

Bradby Shield 2025: History, Data, and the Challenge Ahead.

The Bradby Shield, first contested in 1945, is one of the world's oldest two-leg school rugby series, played between Trinity College Kandy and Royal College Colombo. The series has been held every year except 1971, when only one leg was played, and 2020–2021, when matches were suspended due to the pandemic.

In the 2025 edition, Trinity, favourites on paper, fell 5 to 15 in the first leg at home in Kandy, leaving a 10-point deficit heading into Colombo. Historically, no team has ever overturned such a margin, making this year's Shield particularly compelling.

To better understand patterns in Bradby history, I scraped match data from Wikipedia and conducted a detailed analysis using Python. I also engineered additional features not available in the original dataset, and visualized insights with Matplotlib and Seaborn.

Key Insights:

 All-time tally: Trinity leads 40–36, never once surrendering the overall edge. Their biggest cushion: 9 wins (1987, 2000, 2014). Today, the gap is down to 4, despite Royal's dominant run from 2015–2023.

 Clean sweeps (winning both legs): Trinity 24 times, Royal 23 times — the rivalry swings both ways.

 Grinding results: Royal has converted 6 drawn legs into overall wins; Trinity has done so 4 times.

 Second-leg slips: Trinity has lost the second leg but still lifted the Shield 7 times (Royal 4).

 Comebacks (losing first leg but winning second): Only 8 in history — Trinity 5, Royal 3. Trinity's 8-point turnaround in 2011 remains the record. A 10-point recovery this year would be unprecedented.

 Rare first-leg home recoveries: Only twice in history has a team lost the first leg at home and still lifted the Shield — Trinity in 2011 and Royal in 1998. Trinity faces that same uphill path in 2025.

 Recent form: Royal dominated 2015–2023 with big score gaps some years, but Trinity broke the streak in 2024.

 Second-leg battles: Momentum can swing late — both teams have traded second-leg wins in recent years.

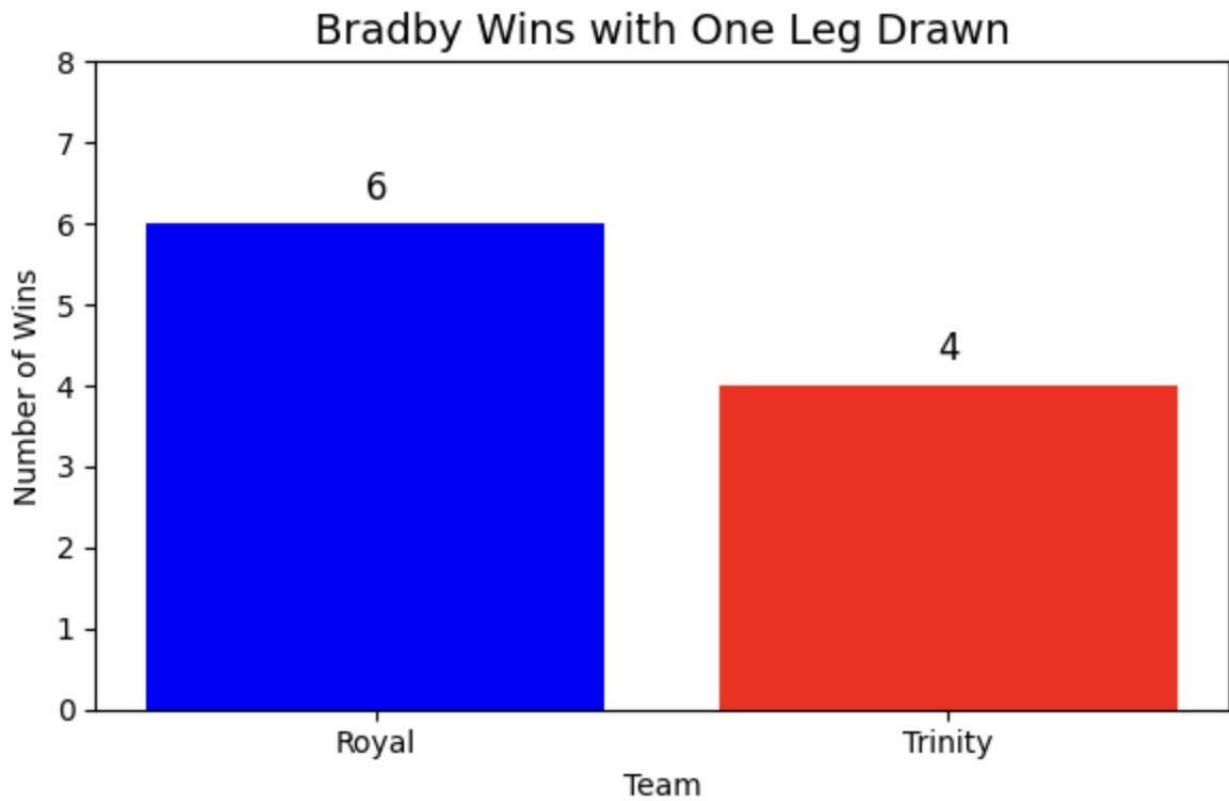
 Wishing Trinity Rugby the very best for 2025 — may history, skill, and spirit guide the team to another memorable victory!

