

IFHA QUARTERLY

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



Welcome to the IFHA Quarterly

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In an effort to keep members up-to-date on happenings within the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA) as well as throughout the sport, the IFHA is launching a quarterly newsletter in partnership with the Japan Racing Association (JRA).

Each issue will provide timely updates to important changes occurring within the sport as well as profile a member of the IFHA. Additionally, features on horses, jockeys, trainers, and other industry members will appear along with relevant news from the IFHA itself.

The newsletter will also provide the latest information concerning the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings and Longines World's Best Jockey competition. We hope you find the information informative!

HISA and Its Impact on American Racing

by Howard Wright

“The United States has to clean up its act and get it right.”

The words of the man charged with ensuring the integrity of the country’s Thoroughbred racing industry is in line with the majority of international jurisdictions could not be clearer, as the U.S. prepares fully to implement the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act (HISA) from 1 July 2022.

HISA, the act, passed into law last December. HISA, as in the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Authority, has been duly empowered to take on its rulemaking and enforcement activities and will implement and enforce an anti-doping and medication control programme as well as a racetrack safety programme, for Thoroughbred racing.

At the centre of the authority’s activities will be the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA), which under an initial five-year contract will add an equine programme to its work with human athletes, and whose chief executive of 14 years, Travis Tygart, used the opening words to get across his thumbnail sketch of what is required.

He added: “The US should be a leader. We as a society believe in the rule of law; that’s what we’re founded on, and how we act in sport is indicative of our values more generally. We’re looking forward to setting up a programme under HISA that the world can be envious of, if they support clean sport.”

Tygart is well aware that USADA’s involvement in enforcing HISA’s rules, overseeing laboratory testing and handling violations, is unique, not only in bringing the U.S. into closer alignment with most other members of the International

Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA) but also in unifying the 30 or so states that stage Thoroughbred racing.

“That’s the beauty of what’s happening,” he said. “First and foremost, The Jockey Club in particular, the Water Hay Oats Alliance (WHOA), and many others wanted a uniform and harmonised programme across all states, with which we agreed. So, the rules in Kentucky will be the same as in Florida, which will be the same as in New York. You won’t have to go to each individual state to find out what’s allowed and what’s not allowed. Otherwise, it opens up loopholes that cheaters will attempt to exploit and will ultimately create an unlevel playing field, state to state.”



Travis Tygart became USADA's CEO in September 2007

IFHA chairman Louis Romanet, who raised the importance of and need for international harmonisation of medication policies when he delivered the keynote address at The Jockey Club’s 57th annual Round Table Conference in Saratoga in 2009, remains steadfast in promoting uniform medication rules.

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HISA's Impact cont.

"HISA has the full support of the IFHA, which strongly believes it will help to bring American medication and anti-doping standards up to the same high level as in other major racing jurisdictions," Romanet said. "Creating a single set of strict, uniform, anti-doping rules that are robustly enforced will benefit everyone in the racing industry within the U.S. and internationally."

Speaking for The Jockey Club in America, Jim Gagliano, its president and chief operating officer, added: "The point of HISA is to unify horse racing in the U.S. with a national anti-doping and medication programme and a racetrack safety programme. All racing states will automatically be subject to the rules and regulations promulgated by the authority, which, along with USADA, will have the right to enforce compliance."

The novelty of the situation is not lost on Tygart. "That has not escaped my attention," he said. "But it's hard to imagine it's taken this long for it to happen. It's about time, quite honestly. And good for The Jockey Club and WHOA and Capitol Hill to recognise that it's time to catch up and bring the industry's anti-doping and medication control efforts into modern times. It's too important to be left to the whims of different, sometimes politically appointed groups of people, for many of whom it's not their day job. It has to be professionalised and should be uniform. We're just honoured and privileged to play a role in doing that."

While it is true USADA will be moving into uncharted territory, industry leaders are confident that its established expertise in the field of drug testing means it will handle things with aplomb.

"USADA is composed of experts in drug testing, and whether the athlete is a human or a horse does not change that," said Gagliano.

"We have been consulting with USADA for years, and its scientists and labs are prepared to work with HISA and the racing industry."

Tygart is facing the challenges head on, saying: "It will be a totally different system under HISA than what our Olympic and Paralympic human athletes are used to, so it's a case of taking the best practices from around the world and fulfilling the hope of the industry that was captured in the legislation.

