

IFHA QUARTERLY

*The International Federation of Horseracing Authorities
newsletter in partnership with the Japan Racing Association*



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Registration for ARC, IFAR Now Open

Registration is now open for the 40th Asian Racing Conference (ARC), which will be held in Sapporo, Japan, from 27 August to 1 September. The first ARC was convened in Tokyo in 1960 on the initiative of Japan. The 40th ARC is themed “Be Connected, Stride Together” and aims to support deeper collaboration and partnerships amongst ARF members and stakeholders.

Additionally, the eighth International Forum for the Aftercare of Racehorses (IFAR) will be held in conjunction with the ARC. The IFAR conference will take place on Tuesday, 27 August, and it will facilitate an aftercare facility visit as well as host a variety of panels with speakers from around the world.

For more information please visit the [ARC website](#).

Equinox, Japan Cup Celebrated during Longines World Racing Awards

On 23 January, Swiss watch brand Longines and the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA) proudly hosted the 2023 Longines World Racing Awards ceremony in London. Equinox won the 2023 Longines World's Best Racehorse title, while the Japan Cup in association with Longines (G1) was named the 2023 Longines World's Best Horse Race.

The horse racing world gathered to celebrate the 11th time Longines and the IFHA have crowned the top Thoroughbred racehorse of the previous year. Additionally, the Longines World's Best Horse Race was honoured for the ninth time.

During the Longines World Racing Awards ceremony, which was held at The Savoy, Equinox was named the 2023 Longines World's Best Racehorse with a rating of 135. This is the highest mark a Japanese horse has received under the current system, besting the 134 that El Condor Pasa earned in 1999. It is the second time a horse from Japan has won the Longines World's Best Racehorse title, following Just A Way in 2014.

Equinox earned his rating in the Japan Cup in association with Longines, which he took by four lengths over Liberty Island, who won the Japanese Triple Crown for fillies earlier in the season. Equinox was undefeated in 2023, with his other victories coming in the Longines Dubai Sheema Classic (G1), Takarazuka Kinen (G1), and Tenno Sho (Autumn) (G1). The Japan Cup was the final race of his storied career. Tetsuya Kimura trained Equinox for Silk Racing, and he was ridden to victory by Christophe Lemaire.



Equinox was crowned the 2023 Longines World's Best Racehorse

Masashi Yonemoto, the CEO of Silk Racing, as well as Kimura and Lemaire were in London to celebrate their champion. The winning connections were presented with elegant Longines watches as well as a replica of the Longines World's Best Racehorse vase, named Equus, by representatives of Longines and IFHA.

The Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings are established by international handicappers according to the performance of the horses in top races. Overall, 288 horses, trained in 16 different countries, were rated 115 or higher. The [full list and further information](#) on the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings are available on the IFHA website.

Additionally, the Japan Cup in association with Longines was honoured as the Longines World's Best Horse Race with a rating of 126.75. Longines is proud to be the Official Partner and Official Timekeeper of this historic race.

The Longines World's Best Horse Race award

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Longines Awards cont.

recognises the best-rated race of the highest-rated Group/Grade 1 international races as established by a panel of international handicappers. The ratings of the top four finishers in each race serve as basis for the assessment. This is the first time the Japan Cup has won the award.

Masayoshi Yoshida, the President of the Japan Racing Association (JRA), as well as Masayuki Goto, the JRA's Executive Adviser of International Affairs, were in London to accept the award. They received an elegant Longines timepiece as well as a replica of the trophy, representing a proud horse head, on behalf of the JRA.



The Japan Cup was named the 2023 Longines World's Best Horse Race

In association with the Longines World Racing Awards, the IFHA also published its annual list of Top 100 Group 1 and Grade 1 races.

The remaining Top 10 rated races of 2023 are the Longines Dubai Sheema Classic (126.50), Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe (124.75), King George VI & Queen Elizabeth Qipco Stakes (124.50), Takarazuka Kinen (124.25), Royal Bahrain Irish Champion Stakes (123.50), Tenno Sho (Autumn) (123.50), Arima Kinen (123.00), Prix du Haras de Fresnay-le-Buffard - Jacques Le Marois (122.75), and Juddmonte International Stakes (122.25).

The top rated races in the five respective distance categories are the Yulong Stud Newmarket Handicap (119.50-Sprint); Prix du Haras de Fresnay-le-Buffard - Jacques Le Marois (122.75-Mile); Royal Bahrain Irish Champion Stakes (123.50-Intermediate); Japan Cup in association with Longines (126.75-Long); and Kikuka Sho (Japanese St Leger) (117.50-Extended).

The Longines Breeders' Cup Distaff (116.25), Maker's Mark Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Turf (116.25), and Qatar Nassau Stakes (116.25) jointly hold the title of highest rated race for fillies/mares, while the highest rated 3-year-old race is the Qatar Prix du Jockey Club (121.50).

