

Head of the River Fours

by [Martin Gough - BBC Sport](#) 17 November 2006

The focus from the outside world will always be on the top crews - the preview I wrote this morning did that almost entirely - but the Head of the River Fours is about far more than that.

For everyone, it's about proving you have started the new season well and have a strong base for the winter ahead.

For some it's about trying to mix it with the internationals in the top 50, and maybe getting one of the pennants for non-elite events.

Oxford and Cambridge are out in force, and will look for an early indication of strength, with the Light Blue coxed four worth watching.

Others have their eyes on the prizes further down the order. My club has six blades on the wall from Senior 3 and Senior 2 events over the last decade and there's a good story attached to each one, not least because the prize-giving at the brewery of the sponsors Fullers is a legendary occasion.

And, of course there's the social element, too, and the horrible Sunday hangovers that is likely to entail.

I'm afraid I'll have my eyes on the four crews I coach and very little else (although I might sneak a glance at Cop, Drysdale and Campbell in a quad together).

But it must be a pretty impressive display for the neutral bystander too, with 2483 athletes in 546 crews all on the same bit of river. Hammersmith Bridge is probably the best place to see the action if you happen to be passing.

Wherever you are on the tree it would be good to hear your thoughts and stories, both before and afterwards.

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