

SPORTS FANS

At Manchester's Belle Vue, Peter Kane and Stan Rowan come out for the last round in an all-Lancashire battle to find the challenger for Britain's bantamweight crown. Kane is a tired man, and although he tries hard, he can't keep up the pace set by his young Liverpool opponent.

Pinning the seemingly defenceless Kane against the ropes, Rowan gives him a merciless pounding - and the ex-world champion can't get away.

There is a last minute despairing effort from Kane, but it's too late. Only a shadow of his former self, he is decisively beaten on points. With his second come-back now ending in failure, Kane, 30-years-old should heed his managers' advice and retire. Stan Rowan of Liverpool is a worthy successor.

On-the-morning-after-the-fight, Manchester turns on its best hangover weather for the flat racing season's farewell to arms - the November handicap. The Strachey boys (the only ones in Britain who don't want mere rations) prepare for their last rides till next May, when they'll come up from retirement no taller for their winter sleep. Forty thoroughbreds are engaged, from outsider Prince Hardi, No. 21, to the much-fancied favourite Philadelphie the Second. Turning up in force for a tax-free benefit are the Exchequer's elusive friends - hopeful of another haul in a record profit year. There is a last minute hush as the horses come under starter's orders - and then they are off - on a mile-and-a-half long course, with "Highland Laddie" making the running.

As they head for the straight, it's "Bristol Fashion" - No. 39 - in the lead, two or three lengths ahead. Coming up on the outside is the fortieth horse in the race, little-fancied "Sports Master."

With four hundred yards to go "Sports Master" ridden by Derek Greening is out in front. Closely challenged, he holds the lead and all his pupils can do, is chase him home. Odds of twenty-to-one come off, as "Sports Master" streaks past the post - the season's last big winner.