Eleven countries comprise this year's list, representing the foremost racing events throughout the world across 39 different racecourses. Australia leads all countries with 24 total races, followed by Great Britain (17), United States (17), Japan (15), Hong Kong SAR, China (12), France (6), Ireland (3), United Arab Emirates (3), New Zealand (2), South Africa (2), and Saudi Arabia (1). Because of a six-way tie for the 97th spot on the list of Top 100 G1 races, the 2023 edition consists of 102 races.

The full list of the [Top 100 Group 1 and Grade 1 races](#) can be found on the IFHA website. This list also serves as the base of the 2024 Longines World's Best Jockey award, which is the annual competition to recognise top jockeys throughout the world.

BONUS CONTENT:

To watch the Longines World Racing Awards as well as multiple features on the winners, visit the [IFHA YouTube channel](#).



2024 JAPAN GROUP 1 RACES

Date	Race	Racecourse	Distance	Purse	Nomination Close
28 Apr	Tenno Sho (Spring)	Kyoto	Turf 3200m	€ 3,189,300	12 Mar
2 Jun	Yasuda Kinen	Tokyo	Turf 1600m	€ 2,609,400	23 Apr
23 Jun	Takarazuka Kinen	Kyoto	Turf 2200m	€ 3,189,300	7 May
29 Sep	Sprinters Stakes	Nakayama	Turf 1200m	€ 2,471,100	13 Aug
27 Oct	Tenno Sho (Autumn)	Tokyo	Turf 2000m	€ 3,189,300	10 Sep
10 Nov	Queen Elizabeth II Cup	Kyoto	Turf 2200m	€ 1,891,300	24 Sep
17 Nov	Mile Championship	Kyoto	Turf 1600m	€ 2,609,400	24 Sep
24 Nov	Japan Cup	Tokyo	Turf 2400m	€ 7,281,900	8 Oct
1 Dec	Champions Cup	Chukyo	Dirt 1800m	€ 1,739,600	8 Oct

The currency exchange rates used above is 1€=149JPY. Approx. figures per exchange rates as at Dec. 2023.
Nomination Fee: Free of Charge. For entries, enquiries, and further information, please contact:

 **JRA** Japan Racing Association
<https://japanracing.jp>



Longines World Racing Awards in Photos



Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges, Chair of the IFHA, offered welcoming remarks during the Longines World Racing Awards in London this January



Masayoshi Yoshida, President of the JRA, was congratulated by Longines Vice President, Marketing Bernardo Tribolet on the Japan Cup being named the 2023 Longines World's Best Horse Race



Masayuki Goto, the JRA's Executive Adviser of International Affairs, was also in London to accept the 2023 Longines World's Best Horse Race Award

Awards photos cont.



Team Equinox traveled to London to celebrate their superstar winning the 2023 Longines World's Best Racehorse title



International media interviewed the award winners



The Longines World's Best Racehorse vase named Equus



The Savoy Hotel proved to be an elegant venue for the Longines World Racing Awards of 2023

Awards photos cont.



The Longines World's Best Horse Race trophy represents a proud horse head



Fuji TV's Minami Sakuma interviewed 2023 Longines World's Best Jockey Ryan Moore



Yuko Suzuki and Aly Vance co-hosted the 2023 Longines World Racing Awards ceremony, which was presented in both English and Japanese



Dominic Gardiner-Hill and Nigel Gray, co-chairmen of the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings Committee, honoured Dr. Kazuhito Matano, the JRA's official handicapper, ahead of his retirement

Debbie Kepitis Reflects on Winx Five Years On

This April will mark five years since Winx ran in and won her final race, the 2019 Longines Queen Elizabeth Stakes (G1). All told, the champion won 37 of 43 career starts, including her final 33 races. Her remarkable winning streak lasted for four years. Throughout her legendary career, Winx won 25 Group 1s.

An international superstar, Winx featured in the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings for years, and she was named the co-2018 Longines World's Best Racehorse.

Winx was trained by Chris Waller, ridden by 2017 Longines World's Best Jockey Hugh Bowman, and owned in partnership by Peter and Patty Tighe's Magic Bloodstock Racing, Debbie and Paul Kepitis, and Richard Treweeke. Debbie recently answered questions about Winx, who is now a broodmare.



Team Winx was honoured in London at the 2018 Longines World Racing Awards

A: Winx's recognition in the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings for three years was very humbling. Winx was a special horse to us, giving us an amazing ride, so to have her recognized and ultimately honoured on the world stage highlighted her uniqueness. She loved competing and always gave completely.

The world ranking meant a lot personally and gave us great pride. The award memories are many and are very dear to our hearts as is our Winx. Chris Waller and his team were amazing nurturing her to achieve everything she could. Thank you just doesn't say enough.

Q: Winx retired five years ago this April. With some time and distance from her career, what now stands out most to you?

A: It's hard to believe it's been five years, and on reflection, we were very lucky and fortunate for things to go so well. Winx built into being a champion horse with many fun moments, leading into her amazing winning streak.

Racing doesn't always go to plan, but Winx didn't seem to know this. She always had her own plan, and she trusted everyone around her. This is what stands out for me.

