

IFHA QUARTERLY

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



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Replays Available from International Jockeys Conference

The video replays from the International Conference for the Health, Safety and Welfare of Jockeys (ICHSWJ) can now be found at the YouTube channel of the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA) or by following the direct link at [ICHSWJ Video Replays - YouTube](#).

The ICHSWJ was held 11-12 December in Hong Kong. Themed Performance Medicine in Racing – Developing and Protecting the Jockey, the two-day conference took an applied, evidence-based approach featuring presentations and panel discussions with leading experts in the field. The 2025 ICHSWJ was organised by the Jockeys Health and Wellbeing Committee of the IFHA and proudly supported by The Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC). For more information please visit the [ICHSWJ website](#).

Vale Louis Romanet

Mr. Louis Romanet, one of the most influential figures in international horse racing and Chairman Emeritus of the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA), passed away on 4 March at the age of 78.

Throughout his life, Romanet's career was devoted to advancing the sport. He dedicated himself to the development of horse racing in France and around the world, holding numerous leadership roles and helping shape the modern global racing landscape.

Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges, Chair of the IFHA, said: "Louis Romanet devoted his life to the advancement of horse racing and to bringing the international racing community closer together. Through his vision, leadership, and unwavering dedication, he helped guide our sport into a new era of global cooperation and development.

"Louis was a friend and mentor to me for more than 40 years, and he was the most respected and globally recognized figure in international racing for decades. He was a friend to all, a passionate and caring leader, and a mentor to many across our industry. He will be missed dearly, and his legacy will endure throughout the worldwide racing community he worked so tirelessly to unite."

Upon the creation of the IFHA in 1994, Romanet became its first Chairman, a position he held for more than 25 years. During his tenure, the IFHA evolved into the leading global forum for cooperation among racing authorities. Under his leadership, international racing experienced significant growth, including increased trade in bloodstock, the expansion of simulcasting and betting markets, and greater harmonization of racing rules across jurisdictions.



Romanet was instrumental in building the organizational structure that supports international cooperation in racing today. He brought together leading experts from around the world and oversaw the creation or development of numerous IFHA committees, including the International Movement of Horses Committee, the International Grading and Race Planning Advisory Committee, the Technical Advisory Committee, the Horse Welfare Committee, the Committee for the Harmonization of Raceday Rules, the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings Committee, and the International Conference for the Health, Safety and Welfare of Jockeys. He also strongly supported the work of existing bodies such as the Advisory Council on Equine Prohibited Substances and Practices and the International Stud Book Committee.

A passionate advocate for integrity and welfare in sport, Romanet consistently championed issues related to doping control and the health, safety, and welfare of both

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Louis Romanet cont.

horses and riders. He frequently represented international racing at national and regional forums, helping advance initiatives important to the broader equestrian and racing communities.

He was a leading proponent of strong and harmonized doping control in international racing, emphasizing that horses should compete only when free from the influence of medication or prohibited substances. He was also instrumental in advancing the IFHA Reference Laboratories program, which helps ensure that major races are supported by laboratories reviewed by the IFHA and assessed against key standards, including resourcing, accreditation, research activity, and the capability to detect major doping agents.

Romanet also played a key role in strengthening racing's global partnerships. He was the driving force behind the IFHA's landmark sponsorship agreement with Longines, which helped promote the work of the Federation and international racing worldwide. In the context of this partnership, Longines and the IFHA created the prestigious Longines World's Best Racehorse, Longines World's Best Horse Race, and Longines World's Best Jockey awards as a way to celebrate, recognize, and elevate champions of the sport on an international scale.

Additionally, Romanet worked to expand cooperation beyond racing, helping secure IFHA affiliation with the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and fostering collaboration with the Fédération Équestre Internationale (FEI) through the creation of the International Horse Sports Confederation (IHSC).

As part of his legacy, Romanet also led the review that established the IFHA's current structure, strengthening its governance and operational

framework. Building on his role in the Federation's founding and development, the review reinforced regional representation and cooperation among racing authorities worldwide, and it brought together leading racing executives to guide the sport on key international issues. Romanet viewed this work as an essential contribution to ensuring the IFHA's long-term effectiveness and the continued success of global racing.

Following his retirement as Chairman of the IFHA in 2021, he was named Chairman Emeritus in recognition of his extraordinary service to the sport.

Prior to his time leading the IFHA, Romanet was initially a leading figure in French racing. He came from a distinguished racing family and became the fourth member across three generations to work for the Société d'Encouragement, joining the organization in 1968. Over the ensuing decades, he held a number of key responsibilities within French racing and was appointed Director General of the Société d'Encouragement in 1986. When France Galop was created in May 1995, he became Director of Organisation and International Affairs and later served as Director General of France Galop from 1998 until his retirement in 2007.

