

= The Boat Race 1985 =

The 131st Boat Race took place on 6 April 1985 . Held annually , the event is a side @-@ by @-@ side rowing race between crews from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge along the River Thames . Oxford won by four @-@ and @-@ three @-@ quarter lengths . Bruce Philp became the first man to row for both universities having previously rowed for Cambridge , and Henrietta Shaw became the first female cox for Cambridge .

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 three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ quarter lengths in the previous year 's race . However Cambridge held the overall lead , with 68 victories to Oxford 's 61 . The race was sponsored by Ladbrokes for the ninth consecutive year .

The first Women 's Boat Race took place in 1927 , but did not become an annual fixture until the 1960s . 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 .

= = Crews = =

Oxford were pre @-@ race favourites , and weighed an average of 4 pounds (1 @. @ 8 kg) per rower more than their opponents . Oxford 's crew contained four former Blues while Cambridge featured three . Bruce Philp became the first man to row for both universities , having represented Cambridge in the 1982 and 1983 races . Henrietta Shaw became the first woman to cox the Cambridge boat .

= = Race = =

Cambridge won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station . A quick start from Cambridge coupled with a poor one from Oxford saw the Light Blues take a third of a length lead before being reined back at Fulham Football Club . A one @-@ second lead at the mile post preceded a period of warnings from umpire Ronnie Howard to both coxes as they contested the same water . Oxford held a canvas ' lead as the crews passed under Hammersmith Bridge and began to move away along Chiswick Eyot . A ten @-@ second lead at Barnes Bridge became a thirteen @-@ second lead at the finishing post , as Oxford took the win by four and three @-@ quarter lengths in a time of 17 minutes 11 seconds . This was Oxford 's tenth consecutive victory , and their eleventh in twelve years , and took the overall record to 68 ? 62 in favour of Cambridge .

In the reserve race , Oxford 's Isis beat Cambridge 's Goldie by six lengths , while Oxford won the 40th Women 's Boat Race .

= = Reaction = =

Cambridge stroke John Pritchard said " I tried everything . But at the vital moment , the boat went heavy . " His Oxford counterpart Francis Reiningier said " I was always optimistic that the power was there waiting to be switched on . When I asked for it , it glowed . " Oxford coach Dan Topolski

suggested that being given the Middlesex station was to their advantage , " I was glad to have Middlesex because in training our first three minutes had always been relatively poor . "