"It will mean building a programme that has credibility and gets rid of the potential for people to dope horses and get away with it. It's been frequently said that the mind of a cheater, whether in equine or human sport, is the same. So, given the uniqueness of the athletes and other aspects of the industry, we are structuring the HISA programme to ensure that the cheating mentality doesn't win."

Tygart confirmed that part of the structure would be the responsibility to discover the presence of new, performance-enhancing drugs.

"Just as in our human programme, that's a part of the arena, gathering evidence and information, and having sources on the ground, not to mention promoting trust in owners, trainers and breeders, who are there to pick up the phone and give us information that allows us to develop tests through research and science, or to target test equine athletes on which some of these drugs might be used," he said.

"Then, where appropriate, we will coordinate with law enforcement and make sure, where we have evidence of intentional violation of criminal laws, it is brought into play. We're here for the victim, the clean athlete. We call it the Tiffany's box; we package it up and hand it to law enforcement, and demand that they do their job."

Tygart has already fielded calls from industry sources anxious to pass on information in this

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Harrington Ready for the Challenge

by Julian Muscat

If Julie Harrington harboured any doubts about what awaited her as incoming chief executive of the British Horseracing Authority (BHA), they were dispelled on her first day in office on January 4.

“The Prime Minister announced that Britain was going back into lockdown,” Harrington recalled.

But that wasn’t all.



Harrington went from running bets as a child to running the BHA

The following month widely circulated photographs on social media provoked an international outcry when Irish trainer Gordon Elliott was depicted sitting astride a dead horse. With Elliott sure to feature prominently at the imminent Cheltenham Festival, Harrington and her team were forced to consider Britain’s stance over the participation of Elliott’s horses.

And all the while, racing in Britain was taking place behind closed doors. The new lockdown meant owners were unable watch their horses on the track. This inflamed tensions between two key stake holders, the Racehorse Owners Association and the Racecourse Association, over prize-money levels during the Covid-19 pandemic.

“A few other headwinds meant that it wasn’t the easiest of rides for the first three months,” Harrington, 52, said with understatement.

“Most of our focus has been to ensure we can continue to race behind closed doors, and putting plans in place to allow owners to get back onto the racecourse. You could say it has been busy.”

Harrington’s remit also sees her take her place as the newest inductee to the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities’ (IFHA) executive council. She has already attended one meeting where she accompanied Brant Dunshea, the BHA’s chief regulatory officer, and believes the IFHA has an important role to play in the sport’s international projection.

“Racing is such a global product in terms of how fans and bettors perceive it,” she noted. “Any sport not prepared for a digital, international audience will not register as it should. I think this is incredibly important. We have to think of horse racing as a global product.”

The IFHA makes an ideal platform for the expansion of that philosophy. “I am really looking forward to meeting my colleagues from other jurisdictions,” Harrington said. “I know I have a lot to learn, and very much want to share ideas and information with them.”







In bygone days Britain’s representative on the IFHA’s executive council would have been a high-ranking member of the Jockey Club, almost certainly an aristocratic throwback to the days of the empire.

Harrington is cut from entirely different cloth. Having acquired a reputation as a “people person,” she allies a wealth of experience in contemporary management skills to a deep-seated love of the sport.

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2021 JAPAN GRADE 1 RACES

Date	Race	Racecourse	Distance	Purse	Nomination Close
6 Jun	Yasuda Kinen	Tokyo	1600m Turf	¥281,800,000 €2,254,000	20 Apr
27 Jun	Takarazuka Kinen	Hanshin	2200m Turf	¥325,000,000 €2,600,000	4 May
3 Oct	Sprinters Stakes	Nakayama	1200m Turf	¥281,800,000 €2,254,000	10 Aug
31 Oct	Tenno Sho (Autumn)	Tokyo	2000m Turf	¥325,000,000 €2,600,000	7 Sep
14 Nov	Queen Elizabeth II Cup	 Hanshin	2200m Turf	¥226,800,000 €1,814,000	21 Sep
21 Nov	Mile Championship	 Hanshin	1600m Turf	¥281,800,000 €2,254,000	21 Sep
28 Nov	Japan Cup	  Tokyo	2400m Turf	¥648,000,000 €5,184,000	5 Oct
5 Dec	Champions Cup	  Chukyo	1800m Dirt	¥216,000,000 €1,728,000	5 Oct

The currency exchange rates used above is 1€=125JPY. Approx. figures per exchange rates as at Dec. 2020.
Nomination Fee: Free of Charge.

