

# IFHA QUARTERLY

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



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## Successful Return of the ARC and IFAR

The 39th Asian Racing Conference (ARC) was held in Melbourne, Australia, from 14-19 February. Led by Asian Racing Federation (ARF) Chairman Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges, the three-day business programme was themed Breaking Barriers. More than 700 guests, including delegates from 35 countries, plus leaders in racing and other sports as well as government officials, were in attendance. During the closing ceremony, Engelbrecht-Bresges announced the 40th ARC will be held in its inaugural host country of Japan in 2024. The Japan Racing Association (JRA), in conjunction with ARF, will stage the conference in Sapporo.

Additionally, the seventh International Forum for the Aftercare of Racehorses (IFAR) took place on 14 February in conjunction with the ARC. It provided an onsite visit to a Thoroughbred aftercare facility as well as a traditional conference covering a variety of aftercare topics.

# Drew Fleming on leading Breeders' Cup into the future

by Amanda Duckworth

When Drew Fleming took the reins of Breeders' Cup Ltd. in 2019, he became the youngest president and chief executive officer in the organization's history. The following year, as the world changed as the result of the Covid-19 pandemic, his deep love of racing and the skilled team around him helped keep the Breeders' Cup World Championships marching forward. Ensuring the sport carries on for generations to come was a driving force behind Fleming's decision to take the position, as he works to help guide racing in a positive direction globally.

"I was humbled by their offer to become the CEO in November 2019," said Fleming. "The opportunity to follow in then-CEO Craig Fravel's accomplished footsteps was a natural fit after coming up under his leadership. I already was deeply invested, not only thanks to my lifelong love for the sport, but because of a passion for seeing it succeed in changing times and persevere through various challenges.

"Where the pandemic is concerned, the Breeders' Cup is fortunate to employ a remarkably strong core team, all of whom rallied around the complexities of running the 2020 World Championships with safety as our top priority. Our Board is also made up of breeders and owners from around the world who have a vested interest in the success of the sport, and specifically in the success of the Breeders' Cup, and their support carried us through the challenges we faced during the pandemic."

Fleming's success has not gone unnoticed. Last year, at the age of 39, he was named to the



Drew Fleming is the president and CEO of Breeders' Cup Ltd.

*Sports Business Journal's* Forty Under 40. Given he was young when he stepped into the role of CEO, Fleming is unsurprisingly keen on helping to foster the next generation.

"I take the responsibility of leadership very seriously and work daily to reward the faith of the Board and to make a positive impact on the sport," he said. "It is also critically important to me that I work with other leaders to continue to develop young, digitally savvy talent who can help lead our sport into its next generation and engage fans from all walks of life."

Fleming does not hail from a racing background—his mother was a schoolteacher and his father was a tax lawyer—but as a native of Lexington, Kentucky, he did grow up surrounded by the sport. Like many, simply having a great day at the races was enough to influence the course of his life.

"I didn't actually visit the racetrack until I was 12-years-old," Fleming said. "Going to Keeneland, I got to experience some of the best racing in the world with my dear friend

*Continued on page 3*

## Drew Fleming cont.

Gatewood Bell, who is now their vice president of racing. I caught the bug instantly.

“In high school, our teachers knew we might not be there after lunchtime when we decided to wear blazers to class because we would sneak out and go to Keeneland. I grew up seeing how the racing industry serves as the lifeblood of an entire community, and that has continued to have an impact on me throughout my career.”

Fleming left Kentucky to go to college and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from Washington and Lee University before returning to Lexington to get his Juris Doctorate from the University of Kentucky. Although his career path was not obviously equine-influenced, his pastimes still were.

“When I went away to school and started practicing as a corporate lawyer, I ended up investing in horses with Gatewood and had such a great time,” said Fleming. “Being involved on the ownership front took my passion for the sport and for the horses themselves to the next level. As a lawyer, I started doing some work for the Breeders’ Cup, among other significant international equine clients, and that was the catalyst for pursuing a full-on career within the sport.”

