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ASCOT

Through the Golden Gate to Royal Ascot, most colourful meeting in the racing calendar. Driven by Windsor Greys, the Royal party drives in Ascot state with postillions in blue and gold livery down the famous course. A regal picture to inaugurate peacetime's return to racing elegance.

Ascot has always been the excuse for fashionable display. So it is here we turn to Pathe's fashion reporter who confirms it was a heady show, with coupon-controlled dresses not even winning a place. Controlling the starting prices is the tie-tac man, but nobody can control the price of hats - or the flights of fancy they get up to. Flowers struck the guest note of the day - both on hats and as hats. But the prize for the smallest hat went to Joey the clown.

And now, if you don't mind there's a race due to start - the Queen Anne Stakes. A field of five horses, ignoring the hats and looking for a winning post.

And slip out of the knitting bag comes this white sailer. But the feathered world stole the show with an osprey's farewell to its tail feathers.

The Spanish Onion model raised a tear or two - mostly envious. Other tears came from the thousands who forget to put their money on "Royal Charger" - leading the field and locking a sure winner.

Tails and Toppers used to be the Ascot symbol. This time it was flowers, feathers and fancy hats. Flowing dresses spell coupons but you can really go to town on a nice new hat. And just to put in a minor detail, Royal Charger is clearing up in the 2.30 a length ahead of Langton Abbott. And with this thought in mind, we say..... Farewell to Royal Ascot and the only picture hat that really got into the picture. No top hat Ascot this year but the ladies' hats were tops.