

MORTLAKE

JESUS COLLEGE HEAD OF RIVER

To mark the silver jubilee of the Tideway Head of the River race comes Princess Elizabeth to start this year's race, her last engagement before leaving for Malta. The eights start at 10 seconds intervals. London I, last year's head are first away. It's a race against the clock - the best time for the four-and-a-quarter miles from Mortlake to Putney wins - but starting at such short intervals enables crews to overtake and race one another.

Eights come from all over England, Ireland and Wales. When the race was first held 25 years ago there were 21 starters: this year there are 213. It's the Boat Race course rowed in the opposite direction, and several crews from Oxford and Cambridge are taking part.

Now the lead boats are shooting Hammermith Bridge ... less than two miles to go.

Jesus College, Cambridge, who started third have gone into a long lead.

They're still going remarkably well. It's still possible for one of the back-markers to return the best time and win, but Jesus College crossed the line first and the clock confirms them Head of the River.