“When I was practicing corporate law and working with the Breeders’ Cup, I got along very well with Craig. I’ll always remember he took me to a Christmas lunch where I thought we would be celebrating the early holiday, and instead he offered me an opportunity to change my career path forever.”

In 2016, Fleming became the Breeders’ Cup’s senior vice president of business and development. He was then promoted to chief operating officer in January 2019, and 11 months later, he was elevated to president and CEO.

“Craig has enjoyed a wonderful career in the Thoroughbred business and told me he felt it was important to mentor the next generation and give back to the industry that has given him so much,” said Fleming. “He told me he would teach me everything he’d learned in racing, and I thought, ‘Well, this is going to be the Harvard Business School of Thoroughbred racing management.’ And Craig did every single thing he said he would do and more. He took me to every meeting, included me in Board dialogue, and worked with me and mentored me.”

“When he left the company at the end of 2019 – in my opinion, unfortunately too soon – then-Board Chairman Fred Hertrich and the Directors were kind enough to give me the opportunity to become CEO.”

The 2020 Breeders’ Cup was always going to be a milestone for Fleming, simply due to it being the first one held under his leadership. Adding to the excitement was the fact the host site was Keeneland, his home track. Then, the pandemic struck.

“The sport found itself in a unique position in 2020 in that racing was able to continue despite many other major sports coming to a halt due to COVID-19,” said Fleming. “I was proud to join other leaders across the sports industry on a call with the White House in early 2020 about how to find ways to keep live sports operational while maintaining critical health and safety protocols. Even though the Triple Crown races were postponed to the summer and fall, they led directly into the Breeders’ Cup and saw exciting levels of engagement.”

“We also benefited from a significant increase in television coverage and were able to

*Continued on page 4*

## Drew Fleming cont.

showcase to the American public that one of our nation's oldest and most cherished pastimes was still running strong. Despite the uncertainties of the pandemic, Breeders' Cup committed to keeping our levels of purses and awards the same as in 2019. It was important for us to be there to support the industry as we all navigated an unprecedented time."

While the purses remained the same, the biggest change seen in the 2020 Breeders' Cup was that, like many racing festivals that year, it was not open to the public. Instead, Fleming and his team relied on technology to help fans still be a part of it all.

"Clearly, running the 2020 event without fans at Keeneland was a choice we did not want to make, but it was vital to put the health and safety of both fans and participants first," he said. "We



The Longines Breeders' Cup Classic was named the 2022 Longines World's Best Horse Race

made a significant effort in expanded technology with the help of NBC Sports, which covered the Championships with 15 livestreams and 75 cameras, so fans were able to watch the event from home as if they were there in person. We also made a commitment to return to Keeneland in 2022 to run the event in the heart of the bluegrass when fans would be able to attend."

Last year, the Breeders' Cup was again staged at Keeneland, and racing fans were able to witness Flightline dominate the Longines Breeders' Cup Classic (G1). In January, Flightline was named the 2022 Longines World's Best Racehorse, while the Classic received the title of Longines World's Best Horse Race.

"I'm so proud of the Breeders' Cup team, of our Board and our supporters, and of the horses and their connections," said Fleming. "This is an honour that shines a spotlight on the World Championships as a global stage where we showcase the best of the best. It all comes back to the support of the breeders and the vision of our Board, which were both rewarded with this recognition.

"It was also very special for us to work with the Keeneland team in our hometown of Lexington. Lexington and Keeneland are synonymous with first-class racing and traditions, so to have Flightline's historic performance in the Classic recognized as the best race in the world last year was particularly satisfying to me as a bluegrass native."

As the Breeders' Cup moves forward under his leadership, Fleming looks toward both the importance of industry cooperation as well as lessons from his own past as he guides the event into the future.