Additional Notes:

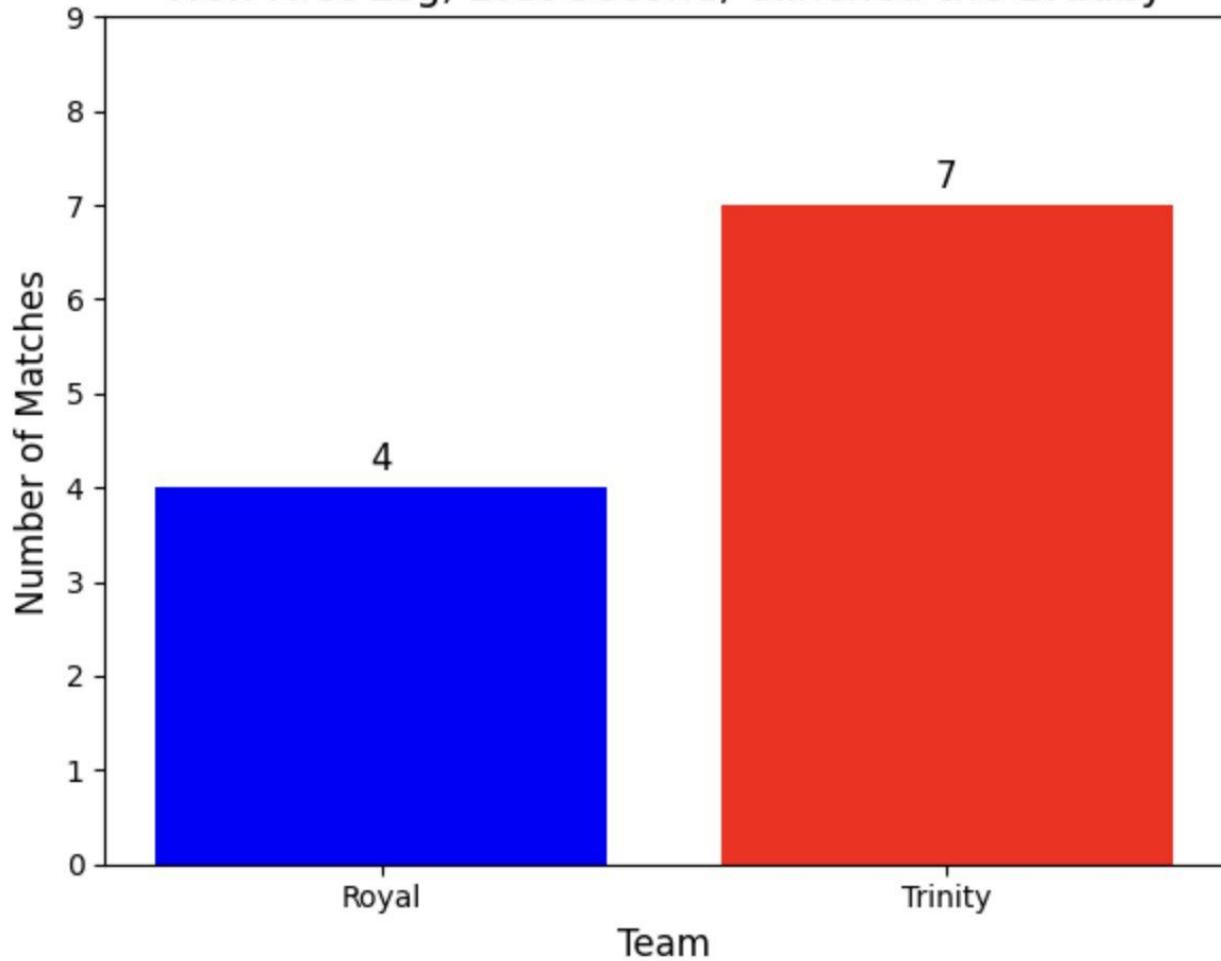
- For simplicity, all grounds in Colombo are grouped as Colombo and all in Kandy as Kandy.
- Please note, the 2025 first leg is not included in the analysis.