VIDEOS

Queen Elizabeth II Cup



Mile Championship



Japan Cup



Champions Cup



Japanese Stars on the Global Stage

by Amanda Duckworth

In 2020, Contrail captured the imagination of race fans the world over when he conquered the Japanese Triple Crown.

His return to the races this April did not go according to plan, but his connections remain confident in his abilities going forward and that of Japanese-bred racehorses in general. They should know—they have had success at the highest levels around the globe.

“It has not been an easy journey, but I am sure Contrail has made some of the greatest achievements in Japanese racing history,” said jockey Yuichi Fukunaga. “I’ve never really cared much about my own records or awards.

“I’ve always just wanted to ride great racehorses like him and continue my career as a jockey. So, I feel very fortunate to have met and ridden such a great horse that could win the Triple Crown while being undefeated.”

Contrail’s winning streak came to an end in November when he finished second behind fellow champion Almond Eye in the Japan Cup in association with Longines (G1). After a break from the races, Contrail, a son of Deep Impact who is owned by Shinji Maeda, made his first start of 2021 in the Osaka Hai (G1), where he finished third behind Lei Papale over testing ground.

“During his winter break, I feel he has grown taller, bigger, and gotten to be more powerful, and he is to only run in Grade 1 races this year,” said trainer Yoshito Yahagi. “We had set a goal—win all the races he will run in this year. But, the surface on the day of the Osaka Hai became too soft, and it was unfavourable for him. He will retire at the end of this year and go to stud, so we need to decide everything carefully, depending on his form.

“Personally, I would love to have him race overseas, but there is great expectation for breeding and considering the world is affected by the pandemic, it might be hard to do.”

Although it is unlikely that Contrail will ever race outside of Japan, neither Fukunaga or Yahagi are strangers to competing—and winning—internationally at the highest levels.

Fukunaga’s victories overseas have included the 2001 Hong Kong Mile (G1) as well as the 2002 and 2003 Queen Elizabeth II Cup (G1) aboard Eishin Preston, the 2005 American Oaks (G1) on Cesario, and the 2014 Dubai Duty Free (G1) with Just A Way.



Fukunaga and 2014 Longines World’s Best Racehorse Just A Way

“I believe the talent level of Japanese horses is already high enough to compete in the world’s top races, and the gap between Japanese horses and the top tier world-class horses has narrowed even further,” said Fukunaga. “So, I think we will have more opportunities for top Japanese horses to challenge on the international stage in the future.”

Fukunaga is certainly qualified to consider Japanese horses on an international level. Just A Way’s romp in the Dubai Duty Free helped propel him to the title of 2014 Longines World’s Best Racehorse. Finishing second to him in the rankings that year was another Japanese runner in Epiphaneia, who happens to be a son of Cesario.

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Harrington Profile cont.

Her best friend's father was a racetrack bookmaker for whom the teenaged Harrington would "run" bets on the course during school holidays.

On graduating from university, she spent 10 years marketing big brands in the brewing industry, which brought her back into racing's orbit.

"One of the things brewers do is sponsor sporting events," Harrington reflected. "We sponsored races at places like York and Aintree, which was brilliant hospitality because you had time to engage with your customers between races. Over time I realised that my favourite part of the job was when I was interacting with racing."



The Juddmonte International at York was the 2020 Longines World's Best Horse Race

Duly re-ordained, Harrington joined Northern Racing (which subsequently merged with Arena) as manager of Uttoxeter Racecourse.

She then advanced to operations director across Northern's 10 racetracks before she joined the Football Association in a similar capacity.

In 2017, Harrington took over as chief executive of British Cycling, where she served for four

years during a turbulent period before she accepted the post as Nick Rust's successor at the BHA.

It felt like a homecoming for the first woman to become chief executive at British racing's governing authority.

From 2014 Harrington actually served a four-year term as an independent non-executive director on the BHA board, although she didn't glean too much about the nature of the chief executive's job.

"As a non-executive director there's a frustration in that you are not empowered to get things done," she said. "You don't really get under the skin of day-to-day, business-as-usual operations."

There is no danger of that now.

By the year's end Harrington will have become more familiar with factional divisions that tried the patience of her predecessors, among them Rust, who was sometimes left exasperated by the entrenched positions between horsemen on one side and racecourses on the other.

