRA Niigata Racecourse.
- Visit saddling enclosure, parade ring (paddock), weighing room, stewards' & handicappers' room and placing judge's room at the racecourse.
- Visit Sample Collection Area at the racecourse.
- Watch races from the Grandstand in the racecourse.
- Depart Niigata for Tokyo.

DAY 6: 23rd Aug. (Sunday)

- Tour JRA Tokyo Racecourse facilities and visit Racing Museum at the racecourse.

DAY7: 24th Aug. (Monday)

- Critique of the Study Program.
- Certificates of Completion of Training distributed to the participant by the President of JAIR.
- Farewell luncheon hosted by President of JAIR.

3. Program for Marketing and Racing Related Facilities

(9th -16th Sep)

DAY 1: 9th Sep. (Wednesday)

- Orientation & Explanation of the study program in the JAIR office.
- Welcome luncheon hosted by a JAIR Executive Director.
- Courtesy visit to the International Strategy Planning Committee, JRA Main office.
- Lecture on JRA Customer Service Department.
- Lecture on JRA Media & Publicity Department.

DAY 2: 10th Sep. (Thursday)

- Depart Tokyo for Miho, Ibaraki Prefecture.

DAY 3: 11th Sep. (Friday)

- Observe Morning Track Work at the JRA Miho Training Center.
- Miho Training Center Facility Tour (slope woodchip track, stable, swimming pool, horse clinic, forest promenade).
- Depart Miho Training Center for Tokyo.

DAY 4: 12th Sep. (Saturday)

- Observe general race-day duties at JRA Nakayama Racecourse located at Chiba Prefecture.
- Visit saddling enclosure, parade ring (paddock), weighing room, stewards' & handicappers' room and placing judge's room, in the racecourse.
- Visit Nakayama Racecourse's facilities for racing fans and watch races.

DAY 5: 13th Sep. (Sunday)

- Visit JRA WINS (OCBC) Korakuen, followed by a facility tour.
- Travel to JRA Tokyo Racecourse (non-race meeting day).
- Tour Tokyo Racecourse's facilities and visit Racing Museum in the racecourse.

DAY 6: 14th Sep. (Monday)

- Depart Tokyo for Hokkaido by airplane.
- Visit the Shadai Stallion Station & Northern Horse Park.
- Leave for Japan Bloodhorse Breeders'

Association (JBBA) Shizunai Stallion Station, located in Shin-hidaka, Hokkaido.

- Exchange views with staff members at the JRA Hidaka Yearling Training Farm and the Bloodhorse Training Center (BTC) in Urakawa, Hokkaido.

DAY7: 15th Sep. (Tuesday)

- Tour the JRA Hidaka Yearling Training Farm and observe the training facilities at the BTC.
- Visit Big Red Farm in Niikappu, Hokkaido.
- Depart Hokkaido for Tokyo.

DAY8: 16th Sep. (Wednesday)

- Critique of the Study Program.
- Certificates of Completion of Training distributed to the participants by the President of JAIR.
- Farewell luncheon hosted by President of JAIR.

[Note]

The purpose of ARF General Study Program is to provide a broad understanding on the outline of Japanese horseracing as well as its related industries, to the human resources who are expected to take a major role in the operation of

horseracing in each ARF member jurisdiction in the future. Meanwhile, the ARF Specialized Study Program focuses on improvement of horseracing skills as well as knowledge to be imparted to the ARF member jurisdictions from the specialized skills and knowledge avail-

able from within the Japanese horseracing industry. These specialized skills and knowledge have been developed over long years of hands-on experience and should be of great assistance to the participants of this program.



The participant from Singapore in the Starter program conducts the mandatory pre-race opening and closing testing of the starting gate.



Participants in the Marketing and Racing Related Facilities program (from New Zealand, Malaysia, and Australia from the left) touring the Crystal Corner at Nakayama Racecourse.



The Participants in the Marketing and Racing Related Facilities program (from front left to right: Malaysia, Australia, two unidentified persons, and the New Zealand member) during their tour of a variety of facilities at Nakayama Racecourse.

2009 Hokkaido Summer Thoroughbred Yearling Sale Report

The Japan Bloodhorse Breeders' Association (JBBA)
<http://www.jbba.jp/en/index.html>

Total sales for the Summer Sale jump to ¥1,729,980,000 8.1% higher than 2008

The Hidaka Horse Breeders' Association hosted the 2009 Hokkaido Summer Sale for Thoroughbred Yearlings at the JBBA Hokkaido Sales Complex in Shinhidaka from August the 24th through the 28th.

1,077 lots were offered (598 colts and 479 fillies) and 396 were sold (262 colts and 134 fillies). The sales ratio was 36.8%, 5.3 points higher than the previous year and the highest in the past 10 years. While the total proceeds ¥1,729,980,000 were up 8.1%, although the average price of ¥4,368,636 was 3.3% down, compared to last year.

The highest-priced lot was a colt by Chief Bearhart (CAN), out of Snark Success that was purchased by Mr. Mamoru Kato from Aichi Prefecture for ¥19,425,000. A filly by Neo Universe, out of Ronny Sunrise, was the highest-priced filly and was purchased by the

Nakachi Agency in Niikappu, Hokkaido for ¥16,800,000.

The Japan Racing Association bought 61 lots (33 colts and 28 fillies) for a total of ¥351,960,000 and the Tokyo Metropolitan Society of Race Horse Owners bought three colts for a total of ¥15,750,000 in the purchases by organizations category.

Brian's Time (USA) had the top average sales price of ¥15,855,000 for sires, followed by Rock of Gibraltar's (IRE) ¥11,970,000 and Neo Universe's ¥8,762,727.

An overseas buyer from Singapore bought four lots (two colts and two fillies) for a total of ¥11,865,000.

(Note: All auction sales prices are inclusive of consumption tax.)



The highest-priced colt, by Chief Bearhart (CAN), out of Snark Success in the 2009 Hokkaido Summer Sale.



The highest-priced filly by Neo Universe, out of Ronny Sunrise, in the 2009 Hokkaido Summer Sale.

Japanese Principal Race Result

43rd The Sprinters Stakes (GI)

Nakayama Racecourse, October 4, 2009
Value of race: ¥185,480,000
3-year-olds & up, International
1200m, Turf Firm, Fine
1:07:5 (Course record 1:07:0)
16 runners
Pari-mutuel handle: ¥19,515,764,500
On-course 4.7%
Off-course 95.3%

Sprinters Stakes only: ¥12,173,375,000
Attendance: 45,987
1st: Laurel Guerreiro (Shinji Fujita, 57.0kg) br.h.5,
King Halo – Big Tenby by Tenby
O-Laurel Racing Co.Ltd. T-Mitsugu Kon B-Murata Bokujo,
Winning money: ¥98,486,000
2nd: B B Guldán (Katsumi Ando, 57.0kg) br.h.5,
Chief Bearhart – All the Chat by Westminster
3rd: Kanoya Zakura (Futoshi Komaki, 55.0kg) ch.m.5,
Sakura Bakushin O – Woodmans Chic by Woodman

JRA Official Tour <http://japanracing.jp/tour/index.html>



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JRA Bldg., 1-19, Nishi Shimbashi 1-Chome, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-0003, Japan Tel. +81-3-3503-8221 Fax. +81-3-3503-8226
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