Romanet's contributions to the racing industry have been widely recognized across the globe. In 2009, he was appointed Officer of the Legion of Honor in France. His other honors include the Derby Award from the British Association of the Racing Press, the Gold Medal of The Jockey Club in the United States, a Special Sovereign Award from the Jockey Club of Canada, the Gold Medal of the Direktorium für Vollblutzucht und Rennen in Germany, and Japan's Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon.

Calandagan, Champion Stakes, and Japan Cup Honoured at Longines Awards

Swiss watch brand Longines and the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA) proudly hosted the 2025 Longines World Racing Awards ceremony in London on 20 January. Calandagan was named the 2025 Longines World's Best Racehorse, while the Qipco Champion Stakes (G1) and Japan Cup in association with Longines (G1) shared the title of 2025 Longines World's Best Horse Race.

The horse racing world came together in London to celebrate the 13th time Longines and the IFHA have honoured the top Thoroughbred racehorse of the previous year. Additionally, the Longines World's Best Horse Race was celebrated for the 11th time.

"Equestrian sports have been part of the Longines story for more than a century," said

Yannick Jenni, the Longines Vice President Sales International. "It is a sport that reflects what our brand stands for: respect for tradition, high performance, and timeless elegance. Our partnership with the IFHA is built on these same principles. Together, we work to support horse racing around the world and to highlight the achievements of its greatest champions.

"Today is about recognition. We are here to celebrate exceptional races and exceptional horses, and the many people behind them: owners, trainers, jockeys, and teams, all those whose dedication makes this sport so special."

During the Longines World Racing Awards ceremony, which was held at The Savoy, Calandagan was named the 2025 Longines World's Best Racehorse with a rating of 130. Calandagan earned his rating in the Champion Stakes at Ascot. A top-level winner in three countries in 2025, his other major victories came in the Grand Prix de Saint-Cloud (G1), King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Stakes (G1), and Japan Cup.

The winning connections were presented with elegant Longines watches as well as a replica

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Calandagan, pictured with jockey Mickael Barzalona and trainer Francis-Henri Graffard, won the title of 2025 Longines World's Best Racehorse

Longines Awards cont.

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.

Additionally, the Champion Stakes and Japan Cup were both honoured as the Longines World’s Best Horse Race with an equal rating of 126.25. This is the first time the Champion Stakes has been celebrated, while the Japan Cup first won the title in 2023.

The Longines World’s Best Horse Race Award 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. Calandagan, the world’s highest rated horse, won both contests, and it is the first time there has been a tie in this category.

Representatives from Ascot, The Jockey Club (UK), and the Japan Racing Association (JRA) were in London to accept the award. They received an elegant Longines timepiece as well as a replica



The Champion Stakes (G1) was named the co-Longines World’s Best Horse Race of 2025

of the trophy, representing a proud horse head.

"Calandagan’s international travels this year added greatly to the spirit of sportsmanship," said IFHA Chair Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges. "The IFHA and Longines are passionate about honouring the best racing has to offer, and the Longines World Racing Awards are a way to celebrate all of the hard work that goes into delivering high quality racing and champion racehorses."

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 ranked list is compiled using the annual race ratings, which are calculated based on the first four finishers in each race.

Following the Champion Stakes and the Japan Cup, the remaining Top 10 rated races are the Longines Breeders’ Cup Classic (125.50), King George VI & Queen Elizabeth Stakes (125.00), Longines Dubai Sheema Classic (124.00), Qatar Prix de l’Arc de Triomphe (123.75), Coral-Eclipse (123.25), Prince of Wales’s Stakes (122.25), Tenno Sho (Autumn) (122.25), Arima

RANK	HORSE NAME	TRAINED	RATING
1	CALANDAGAN (IRE)	FR	130
-2	FOREVER YOUNG (JPN)	JPN	128
-2	KA YING RISING (NZ)	HK	128
-2	MASQUERADE BALL (JPN)	JPN	128
-2	OMBUDSMAN (IRE)	GB	128
-2	SOVEREIGNTY (USA)	USA	128
-7	DARYZ (FR)	FR	127
-7	ROMANTIC WARRIOR (IRE)	HK	127
-7	SIERRA LEONE (USA)	USA	127

#LONGINESWORLDRACINGAWARDS

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Longines Awards cont.

Kinen (The Grand Prix) (121.50), Satsuki Sho (Japanese 2000 Guineas) (121.50), and the Tattersalls Gold Cup (121.50). Because of a tie for the 10th position, there are 12 races in the 2025 Top 10.

The top rated races in the five respective distance categories are the Tab Everest Stakes (121.00-Sprint); Saudi Cup (121.00-Mile); Champion Stakes (126.25-Intermediate); Japan Cup (126.25-Long); and the Gold Cup (117.50-Extended).