Many key decisions within British racing cannot be implemented without agreement by consensus from the BHA, horsemen and racecourses, the so-called "major stakeholders."

But the process has historically been compromised by self-interests of the latter two groups.

The latest manifestation of this is the stand-off between racecourses and owners over prize-money levels that fell significantly in the Covid era. Owners believe racecourses should have contributed more towards prize-money from

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Harrington Profile cont.

their media rights proceeds, which is now the single, biggest source of income for British racing.

For her part, Harrington believes frustrations over prize-money pre-date the pandemic. “I think British racing already had issues around its long-term financial sustainability,” she said. “Our funding model and the self-interests that lie within it is not conducive to long-term, sustainable growth of the sport.

“The structure of British racing’s national body requires consensus-building,” she continued. “But whenever you build consensus in the short-term, there appear to be winners and losers. The only way we will achieve longer-term financial health is by getting everybody to think beyond a horizon of two or three years.”

Identifying weak links in the chain is the easy part. Strengthening it is a different matter, although Harrington feels the Covid experience might leave a positive legacy in the way it obliged all the sport’s factions to work together to keep the show on the road.

That same spirit will be necessary as Harrington and her team prepare to implement the sport’s post-Covid recovery.

“I think the pandemic has shown that racing’s stakeholders can come together,” she said. “If not, the best horses running in Britain today might be based overseas, which is not good for anyone. One of the things the BHA is uniquely placed to do is bring people together, because it isn’t driven by self-interest. It is well placed to broker how we might move forward.”

It may be optimistic to expect long-feuding elements within British racing to set aside their differences in the quest for long-term sustainability.

Yet beyond the pandemic, British racing has been left reeling by the recent deaths of three huge investors in Prince Khalid Abdullah, Sheikh Hamdan Al Maktoum and David Thompson, proprietor of Cheveley Park Stud.

It is a growing source of concern whether affluent international owners will remain prepared to overlook poor financial returns from racing in Britain, as they have for the last 50 years. The fact that the sport will be severely damaged in their absence may provide the necessary impetus.

“Yes, getting consensus will require a big shift in attitudes,” Harrington acknowledged. “Call me a masochist but that’s what attracted me to the role. I have always liked a challenge.”

She certainly has one on her plate now.



Industry groups showed they could work together to keep racing going during Covid-19

Japanese Horses cont.

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Yoshito Yahagi, Contrail's breeder Koji Maeda, and Yuichi Fukunaga

"Just A Way was a horse who could run over a wide range of distances, from 1600m to 2400m, which is similar to Contrail," he said. "He was also a very quick horse. This is true of most of the good Japanese horses in general, and I believe speed and agility are the typical characteristics for Japanese horses."

Yahagi has also had success in the Dubai, winning the 2016 Dubai Turf Sponsored by DP World (G1) with Real Steel. Additionally, he has achieved great success in Australia, winning the 2019 Ladbrokes Cox Plate (G1) with Lys Gracieux, which carried extra importance for him.

"I stayed in Australia for a training program in my younger years, so I was so happy to win the Cox Plate, which I thought the best race in the world," he said. "Now my new big goal is to win the big Group 1 races in Europe, such as the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, the King George, and the Champion Stakes."

In March, Yahagi finished third in the Longines Dubai Sheema Classic (G1) with Loves Only You, who was just a half-length behind Mishriff, currently the co-highest rated horse in the world. Loves Only You went on to Hong Kong where she won the FWD Queen Elizabeth II Cup (G1), and her traveling may just be getting started.

"I think this year's Dubai Sheema Classic was a very high level race, and the first three horses are definitely world-class runners," Yahagi said. "In autumn, I am planning to send her to the Breeders' Cup Fillies and Mare Turf (G1) at Del Mar and hopefully onto the Longines Hong Kong International Races."

As for Contrail, top class races under consideration for the rest of the year include the Takarazuka Kinen (G1) in June, the G1 Tenno Sho (Autumn) in October, and the Japan Cup in November. Contrail's run into the history books has additional layers of meaning to Yahagi, who selected his dam, Rhodochrosite, as a yearling at the 2011 Keeneland September sale in Kentucky.

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Contrail, a G1 winner at 2 and 3, will only run in G1s in 2021



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WORLD RANKINGS

During the first quarter of 2021, Mishriff dominated the headlines. He led the first [Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings](#) release of the year following his victory in the [Saudi Cup](#) and then maintained his position after he switched back to turf and won the [Longines Dubai Sheema Classic \(G1\)](#) in his next start.

