

= The Boat Race 1841 =

The 5th Boat Race took place on the River Thames on 14 April 1841 . It was the fourth of the University Boat Races , a side @-@ by @-@ side rowing competition between the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge , to be contested in London . The race was held between Westminster Bridge and Putney Bridge and was won by Cambridge , whose crew featured two pairs of brothers rowing , who defeated Oxford by a distance of 22 lengths in a time of 32 minutes and 30 seconds . The victory took the overall record in the event to 4 ? 1 in Cambridge 's favour .

= = 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 ") . The race was first held in 1829 , and takes place on the River Thames in southwest London . Cambridge went into the race as reigning champions , having won the previous year 's race by three @-@ quarters of a length .

There was some disagreement over the day selected for the race , mainly in an attempt to coincide with a suitable tide . The Cambridge cox for the 1839 race , Thomas Selby Egan , along with Oxford 's R. G. Walls were umpires for the race along with referee Edmund Antrobus from St John 's College , Cambridge . Both universities rowed in boats constructed by Searle of Stangate ; the vessels were " justly and generally admired " , the only significant difference between them being that Oxford 's boat was carvel built while Cambridge 's was clinker built . The race took place on a five @-@ and @-@ three @-@ quarter @-@ mile (9 @.@ 2 km) stretch of the Thames between Westminster Bridge and Putney Bridge . No arrangements had been made for the police to keep the course clear : according to Cambridge 's number seven George Denman " it was often ticklish work for the coxswains to decide whether to go ahead or astern of a train of barges catering across the river " . According to a report in The Morning Chronicle , " both crews ... have agreed that the match will be off if any of the steamers attempt to lead " .

Oxford arrived at the Thames fifteen days prior the race , and rowed the full course ; Cambridge started their practice runs four days later , often racing against a crew from the Cambridge Subscription Room (who subsequently won the Grand Challenge Cup at the Henley Royal Regatta) . George Denman suffered an injury during practice , struck " by a tremendous blow on the shoulder " which was all but cured by the application of " just one leech " . Oxford 's crew was not settled until three days before the race , when they competed against a crew from Leander Club .

= = Crews = =

The Cambridge crew weighed an average of 11 st 4 @.@ 625 lb (71 @.@ 8 kg) , 0 @.@ 5 pounds (0 @.@ 2 kg) per rower more than their Dark Blue opposition . Cambridge 's crew contained three Blues : John Matthew Ridley , Francis Penrose and Charles Marsh Vials , all of whom had rowed in the previous year 's race . Similarly , Oxford saw the return of four members with Boat Race experience : Jacob G. Mountain , E. Royds , G. Meynell and J. J. T. Somers @-@ Cocks . For the first time in the history of the race , two pairs of brothers rowed for Cambridge , the Crokers (Joseph and William) and the Denmans (George and Lewis) .

= = Race = =

Cambridge were considered favourites for the race , mainly as they had won the previous three races on the Thames . The Light Blues won the toss and elected to start at the first arch from the centre of Westminster Bridge on the Surrey side , Oxford from the next arch along . The race commenced at 6 : 10 p.m. , with the Light Blues making the better start , taking an early lead , and getting clear by Lambeth . A lead of at least two lengths by Vauxhall Bridge was extended to around six lengths by Battersea Bridge .

Cambridge won by 22 lengths in a time of 32 minutes 30 seconds . It was their fourth consecutive victory and took the overall record to 4 ? 1 in their favour . Despite earlier fears , " the steamers were well managed , and offered no obstruction to the boats " .