

## = The Boat Race 1839 =

The 3rd Boat Race took place on the River Thames on 3 April 1839 . It was the second of the University Boat Races to be held on the River Thames , this time between Westminster and Putney . Cambridge had competed against Leander Club in 1837 and 1838 ; it had been three years since Oxford and Cambridge raced against one another . Representatives of both universities and an independent referee oversaw the proceedings . Cambridge won the race by 35 lengths , as of 2014 the largest winning margin in the history of the event .

## = = 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 . No race between the two universities was held in 1837 or 1838 , instead Cambridge raced against Leander Club those years . The umpires for the race were C. B. Wollaston ( for Oxford ) and C. J. Selwyn ( for Cambridge ) , while W. H. Harrison acted as referee .

Cambridge 's boat was constructed by Searle of Stangate , while Oxford 's " beautifully constructed " vessel was built by King of Oxford . The race was scheduled to take place on a five @-@ and @-@ three @-@ quarter @-@ mile stretch between Westminster Bridge and Putney Bridge . Oxford were trained by a Thames waterman while Cambridge were guided by their cox , Thomas Selby Egan .

## = = Crews = =

The Oxford crew weighed an average of 11 st 10 @.@ 5 lb ( 74 @.@ 4 kg ) per rower , almost 10 pounds ( 4 @.@ 5 kg ) more per man than their opponents . None of the Oxford crew from the 1836 featured in this year 's race ; however , both the stroke Edmund Stanley and cox Egan returned for Cambridge , the former being described by Bell 's Life as " really terrific , one of the severest we ever saw " . Oxford 's boat club president was Calverley Bewicke who rowed at stroke for the Dark Blues , while Cambridge had a non @-@ rowing president in Augustus Granville .

## = = Race = =

The umpires for the race were Charles Woolaston and C. J. Selwyn , while W. Harrison Esq , the Commodore of the Royal Thames Yacht Club , fulfilled the position of referee . The race was held on a Wednesday , 3 April 1839 , the start time of " precisely " 4.47pm , in conditions described by MacMichael as " cold , cloudy and windy , and just the very worst sort of day for an aquatic expedition " . According to Bell 's Life , Cambridge were slight favourites . Oxford won the toss and elected to commence closest to the Middlesex shore of the river . After a close start , the Cambridge boat started to draw away and by Vauxhall Bridge were " several boats ' lengths " ahead . They increased their lead further by Battersea Bridge and shot Putney Bridge 1 minute 45 seconds ahead , and won by a margin of 35 lengths which remains , as of 2014 , the largest in the history of the event . Cambridge 's victory took them to an overall lead in the event of 2 ? 1 .