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ROYAL COWES REGATTA.

A light breeze and a strong tide in the Cowes Roads make for slow and tricky sailing - so while the big and small yachts are preparing for the Royal Thames Yacht Club events, the committee decide to shorten the course to one round. Quite enough on a day like this.

The royal yacht Britannia lies at anchor in the Roads while the Duke of Edinburgh sails his new 24-foot aloop Fairey Fox, a craft which attracts a good deal of interest. With him is her famous designer Uffa Fox. The Duke's active support for Cowes, combined with the growing popularity of yachting generally, has helped to bring new life to this most famous of all regattas.

The starting gun fires for the Glasebrook Challenge Cup - a handicap race for craft of 32-foot rating and upwards.

Among the competitors in the 5½ metres class is the Marquis of Milford Haven, sailing Maryllis.

A century and a half has passed since Cowes Regatta was founded - and a few years ago it looked as though its glory was departed. Now the tide seems to have turned.