*Continued on page 5*



## Drew Fleming cont.

“The safety of our athletes and integrity of the sport will continue to be at the forefront of our mission, which is why we support the work of the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Authority,” said Fleming. “We will work to fulfill our role as a leader in the Thoroughbred industry, not only striving to host the best and safest races in the world, but also setting the standard where integrity is concerned. Sports betting, research, innovation, and investment are among our core focus areas.

“I’ve tried to take something from every experience in racing and apply it to my work to this day. I’ve been very fortunate to foster relationships across the globe, and I’ve also experienced the highs and lows associated with the sport as both an owner of racehorses and as an attorney representing various key industry clients. It’s important to look at what’s best for the sport from all angles. My first job in the Thoroughbred industry was mowing grass on Wimbledon Farm when I was 18-years-old. I think it’s those experiences that really shape a person and their views.”

While headlines from recent Breeders’ Cups—like American Pharoah’s Grand Slam, the dual success of Loves Only You and Marche Lorraine for Japan, and Flightline’s emphatic performance, to name a few—all struck a lasting chord within Fleming, his personal experiences as an owner have also moved him.

“There are so many great memories in racing that it’s impossible to name just one,” he said. “Personally, there are two races as an owner that I’ll remember forever. The first was our first win at Keeneland with a horse named Nina Fever. The second was with a horse named Con Te Partiro, who went on to win at Royal Ascot. Traveling there with friends and celebrating in the car park is a memory I’ll always cherish.”

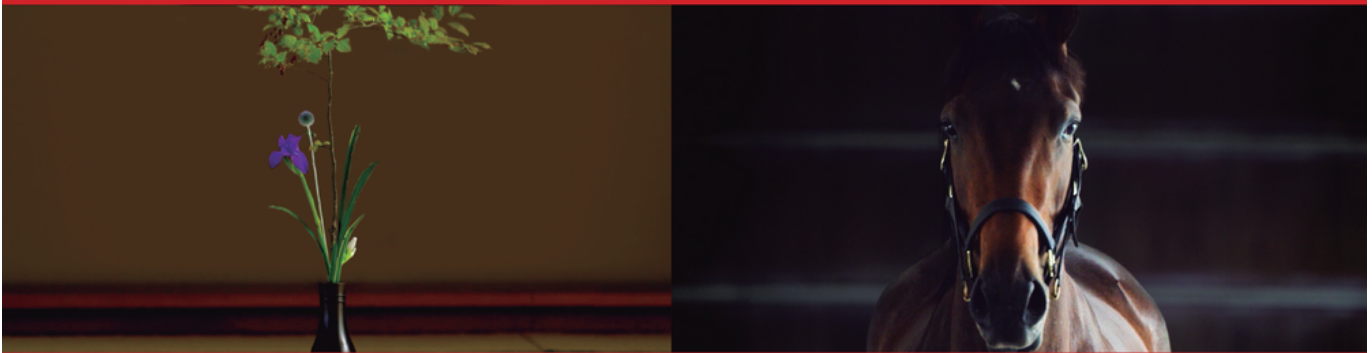


**Fleming was a co-owner in Royal Ascot winner Con Te Partiro**

It should come as no surprise given the global slant of the Breeders’ Cup that Fleming is heavily invested in improving racing worldwide. Among his other roles, he serves on the executive council of the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA).

“Racing is truly a global affair, and it is imperative that we work together with our international partners to grow the sport and showcase its beauty and excitement to new fans around the world,” Fleming said. “Rising tides lift all ships – we want racing to succeed across the globe for the health of the sport.

“My goal in taking a seat at the IFHA table was to serve in the best interest of our sport. Working together in pursuit of international safety and welfare standards, global harmonisation of rules, and growth where social and economic significance are concerned will provide a solid foundation and allow racing to continue to grow and flourish in years to come. It’s been an honour working with leaders across the globe, and I very much look forward to continuing to work together toward uniformity and harmonisation.”