Losing the 1st leg at home and coming back to win the Bradby

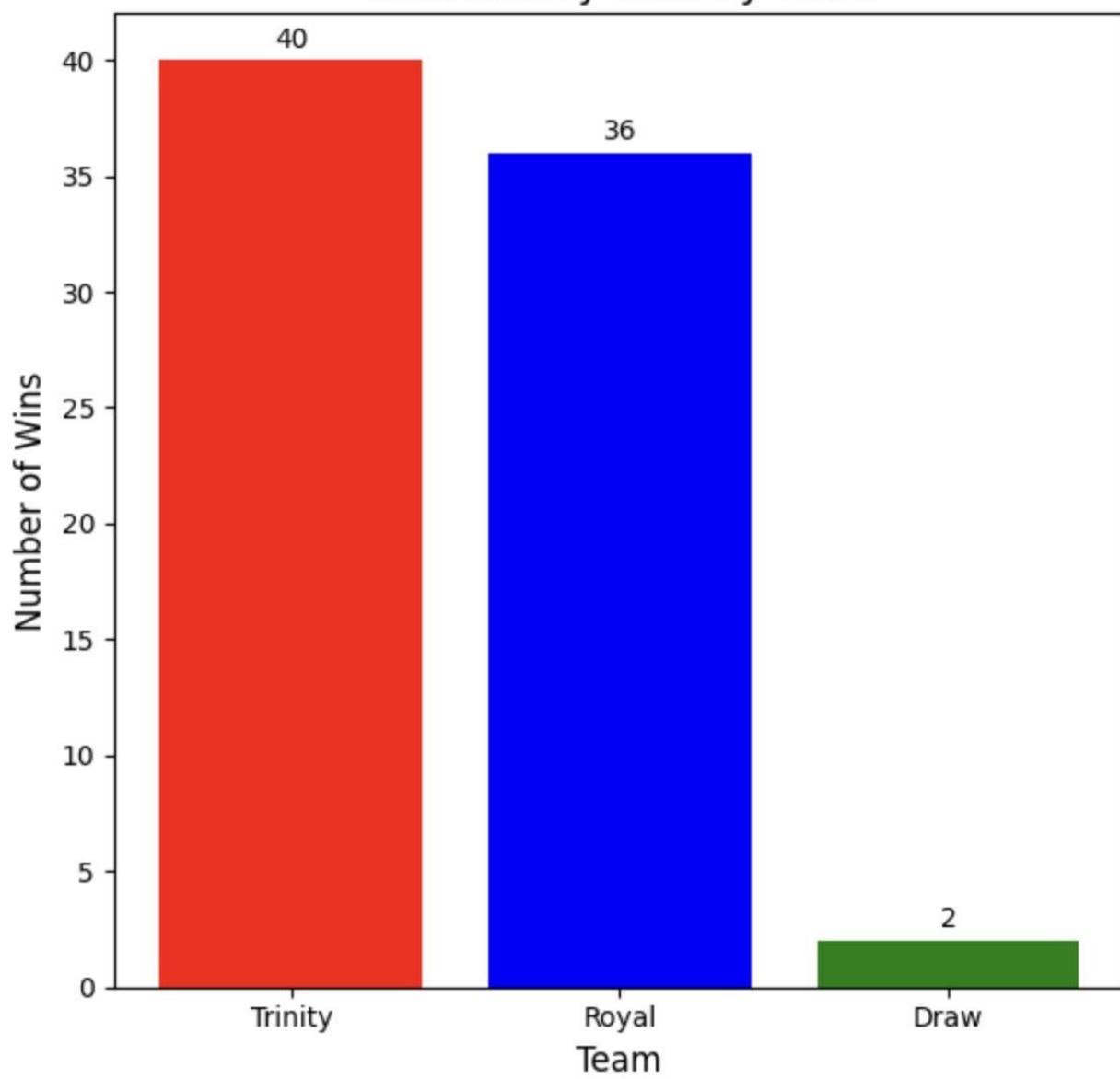
Year	Royal 1st leg	Trinity 1st leg	Royal 2nd leg	Trinity 2nd leg	Winner
2011	33	25	5	40	Trinity
1998	18	20	42	11	Royal