The Juddmonte Spinster Stakes (116.75) is the highest rated race for fillies/mares, while the highest rated 3-year-old race is the Satsuki Sho (Japanese 2000 Guineas) (121.50).

Ten countries comprise this year's list, representing the foremost racing events throughout the world across 37 different racecourses. Great Britain leads all countries with 20 total races, followed by Australia (19), United States (16), Japan (15), Hong Kong SAR, China (11), France (10), Ireland (4), United Arab Emirates (3), Germany (1), and Saudi Arabia (1).



The Japan Cup (G1) was named the co-Longines World's Best Horse Race of 2025

The 2026 Longines World's Best Jockey Award will be based upon performances in these 100 highest-rated Group 1 and Grade 1 races from 1 December 2025 until 30 November 2026. Jockeys accrue 12 points for a win, 6 points for placing second, and 4 points for placing third.

The full list and further information on the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings are available on the IFHA website ifhaonline.org

LONGINES OFFICIAL PARTNER		LONGINES WORLD'S BEST HORSE RACE 2025			
RANK	RACE	TRACK		RATING	
=1	JAPAN CUP IN ASSOCIATION WITH LONGINES	TOKYO	JPN	126.25	
=1	QIPCO CHAMPION STAKES	ASCOT	GB	126.25	
3	LONGINES BREEDERS' CUP CLASSIC	DEL MAR	USA	125.50	
4	KING GEORGE VI & QUEEN ELIZABETH STAKES	ASCOT	GB	125.00	
5	LONGINES DUBAI SHEEMA CLASSIC	MEYDAN	UAE	124.00	
6	QATAR PRIX DE L'ARC DE TRIOMPHE	PARIS-LONGCHAMP	FR	123.75	
7	CORAL-ECLIPSE	SANDOWN PARK	GB	123.25	
=8	PRINCE OF WALES'S STAKES	ASCOT	GB	122.25	
=8	TENNO SHO (AUTUMN)	TOKYO	JPN	122.25	
=10	ARIMA KINEN (THE GRAND PRIX)	NAKAYAMA	JPN	121.50	
=10	SATSUKI SHO (JAPANESE 2000 GNS)	NAKAYAMA	JPN	121.50	
=10	TATTERSALLS GOLD CUP	CURRAGH	IRE	121.50	

#LONGINESWORLDRACINGAWARDS



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show the way to the finish line.
That beauty and that power take you to another world.



Longines World Racing Awards in Photos



The team from the Aga Khan Studs, trainer Francis-Henri Graffard, and jockey Mickael Barzalona were all in London to celebrate Calandagan being honoured as the 2025 Longines World's Best Racehorse



Nick Smith and Felicity Barnard of Ascot celebrated the Champion Stakes being named the co-Longines World's Best Horse Race of 2025



JRA President and CEO Masayoshi Yoshida celebrated the Japan Cup being named the co-Longines World's Best Horse Race of 2025

Awards photos cont.



Yannick Jenni of Longines celebrated the honourees along with IFHA Chair Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges and Vice Chairs Jim Gagliano, Henri Pouret, Horacio Esposito, and Masayuki Goto

Awards photos cont.



Calandagan's trainer Francis - Henri Graffard doing interviews during the Longines Awards



Princess Zahra was gifted flowers by JRA President and CEO Masayoshi Yoshida



The Savoy in London served as the elegant host site for the 2025 Longines World Racing Awards ceremony



IFHA Chair Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges welcomed an international audience to the Longines World Racing Awards

41st ARC Held in Saudi Arabia

A week of insight, thought leadership and discussion about the future of horse racing concluded with a call for global collaboration before a spectacular laser show at the Closing Ceremony of the 41st Asian Racing Conference in Riyadh.

Organised by the Asian Racing Federation and hosted by the Jockey Club of Saudi Arabia, the three-day business programme wrapped up on Thursday, and throughout the week's 10 expert-filled sessions one over-riding theme became apparent.

"If there is one message that cuts across all our discussions, it is this: the future of horse racing is under threat and can only be secured by working together to address the key challenges we face," Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges, Asian Racing Federation Chair, Chief Executive Officer of The Hong Kong Jockey Club, and Chair of the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA), told the assembled delegates. "I firmly believe we now have a mandate for change. We must act now. We must think and cooperate globally and implement nationally."

Engelbrecht-Bresges said the sport should be excited and energised by the possibilities AI could bring, and it needs to keep pace with competitors who have been early adopters, but the sport must also note its social license and responsibilities.