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# The Legacy of Strength



## Flightline, Baaeed, and the Longines Breeders' Cup Classic Honoured at the 2022 Longines World Racing Awards

On 17 January, Swiss watch brand Longines and the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA) proudly celebrated the 2022 Longines World Racing Awards ceremony in London. Flightline was crowned the 2022 Longines World's Best Racehorse, while the Longines Breeders' Cup Classic (G1) was honoured as the 2022 Longines World's Best Horse Race.

It marked the 10th time that Longines and the IFHA have honoured the top Thoroughbred racehorses of the previous year, and it was the eighth time the Longines World's Best Horse Race was named.

During an event held at Banqueting House, which is one of the Historic Royal Palaces, it was announced Flightline had earned the title of 2022 Longines World's Best Racehorse with a historic rating of 140. This mark equals Frankel's benchmark rating set in 2012 under the current system.

Flightline earned his 140 in the TVG Pacific Classic Stakes (G1), which he won by 19 ¼ lengths over Dubai World Cup Sponsored by Emirates Airline (G1) winner Country Grammer. His other victories over the course of 2022 included the Hill 'N' Dale Metropolitan Handicap (G1) and the Longines Breeders' Cup Classic.

Undefeated, Flightline retired to Lane's End at the end of the year.



Flightline, with a rating of 140, was named the 2022 Longines World's Best Racehorse

His 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.

During the ceremony, Baaeed was also celebrated as the second-highest rated horse and the highest rated turf horse in the world for 2022. He received his rating of 135 in the Juddmonte International Stakes (G1), and it is the highest rating given on turf since Frankel received his 140.

*Continued on page 8*



Baaeed was rated at 135, making him the highest rated turf horse in 2022



## Longines Awards cont.

Baaeed's other victories in 2022 included the Qatar Sussex Stakes (G1), Queen Anne Stakes (G1), and Al Shaqab Lockinge Stakes (G1). The Shadwell runner retired at the end of the season.

Overall, 288 horses, trained in 16 different countries, were rated 115 or higher in 2022.

Longines and the IFHA were also delighted to honour the Longines Breeders' Cup Classic as the 2022 Longines World's Best Horse Race. Longines is proud to be the Official Partner and Official Timekeeper of this historic race.

The Longines World's Best Horse Race Award recognizes 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 second time the Classic has won the award, with additional recognition coming in 2016. In 2022, it achieved a rating of 126.75 after Grade 1 winners Flightline, Olympiad, Taiba, and Rich Strike were the first four across the finish line.

Drew Fleming, the president and chief executive officer of Breeders' Cup Ltd., was present in London to accept the award. He received an elegant Longines timepiece as well as a replica of the trophy, representing a proud horse head, on behalf of the Breeders' Cup.



The Longines Breeders' Cup Classic was the 2022 Longines World's Best Horse Race

## BONUS CONTENT:

To watch the Longines World Racing Awards and the celebration videos for Flightline, Baaeed, and the Longines Breeders' Cup Classic, visit the [IFHA's YouTube page](#).

The remaining Top 10 rated races were the Qipco Champion Stakes (124.75), Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe (124.25), Al Shaqab Lockinge Stakes (123.75), Qatar Sussex Stakes (123.50), TVG Pacific Classic Stakes (123.25), Irish Champion Stakes (122.50), Queen Anne Stakes (122.50), Hill 'N' Dale Metropolitan Handicap (121.75), and Qatar Prix du Jockey Club (121.75).

The top rated races in the five respective distance categories were the Black Caviar Lightning Stakes (119.50-Sprint); Al Shaqab Lockinge Stakes (123.75-Mile); Longines Breeders' Cup Classic (126.75-Intermediate); Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe (124.25-Long); and Al Shaqab Goodwood Cup (119.75-Extended).

