

= The Boat Race 1876 =

The 33rd Boat Race between crews from the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge took place on the River Thames on 8 April 1876 . Six of the Oxford crew had Boat Race experience while Cambridge 's crew contained three Blues . Umpired by Joseph William Chitty , Cambridge won the race " easily " in a time of 20 minutes 20 seconds , following confusion as to the positioning of the finish . The victory took the overall record to 17 ? 16 in Oxford '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 since 1845 has taken place on the 4 @. @ 2 @-@ mile (6 @. @ 8 km) Championship Course on the River Thames in southwest London . Oxford went into the race as reigning champions , having defeated Cambridge by ten lengths in the previous year 's race , and led overall with seventeen wins to Cambridge 's fifteen .

Cambridge were coached by Constantine William Benson who had rowed for Cambridge in the 1872 , 1873 and 1875 races , and James Brooks Close who had represented the Light Blues in the 1872 , 1873 and 1874 races . There is no record of who coached Oxford . Joseph William Chitty was the umpire for the race . He had rowed for Oxford twice in 1849 (in March and December) and the 1852 race . The starter was Edward Searle .

= = Crews = =

Both crews weight an average of 11 st 13 @. @ 875 lb (76 @. @ 0 kg) . The Cambridge crew contained three former Blues : William Brooks Close , cox George Latham Davies and Herbert Rhodes (rowing in his fourth Boat Race) . Oxford saw six Blues return , including H. J. Stayner who was making his third Boat Race appearance . Author and rower G. C. Drinkwater stated that the placement of Tom Cottingham Edwards @-@ Moss , described as " one of the best sevens that ever rowed " , at stroke was a mistake . In contrast , Cambridge were " considered by many to be the finest seen at Putney up to that time . "

= = Race = =

Oxford won the toss and elected to start from the Middlesex station , handing the Surrey side of the river to Cambridge . Weather conditions were warm but with a " foul wind " in Corney Reach (about 3 miles (4 @. @ 8 km) along the course) , and the race commenced at 2 : 02 p.m. The crews remained almost level for the first four minutes of the race , after which Cambridge began to pull ahead . By Hammersmith Bridge they had a clear water advantage and were three lengths up by Chiswick Eyot . Extending their lead , the Light Blues were five lengths ahead by The Ship pub . When Oxford finally passed the pub , they stopped , " apparently unaware that they had not completed the course " . Author and former Oxford rower Dickie Burnell suggested the course was approximately 60 yards (55 m) too long .

Cambridge , having sprinted to the finish , received the finishing gun while eight lengths ahead . As a result of the confusion , the judge declared the winning distance as four lengths . However , official records state that Cambridge won the race " easily " , in a time of 20 minutes 20 seconds . It was their sixth win in seven years and took the overall record to 17 ? 16 in Oxford 's favour .