

= The Boat Race 1987 =

The 133rd Boat Race took place on 29 March 1987 . 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 . Oxford won by four lengths . The race featured the tallest , heaviest , youngest and oldest crew members in the event 's history .

Oxford 's crew rebelled in the prelude to the race , with several American rowers and the cox leaving the squad in February after their coach Dan Topolski removed their compatriot Chris Clark from the crew , replacing him with Scottish rower Donald Macdonald . The rebels were replaced in the main by the reserves . Umpired by former Oxford Blue Colin Moynihan , it was the first year that the race was sponsored by Beefeater Gin , replacing Ladbrokes after ten years .

In the 23rd reserve race , Cambridge 's Goldie defeated Oxford 's Isis by one length . Cambridge won the 42nd Women 's Boat Race .

= = Background = =

= = = History = = =

The Boat Race is a side @-@ by @-@ side rowing competition between the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge (sometimes referred to as the " Dark Blues " and the " Light Blues " respectively) . 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 is followed throughout the United Kingdom ; the races are broadcast worldwide . Cambridge went into the race as reigning champions , having won the 1986 race by seven lengths , and led overall with 69 victories to Oxford 's 62 (excluding the " dead heat " of 1877) . The 1987 race was the first race to be sponsored by Beefeater Gin .

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 .

= = = Mutiny = = =

Following defeat in the previous year 's race , Oxford 's first in eleven years , American Chris Clark was determined to gain revenge : " Next year we 're gonna kick ass ... Cambridge 's ass . Even if I have to go home and bring the whole US squad with me . " He recruited another four American post @-@ graduates : three international @-@ class rowers (Dan Lyons , Chris Huntington and Chris Penney) and a cox (Jonathan Fish) , in an attempt to put together the fastest Boat Race crew in the history of the contest .

Disagreements over the training regime of Dan Topolski , the Oxford coach , (" He wanted us to spend more time training on land than water ! " lamented Lyons) led to the crew walking out on at least one occasion , and resulted in the coach revising his approach . A fitness test between Clark and Scottish former Blue Donald Macdonald (in which the American triumphed) resulted in a call for the Scotsman 's removal ; it was accompanied with a threat that the Americans would refuse to row should Macdonald remain in the crew . As boat club president , Macdonald " had absolute power over selection " and after announcing that Clark would row on starboard , his weaker side , Macdonald would row on the port side and Briton Tony Ward was to be dropped from the crew entirely , the American contingent mutinied . After considerable negotiation and debate , much of it conducted in the public eye , Clark , Penny , Huntington , Lyons and Fish were dropped and replaced by members of Oxford 's reserve crew , Isis .

== Crews ==

Oxford 's crew weighed an average of nearly 9 pounds (4 @. @ 1 kg) a rower more than their opponents . The race featured the tallest and heaviest (Oxford 's stroke Gavin Stewart) , youngest (Cambridge 's Matthew Brittin) and oldest (Oxford 's president Donald Macdonald) crew members in the event 's history . The Cambridge boat saw four returning Blues while Oxford welcomed back just one , in Macdonald . Oxford 's coach was Topolski , his counterpart was Alan Inns .

== Race ==

With a more experienced crew and less disruption in the preparation for the race , Cambridge were considered favourites . Oxford won the toss and elected to start from the Middlesex station . A malfunction to umpire Colin Moynihan 's barge caused a delay to the start ; as a consequence the crews avoided racing in a lightning storm . Straight from the start , Oxford steered towards Middlesex to seek shelter from the inclement weather . Cambridge eventually followed , taking on water , and receiving warnings for encroaching into Oxford 's water . Almost a length ahead by Craven Cottage , Oxford steered across and in front of Cambridge to control the race before the Mile Post . A seven @-@ second advantage at Hammersmith Bridge became twelve seconds by Barnes Bridge and remained so by the finishing post , with Oxford winning by four lengths in a time of 19 minutes 59 seconds .

In the reserve race , Cambridge 's Goldie beat Oxford 's Isis by one length , their first victory in three years . Cambridge won the 42nd Women 's Boat Race , their fourth victory in six years .

== Reaction ==

Oxford 's Macdonald was triumphant : " It was a fairy @-@ tale . " Topolski acknowledged his crew 's luck in winning the toss combined with the conditions : " We had been praying for rough water . " He also appeared conciliatory : " I wish the Americans had been there . It has nothing to do with vindication . We just won the race , that 's all . " Cadoux @-@ Hudson said , " I thought Cambridge would murder us but we took 20 colossal strokes and there was a primeval scream from the crew . There was a huge release . "

== Legacy ==

In 1989 Topolski and author Patrick Robinson 's book about the events , True Blue : The Oxford Boat Race Mutiny , was published . Seven years later , a film based on the book was released . Alison Gill , the then @-@ president of the Oxford University Women 's Boat Club wrote The Yanks in Oxford , in which she defended the Americans and claimed Topolski wrote True Blue in order to justify his own actions . The journalist Christopher Dodd described True Blue as " particularly offensive " .

Oxford 's stroke Gavin Stewart , writing in The Times in 1996 , had chosen to mutiny because " Macdonald as president had lost the respect of the squad and the selection system had lost credibility " . In 2003 , Clark had " broken his silence " , stating " Mutiny is such a loaded term ... Rebellion would be a more apt description . On the face of it , I have no regrets whatsoever . However , I now lament my own personal maturity level . In hindsight my callowness had the effect of exacerbating a complicated but manageable situation . " On the twentieth anniversary of the race , Topolski insisted " It was just a selection dispute , an argument which every club in every sport has from time to time . The media just took the story and hyped it up . "