

= The Boat Race 1986 =

The 132nd Boat Race took place on 29 March 1986 . Held annually , the Boat Race is a side @-@ by @-@ side rowing race between crews from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge along the River Thames . Cambridge won by seven lengths and took their first victory in eleven years , in one of the fastest winning times in the history of the event . Isis won the reserve race , while Oxford were victorious in the Women 's Boat Race .

= Background =

The Boat Race is a side @-@ by @-@ side rowing competition between the University of Oxford (sometimes referred to as the " Dark Blues ") and the University of Cambridge (sometimes referred to as the " Light Blues ") . First held in 1829 , the race takes place on the 4 @. @ 2 @-@ mile (6 @. @ 8 km) Championship Course on the River Thames in southwest London . The rivalry is a major point of honour between the two universities and followed throughout the United Kingdom and broadcast worldwide . Oxford went into the race as reigning champions , having beaten Cambridge by four @-@ and @-@ three @-@ quarter lengths in the previous year 's race . However Cambridge held the overall lead , with 68 victories to Oxford 's 62 , despite Oxford having won the previous ten races .

The first Women 's Boat Race took place in 1927 , but did not become an annual fixture until the 1960s . Up until 2014 , the contest was conducted as part of the Henley Boat Races , but as of the 2015 race , it is held on the River Thames , on the same day as the men 's main and reserve races . The reserve race , contested between Oxford 's Isis boat and Cambridge 's Goldie boat has been held since 1965 . It usually takes place on the Tideway , prior to the main Boat Race .

The race was sponsored by Ladbrokes for the tenth consecutive year , estimated to be worth about £ 30 @, @ 000 to each boat club , and was umpired by former Cambridge rower Mike Sweeney .

= Crews =

The Oxford crew weighed an average of over 5 pounds (2 @. @ 3 kg) per rower more than Cambridge . Cambridge 's crew featured only two rowers over the age of 24 while Oxford had just three men under 25 . Oxford saw three Blues return while Cambridge welcomed back four . The Cambridge crew featured three international rowers , two Canadians in Gibson and Wilson , and the American Pew . Oxford 's MacDonald was the oldest in the race at the age of 30 , he was accompanied in the boat by international rowers Clark and Livingstone from the United States and Jones from Australia . Dan Topolski was the Oxford coach while Cambridge relied on Alan Inns and Canadian Olympic coach Neil Campbell . Cambridge were clear favourites to win , but prior to the race , Topolski claimed his crew had " pulled themselves back into contention by sheer hard work . "

= Races =

Oxford won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station . The predicted severe wind did not materialise and from the start , Cambridge pulled ahead . A half @-@ length lead by the end of Putney boathouses became a two length lead by Hammersmith Bridge , and Cambridge 's cox Burton steered towards the safer Surrey side , extending Cambridge 's lead to 14 seconds by Chiswick Steps . Continuing to pull away , Cambridge passed the finishing post 21 seconds and seven lengths ahead of Oxford . It was the sixth fastest time in the history of the race . This was Cambridge 's first victory in eleven years and took the overall record to 69 ? 62 in favour of Cambridge .

In the reserve race , Oxford 's Isis beat Cambridge 's Goldie by six lengths , while Oxford won the 41st Women 's Boat Race .

= = Reaction = =

The trophy was presented by former Cambridge student Prince Edward . Cambridge stroke John Pritchard said " After our initial start we built up for 20 strokes , steadied and then just grinded away . " He added " I was just stirring the tea while the others did the work . " Cambridge cox Carole Burton noted " I went where I wanted to go . " Oxford 's Jones remarked " we were as well prepared as last year but we found no magic . " Topolski conceded that even had Oxford been at their best , they would still have lost the race .