"We learned from them (the week's speakers) to be more data-centric to become more customer-centric. To improve both broadcast and customer engagement. While it is important that we embrace technology to enhance the customer experience, we should not lose sight that equine welfare is key for the long-term sustainability of the sport."



Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges addressing ARC delegates

He said the varied line-up of topics throughout the week had exposed a number of challenges, but the vision and objectives were clear, and it was time to execute.

"We must create heroes, create global competitions where the best meet the best, and create platforms with holistic storytelling to increase our fan base and promote our sport globally," he said. "We must use technology to create new digital onsite and online experiences. We must be more agile and embrace global initiatives like the World Pool to better compete against sports betting, i-gaming and other entertainment offerings. We must fight increasing threats posed by the illegal market and the constraints from over-regulation of the legal market."

He also urged a wider remit and more resources to the IFHA Council on Anti-Illegal Betting and Related Crime, to prevent over-regulation at the national level, and on welfare he urged continued investment in science and technology to minimise the risk of catastrophic breakdowns and sudden death.

It was announced during the Closing Ceremony that New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing would host the 42nd ARC in Auckland in 2028.

10th IFAR Held as Part of the ARC

The International Forum for the Aftercare of Racehorses (IFAR) held its 10th annual conference on 9 February. It took place in conjunction with the 41st Asian Racing Conference (ARC) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The 41st ARC was presented by the Asian Racing Federation (ARF) and the Jockey Club of Saudi Arabia (JCSA), which was the host.

The 10th IFAR conference featured a tour of the JCSA's Retraining & Riding Academy followed by a lineup of international speakers addressing a wide range of topics relating to the aftercare of racehorses. HRH Prince Bandar bin Khalid Al Faisal, Chairman of the JCSA and the Saudi Equestrian Authority, officially opened the conference.

"Horse racing, like all horse sport, is founded on a unique partnership between people and horses," he said. "That partnership carries obligations that extend well beyond the moment a horse leaves the track. Aftercare is therefore not a 'nice-to-have' nor a response to public opinion, but a fundamental measure of integrity, credibility and sustainability in our sport.

"By placing aftercare at the centre of discussions, via forums such as this, we affirm our commitment to a sport that is not only successful, but responsible, principled and worthy of public trust."

IFAR Chair Dr. Eliot Forbes provided the welcome address, and HRH Princess Nanda-Devi Norodom, the President of the Cambodian Equestrian Federation, delivered the keynote address. The rest of the conference featured a mix of presentations, panel discussions, videos, and networking.

"The occasion of our 10th IFAR conference naturally invites reflection," said Forbes. "In a decade, IFAR has helped create a global conversation on aftercare. We have taken a topic that was too often treated as 'back of house' and helped move it into the boardroom, into strategy, and into the industry's consciousness. We have delivered 10 annual conferences designed to challenge, inform and provoke the kind of thinking that leads to better practice.

"Today marks not only where we have been, but where we choose to go next. It signals intent for the next period, not just to keep talking, but to keep building capability, sharing what works and lifting standards."

Established in 2016, IFAR works to advocate for the lifetime care of retired racehorses, to increase awareness within the international racing community of this important responsibility, and to increase awareness in the sport horse world regarding the versatility of the Thoroughbred horse. For more information on IFAR, visit www.internationalracehorseaftercare.com.





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WORLD RANKINGS

With a rating of 128, Ka Ying Rising leads the first edition of the Longines World’s Best Racehorse Rankings for 2026.

He began the year with a 1 1/4 length victory over Helios Express in the Centenary Sprint Cup (G1). He then defeated that same rival by 3 1/2 lengths in the Queen’s Silver Jubilee Cup (G1).

Ka Ying Rising has now won 18 consecutive races.

Romantic Warrior is currently the second highest rated horse in the world. He started 2026 by winning the Stewards’ Cup (G1). In his next race, Romantic Warrior won the Citi Hong Kong Gold Cup (G1).

Forever Young is ranked third, following his victory in the Saudi Cup (G1). In his seasonal debut, Forever Young defeated Nysos, who is the fifth highest rated horse off of his effort.

Taking the fourth spot is Royal Champion. In his first start of the year, Royal Champion won the Neom Turf Cup Presented by Howden (G1).

The next edition of the Longines World’s Best Racehorse Rankings will be published on Thursday, the 9th of April.



Ka Ying Rising has won 18 consecutive races

LONGINES World's Best Racehorse Rankings Leading Horses

for 3yos and upwards which raced between
1st January 2026 - 8th March 2026

Rank	Horse	Rating	Trained
1	Ka Ying Rising (NZ)	128	HK
2	Romantic Warrior (IRE)	124	HK
3	Forever Young (JPN)	123	JPN
4	Royal Champion (IRE)	122	GB
5	Nysos (USA)	121	USA