



 FRANCE
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JAPAN CUP 2025

French thoroughbred Calandagan breaks the world speed record over 2,400 metres



Trained in Chantilly (Oise) by Francis Graffard, the French champion Calandagan won the 45th running of the Japan Cup in Tokyo on Sunday morning, the world's most prestigious late-season race.

On this occasion, he broke the world speed record over 2,400 metres on turf, stopping the clock at 2:20.3 (two minutes, twenty seconds and three-tenths). The previous record for the distance was held by Arcadia (set in October 1989 at Santa Anita, California) with a time of **2:22.8**.

His trainer Francis Graffard said after the race: *"I was really nervous before the race. It's one thing bringing the best horse in the world to this race but he faced a really high-quality field. Everything seemed to go well, but I was looking for Christophe Lemaire and he seemed to get a dream run through,"* he said.

"He went a head up and I thought we were beaten but he's tough and he battled back. He's an exceptional horse to have put his head in front on the line."

This is another major milestone for this homebred representative of the Aga Khan Studs, who had already been crowned **Europe's Horse of the Year** this autumn

at the Cartier Awards Ceremony, as well as **World's Best Racehorse (rating 130)** in the official ranking of the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities, sponsored, like the Japan Cup, by Longines.

With a fourteenth Group 1 victory (the highest international level) this year, Francis Graffard has broken the record for a French trainer, previously held by André Fabre. In France in 2025, he notably won the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe with **Daryz** and the Prix de Diane Longines with **Gezora**. Abroad, he notably captured the **King George** and the **Champion Stakes** (England) with **Calandagan**, the **Breeders' Cup** (United States) with **Gezora**, and the **Grand Prix von Baden-Baden** (Germany) with **Goliath**.



To win on Sunday in Tokyo (Japan), in front of more than 77,000 spectators, Calandagan first settled in eleventh position during the race. He then quickened at the top of the straight, sweeping around the field on the outside. He launched his attack alongside the Japanese favourite **Masquerade Ball**, with whom he fought after the pair had pulled clear of the rest of the field. With 250 metres to go, only two horses were left in contention, and their mano a mano ended with a head margin (barely!) in favour of the French runner at the finish line.

It is worth noting that the first two home – Calandagan for France and Masquerade Ball for Japan – were ridden by two French jockeys who were raised in Chantilly: Mickaël Barzalona (retained jockey for the Aga Khan Studs) and Christophe Lemaire (who has long been based in Japan and has been crowned JRA Champion jockey on several occasions).

Credit photos : Scoop Dyga



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