Twelve countries comprise the 2022 Top 100 Group/Grade 1 races list, representing the foremost racing events throughout the world across 40 different racecourses. Australia led all countries with 20 total races, followed by Great Britain (18), United States (18), Japan (12), France (10), Hong Kong SAR, China (10), South Africa (5), Ireland (4), United Arab Emirates (4), Canada (1), Germany (1), and Saudi Arabia (1).

Because of a five-way tie for the 100th spot on the list of Top 100 G1 races, the 2022 edition consists of 104 races.



# Longines World Racing Awards in Photos



The 2022 Longines World Racing Awards were held in London this January



The event took place at Banqueting House, which is one of the Historic Royal Palaces



IFHA Chair Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges welcomed honourees and distinguished guests as the Longines World Racing Awards returned to an in-person event for the first time since 2020



# Longines Awards photos cont.



The Longines Breeders' Cup Classic (G1) was revealed as the 2022 Longines World's Best Horse Race



Matthieu Baumgartner presented Drew Fleming, president and CEO of Breeders' Cup, with an elegant Longines watch



Team Flightline was celebrated by Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges and Matthieu Baumgartner after their champion was named 2022 Longines World's Best Racehorse with a historic rating of 140



Baaeed was named the highest rated turf horse in the world, and Shadwell's Richard Hills, jockey Jim Crowley, and trainer William Haggas were in London to accept the accolades



# Longines Awards photos cont.



Internationally renowned presenter Francesca Cumani served as the emcee of the ceremony



Spirits were high as Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges shared a laugh with France Galop CEO Olivier Delloye and trainer John Gosden



Famous footballer and racehorse owner Michael Owen was among those in attendance



York Racecourse's Chief Executive and Clerk of the Course William Derby took in the award show



IFHA Vice Chair Jim Gagliano



IFHA Vice Chair Horacio Esposito



## Longines Awards photos cont.



Flightline's trainer John Sadler



IFHA Vice Chair Masayuki Goto



IFHA Vice Chair Brian Kavanagh



Stephanie Hronis, one of the owners of undefeated Flightline



Baaeed's trainer William Haggas



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# WORLD RANKINGS

A trio of Hong Kong-based horses hold the top three spots in the first edition of the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings for 2023, with Golden Sixty, on a rating of 125, leading the way. Golden Sixty, who has featured in the ratings since 2020, began 2023 with a one-length victory over Romantic Warrior in the Stewards' Cup (G1). California Spangle was a neck back in third. Romantic Warrior is rated at 123, while California Spangle is rated at 122. Golden Sixty then defeated Romantic Warrior by a head in the Citi Hong Kong Gold Cup (G1).

Fourth position is held jointly by Art Collector and Mostahdaf with a rating of 121. Art Collector won the Pegasus World Cup Invitational Stakes presented by Baccarat (G1), while Mostahdaf took the Neom Turf Cup presented by Altanfeethi (G3).

A quartet of horses share the sixth position with a rating of 120. Elite Power won the Riyadh Dirt Sprint presented by Sports Boulevard (G3), and Panthalassa powered to victory in the Saudi Cup (G1). Anamoe began his season with victories in the TAB Apollo Stakes (G2) and TAB Chipping Norton Stakes (G1), while Do Deuce won the Kyoto Kinen (G2).

The next edition of the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings will be published on Thursday, 13th April.



Golden Sixty has been a stalwart of the rankings for four years

LONGINES World's Best Racehorse Rankings Leading Horses			
for 3yos and upwards which raced between 1st January 2023 - 5th March 2023			
Rank	Horse	Rating	Trained
1	Golden Sixty (AUS)	125	HK
2	Romantic Warrior (IRE)	123	HK
3	California Spangle (IRE)	122	HK
4	Art Collector (USA)	121	USA
4	Mostahdaf (IRE)	121	GB
6	Anamoe (AUS)	120	AUS
6	Do Deuce (JPN)	120	JPN
6	Elite Power (USA)	120	USA
6	Panthalassa (JPN)	120	JPN