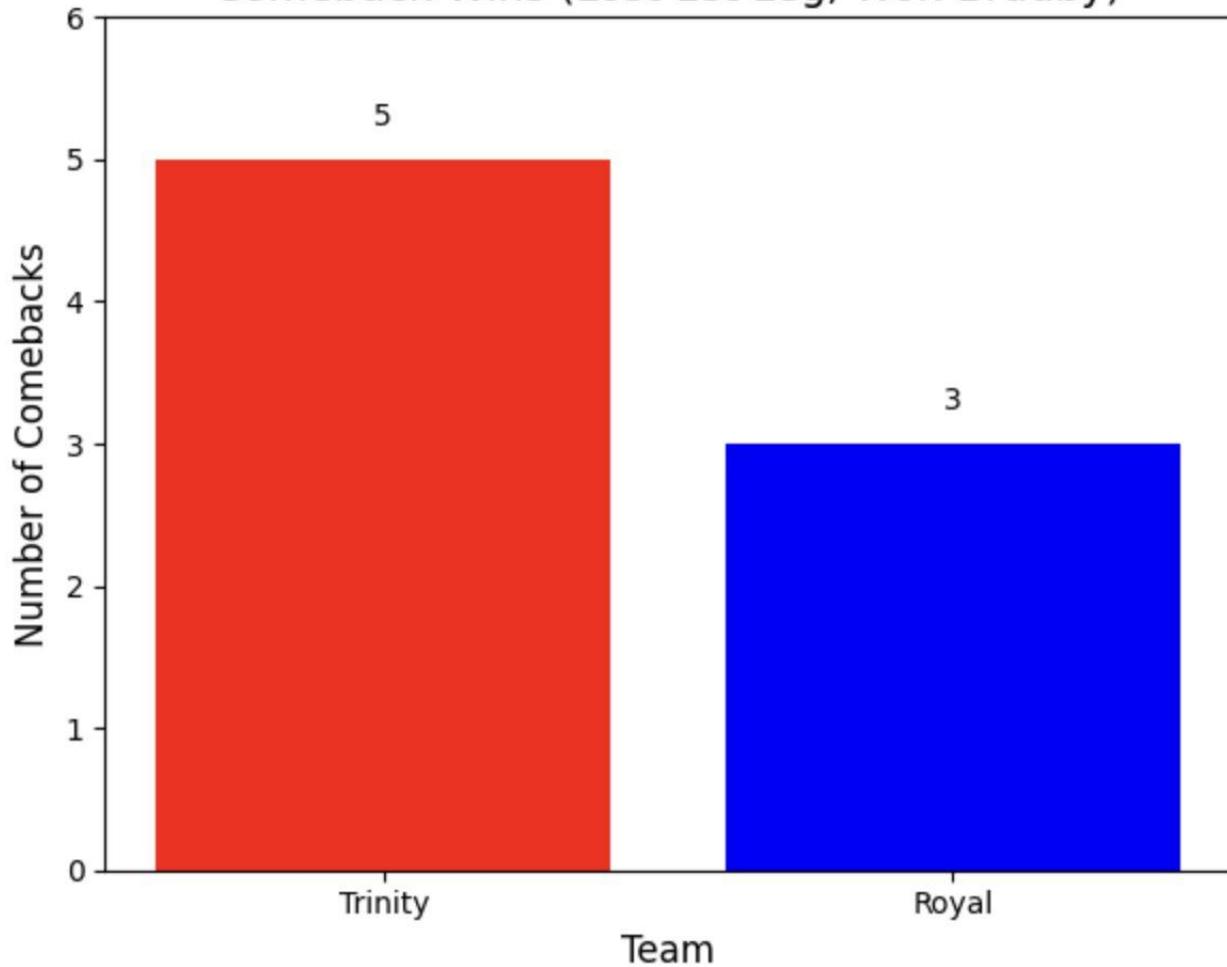
Won First Leg, Lost Second, Clinched the Bradby



