

Ascot - Gold Cup Day

Ascot on Gold Cup Day - a mid-summer setting for high fashion and top-class racing. Yes, it's Ladies Day - and striking creations bring the garden-party atmosphere to this lovely Berkshire course.

And again - the Queen and Prince Philip acknowledge the cheers as they make the traditional drive down the course. A link here with the past, for it was Queen Anne who first rode over from Windsor - to launch her new meeting.

And for over two centuries since - the new season's fashions have graced the well-kept lawns - adding feminine charm to the Sport of Kings.

A Royal Visit to the Paddock, though, Her Majesty has yet to be represented in this long-distance classic

The Queen is wearing ^{A LACE ENCRUSTED DRESS WITH A FUR} ~~a fashionable close-fitting hat~~ a fashionable close-fitting hat

Princess Margaret has a white Shantung dress, ~~with a little cap of pink rose petals and a veil.~~ with a little cap of pink rose petals and a veil. (2)

Princess Alexandra of Kent is with the royal party as they leave the Paddock - ~~and mingle with the vast crowd...~~ and mingle with the vast crowd...

~~A truly democratic scene as Royalty~~ ^{enjoying} a day at the races ~~with the charm of a~~ ~~informality of an informal garden party.~~ There's the Duchess of Kent.

Parade

Now the eleven thoroughbreds parade for the Gold Cup and we take another look at fashions with the focus on hats.

~~And here are the~~ finishing moments of a six-horse French challenge for the coveted trophy. And Royal excitement that was to be repeated ~~when~~ when Landau and Aureole brought off a Royal Double.

The Race

There's ~~the~~ Silex II, for France leading from Elpenor (No. 1), who is making a challenge on the outside. Side by side, they battle it out down the ~~straight~~ straight

straight - two gallant stayers - sharing a photo-finish for France... ~~with~~

The final result goes to Elpenor by a short head - ~~a~~ a first-season training success for our old friend, Charlie Elliott - who rode the winner last year.