Mishriff's rating of 122 was equaled by Mystic Guide, who won the [Dubai World Cup Sponsored by Emirates Airline \(G1\)](#) at the end of March.

The next edition of the 2021 Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings will be released on the 13th of May. Full rankings are available [here](#).

LONGINES World's Best Racehorse Rankings Leading Horses

for 3yos and upwards which raced between
1st January 2021 - 4th April 2021

Rank	Horse	Rating	Trained
1	Mishriff (IRE)	122	GB
1	Mystic Guide (USA)	122	USA
3	Eduardo (AUS)	121	AUS
3	Nature Strip (AUS)	121	AUS
5	Charlatan (USA)	120	USA
5	Exultant (IRE)	120	HK
5	Golden Sixty (AUS)	120	HK
5	Life Is Good (USA)	120	USA
5	Lord North (IRE)	120	GB

LONGINES World's Best Jockey Leading Jockeys *** as of 8 May 2021

Jockey	Total Points
Vincent Ho	48
James McDonald	48
Joao Moreira	40
John R. Velazquez	36
Ryan L. Moore	32
Zac Purton	26
Karis Teetan	26

In the [Longines World's Best Jockey](#) competition, Vincent Ho and James McDonald currently find themselves tied for first with 48 points.

Ho's qualifying four victories have all come aboard Golden Sixty. The pair took the [Longines Hong Kong Mile \(G1\)](#) at the end of 2020 then returned in January to take the [Stewards' Cup \(G1\)](#), added the [Citi Hong Kong Gold Cup \(G1\)](#) in February, and won the [FWD Champions Mile \(G1\)](#) in April.

McDonald has three qualifying wins and two seconds. He partnered with Verry Elleegant to win the [TAB Chipping Norton Stakes \(G1\)](#) and [Ranvet Stakes \(G1\)](#), and he also proved victorious in the [Heineken TJ Smith Stakes \(G1\)](#) with Nature Strip. Follow the competition [here](#).

HISA's Impact cont.

area, encouraged, he thinks, by cases that are currently making their way through the U.S. courts, of which he has intimate knowledge.

"I don't know whether it's been fully captured in the media," he explained, "but the indictment that came out a year ago last March arose from evidence that came through an investigation we did on a cyclist who produced a positive test. We learned that this human athlete was obtaining his EPO from a pharmacy in Florida, which was also compounding designer drugs and giving them to trainers in the equine industry.



USADA has been tasked with implementing HISA

"This showed the underbelly of what was going on, and that was even before HISA was passed. Since then, we've had many calls, but we've had to say we don't have jurisdiction yet, but we appreciate the information, and we want to develop the relationships."

Although not everyone in the U.S. is supportive of HISA, by next year it is set to become the way forward for Thoroughbred racing, and Tygart and his team are prepared to meet the challenge.

"We recognise what a huge responsibility we will have and that we are not going to do everything by ourselves, but we're excited about partnering with the industry and clean athletes, and those who want things done right," Tygart said. "It's been a very, very, very long time coming. Not everyone will appreciate the efforts we make, as it's too profitable or they're stuck in the status quo and don't want to see change.

"Frankly, Lance Armstrong didn't really like the fact we did our job as well as we did. But for those who are reasonable and clean, we should be their best friend, and they should support everything we're attempting to do on their behalf."

Japanese Horses cont.

Rhodochrosite herself is a daughter of champion Folklore, winner of the 2005 Alberto VO5 Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies (G1).

"I remember vividly when we purchased Rhodochrosite because she was a horse that I picked by myself," he said. "I cannot say she was a great-looking horse, but she had an elegance and a nice family line. From my point of view, elegance is very important for broodmares since they will go to the breeding shed later, and she had it."

"It's a pity we are facing a global pandemic now, and it will make it hard for Contrail to show his talent in the overseas races. But we have his 2-year-old full brother who will make his debut this year, and a half-brother who is yearling (by Heart's Cry). Even if Contrail cannot win a Grade 1 overseas, I hope to try with his brothers."

BONUS CONTENT:

Visit the IFHA's Youtube channel to watch interviews with jockey Yuichi Fukunaga and trainer Yoshito Yahagi. They discuss racing internationally, Contrail's career, and more.