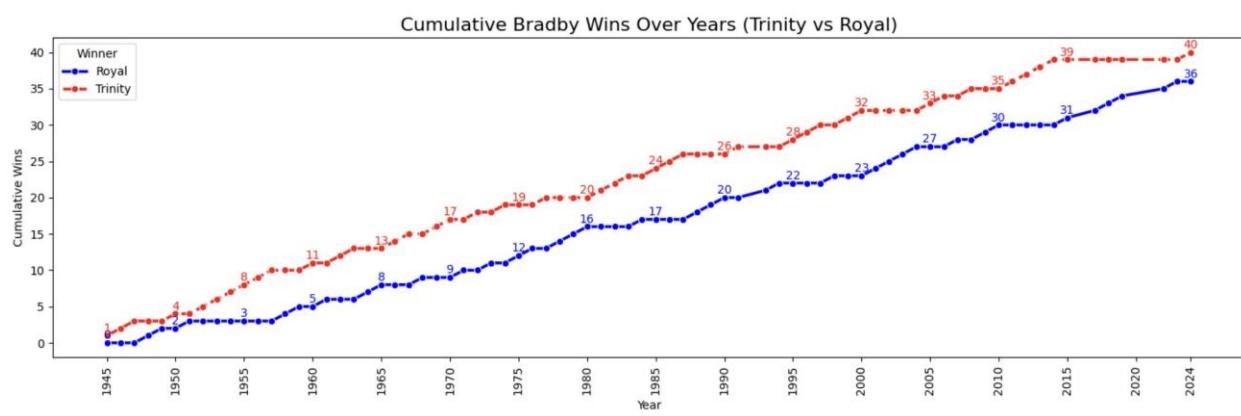
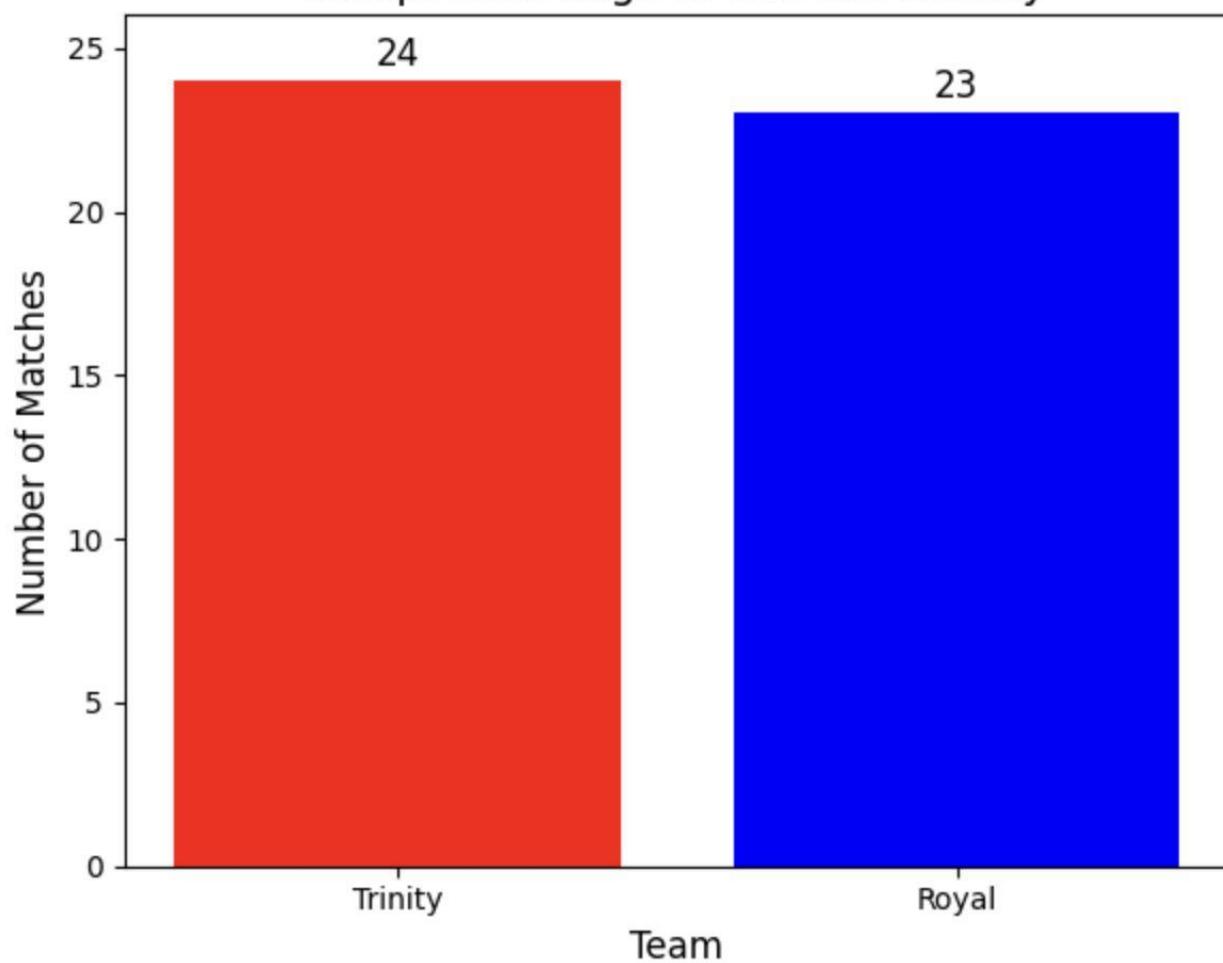
Total Bradby Wins by Team