BONUS CONTENT:

To watch the celebration video honouring Winx as the 2018 co-Longines World's Best Racehorse, visit the IFHA YouTube channel.

Q: What was it like for you and your partners to have Winx recognized in the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings for years and ultimately honoured as the co-2018 Longines World's Best Racehorse?

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Kepitis on Winx cont.

Q: Winx is best known for her longevity and her winning streak. What was the race that meant the most to you to win?

A: I still find it very difficult to single out a race win of hers. Her record 25 Group 1 wins, including three Queen Elizabeths, four Cox Plates, a Turnbull Stakes, and an Epsom are etched in my heart, as she is. There are three standouts for various reasons:

- 1) Her first Cox Plate win in 2015, being 20 years after my father and uncle's horse Octagonal won in 1995, was very personal.
- 2) Her last-to-first win in the Warwick Stakes in 2017 (later raised to Group 1 status and renamed the Winx Stakes), in which she missed the start by four lengths and needed to dig deep to run down her stable mate Foxplay by only half-neck.
- 3) The win in the 2017 Chelmsford Stakes, where

she had to find a way to win with Red Excitement cleverly ridden in a catch-me-if-you-can race. She had to hit the afterburners to win by a length. Hugh Bowman was blown away and couldn't explain the feeling.

Q: What did it mean to you that Winx became so popular not just in Australia but internationally?

A: Winx being the Australian people's horse was wonderful and gave many moments of joy. She worked her magic not only with us but with all. The positivity she exuded to people was immeasurable, and there are many anecdotes from all quarters.

The Longines World's Best Racehorse Award highlighted the love and admiration felt for her around the world. The pride and enjoyment this gave us is difficult to describe. It still gives me a warm fuzzy feeling.

Q: How often do you get to see Winx these days? How is she doing?

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Winx, who featured in the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings throughout her historic career, retired in April 2019

Keptis on Winx cont.

A: We endeavour to see Winx as often as possible and aim for monthly. She loves seeing us. Paul, my husband, brings her cut up carrots just like she had in her racing days. She is doing really well and has settled into paddock life well, as a horse should. She's generally the leader of the pack and still bossy. Her strong personality still abounds, and she tells us when it's time for us to leave.

Q: Winx's first foal, a filly by Pierro, will be offered this April at the Inglis Easter yearling sale. What went into the decision to sell her?

A: The decision to sell Winx's first foal was a difficult one which the whole ownership group worked through thoroughly. There were many conversations, as she is our very treasured foal. Ultimately, we felt her sale would offer the opportunity for someone else to experience the same enjoyment Winx has given us. This is the next racing chapter of the Winx story.

Q: Have you followed the winners of the Longines World's Best Racehorse title since Winx's retirement? What are your thoughts on some of the horses who have come after?

A: We follow the tally of the Longines World's Best Racehorse title on social media and always look forward to see who rates during the year. Winning this title is not an easy feat, and the horses have to be champions to do it. Watching horses like Equinox, Flightline and Enable bring the memories of Winx flooding back. Waiting from October to January for the winner can be tense. It's a great initiative by Longines and the IFHA. Thank you.

Q: What do you hope the international racing community will remember most about Winx?

A: Please remember Winx, the Australian mare, for her amazing racetrack ability and the tingling feeling her racing gave you. Winx would like us to thank all the audiences who watched and loved her.



Winx, the 2018 co-Longines World's Best Racehorse, pictured on 29 November 2022 with her first foal, a filly by Pierro



Elegance is an attitude
JENNIFER LAWRENCE



MINI
DOLCEVITA

LONGINES


LONGINES WORLD RANKINGS

With a rating of 121, National Treasure and Senor Buscador share the top spot in the first edition of the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings for 2024.

National Treasure and Senor Buscador both began their 2024 campaigns in the Pegasus World Cup Invitational Stakes presented by Baccarat (G1) in January, and National Treasure defeated Senor Buscador by a neck.

Following that effort, they both traveled to the Middle East to compete in the Saudi Cup (G1). Senor Buscador raced in the back of the field for the majority of the race before rallying to defeat Ushba Tesoro, who is rated at 120, by a head. Saudi Crown, who is rated at 119, was three-quarters of a length back in third, while National Treasure was three-quarters of a length back in fourth.

Ushba Tesoro is in the co-second position in the rankings, along with three other horses: Romantic Warrior, Rebel's Romance, and Private Eye.

The next edition of the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings will be published on Thursday, the 11th of April.



Senor Buscador and National Treasure share the top spot

LONGINES World's Best Racehorse Rankings Leading Horses

for 3yos and upwards which raced between
1st January 2024 - 10th March 2024

Rank	Horse	Rating	Trained
1	National Treasure (USA)	121	USA
1	Senor Buscador (USA)	121	USA
3	Private Eye (AUS)	120	AUS
3	Rebel's Romance (IRE)	120	UAE
3	Romantic Warrior (IRE)	120	HK
3	Ushba Tesoro (JPN)	120	JPN