

ROYAL REGATTA

How rightly is Henley called the Royal Regatta; finest of all rowing meetings that bring excitement and beauty to our rivers in the summer. The Thames changes, perhaps, and yet in essence remain the same. And even on Finals day the river does not entirely belong to the races. Rowing's not everybody's meat, though at Henley the exceptions are rare. For this is the oarsmen's festival, at which men for whom rowing is the ruling passion, even when their active days are only a memory, come into their own. The younger generation, too, is drawn to the river while grandfathers dwell on the glories of forty years ago.

up.

120.

Oarsmen who have defeated all competition so far face the supreme test on the last day. The final of the Wyfold Challenge Cup was between the National Provincial Bank and an American four, South Kent School. The National Provincial (on the far side) obtained a slight lead soon after the start. Henley's famous course is one mile, 550 yards, the longest possible straight stretch on this part of the river. The Wyfold Challenge Cup was presented to the Regatta 114 years ago. Only once has it been won by a crew from abroad. The National Provincial, now up by three quarters of a length, weren't going to let this be the second time, if they could help it.

up.

190.

The Americans were quite unable to wrest the lead from the Bank four, so the National Provincial won by two lengths; time; seven minutes 28 seconds.

up.

Senior experts were very doubtful about the Grand Challenge Cup. Visitors not directly concerned, and probably forming no opinion came from Japan. Molesey won the Trophy last year; this time Leander were up against the Russian Navy.

up.

245. The Russians (nearest the camera) are a powerful eight, averaging thirteen stone-eight. Leander, though the fastest English crew at Henley, couldn't equal their opponents at the beginning. The best hope was that they might increase their pace, when they got really into the swing of it.

up.

278. Undoubtedly the pace set was pretty hot. The Russians had let it be known that their ambition was to beat the course record. They were in front now by three quarters of a length.

up.

319. Leander couldn't reduce the lead, but they were by no means outclassed. The Russian Navy won by a length in six minutes, 43 seconds, a good time but not a course record. Poor Leander, beaten after a great effort.

up.

351. Leander or some other British eight will have to do something about this; we can't have the Grand Challenge Cup settling down behind the Iron Curtain. Meanwhile it was brave to the Russians. Henley always welcoming crews from overseas, had been a great Regatta.