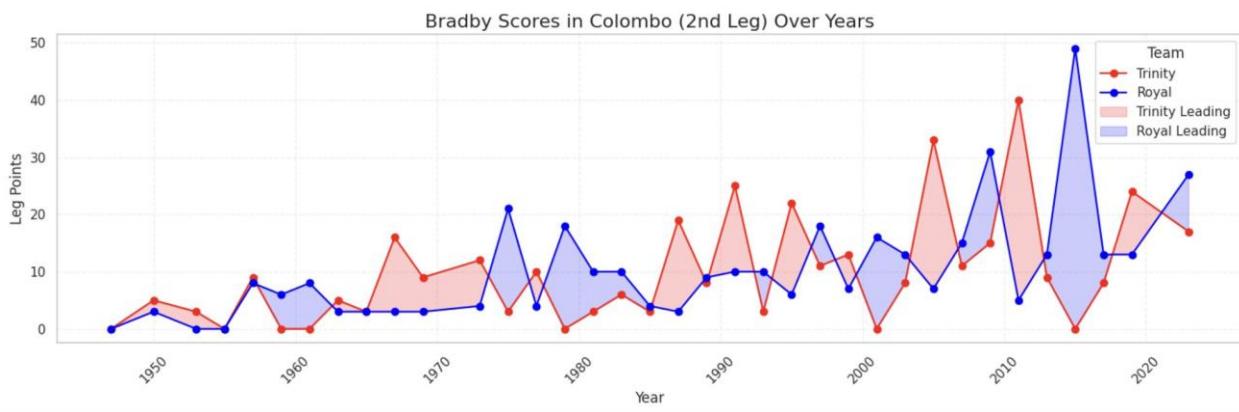
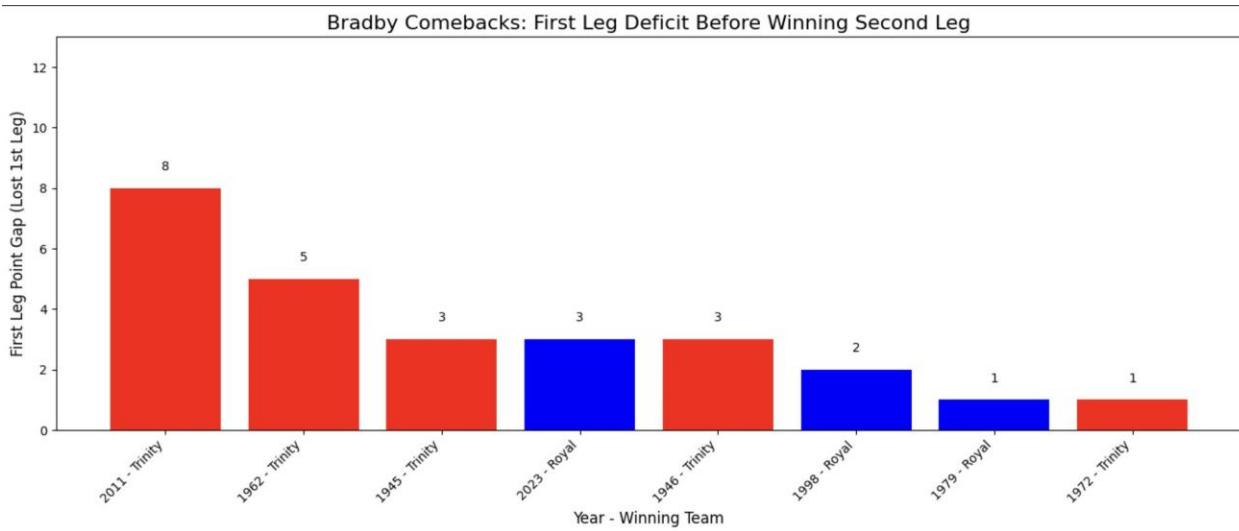


