

ASCOT GOLD CUP.

It's Gold Cup day at Royal Ascot - and although the weather hasn't been too kind to Ascot so far, the fashionable racegoers are as optimistic as ever. There's old king Nubar Gulbenkian - but it's not the man we've come to look at. Tiny hats and "Headache bands" are much in evidence - though there are still plenty of the conventional fully-rigged efforts around.

And of course, a full-turn-out of saaks, trapezes, and balloons.

But to get to the 'aces' Only eight runners this year - a small field, for the Gold Cup.

Here's Doutelle, the Queen's entry - to be ridden by W.H. Carr, who has a word with the Queen and her family. From Ireland, "Gladness" trained by Vincent O'Brien, and to be ridden by Lester Piggott.

Joint favourites are Gladness and Scott II at 3-1; then Court Harwell at 9-2, and the Queen's horse at 5-1. And for those who prefer the chance of getting rich on an outsider, there's Alcaustus at 50-1.

Any moment now...

And they're off! - with two and a half miles to go.

First time round, and it's the two outsiders in the lead, Flying Flag II followed by Alcaustus. Then it's Alexis, with Gladness lying fourth.

But this is a race for stayers, and coming into the final straight, the challenges begin - Lester Piggott pushes Gladness into the lead!

Now Hornbeam's chasing after the lead - and Doutelle's moving up into third place!

Only a few yards to go, and it's still the same order, Gladness, Hornbeam, Doutelle - with Gladness holding the lead easily, and Scott II challenging the Queen's horse for a place. And there's the post! And it's Gladness, Hornbeam, Doutelle, Piggott brings Gladness in - and the first mare to win the Gold Cup for 22 years.

Royal congratulations for Doutelle for earning a place - and consolation for the Queen is not far away, for the next race goes to her colt "Restoration". Meanwhile, it's one more Irish victory for the record.