Comeback Wins (Lost 1st Leg, Won Bradby)

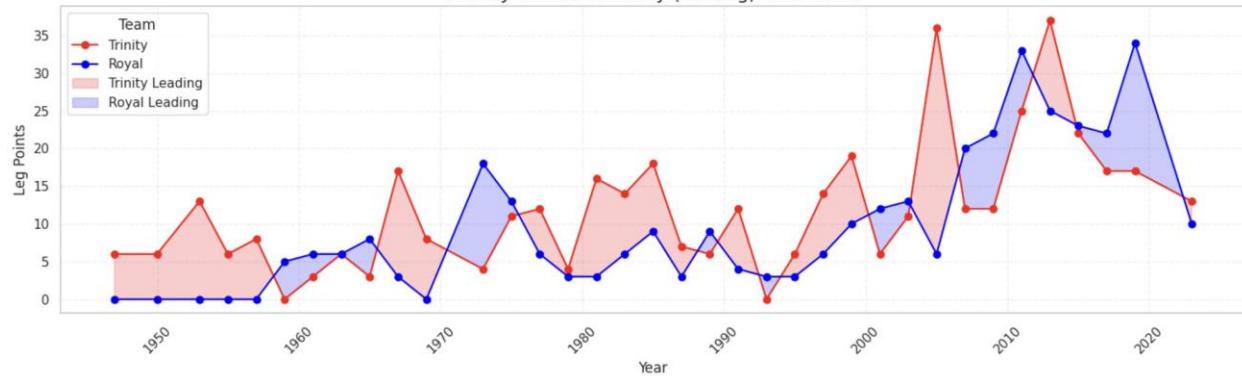


Swept Both Legs to Win the Bradby





Bradby Scores in Kandy (1st Leg) Over Years



Bradby Total Points Over Years with Gap

