

= The Boat Race 1947 =

The 93rd Boat Race took place on 29 March 1947 . 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 in London . In a race umpired by former Oxford rower D. T. Raikes , Cambridge won by ten lengths in a time of 23 minutes 1 second , taking the overall record in the event to 49 ? 43 in their 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 . The rivalry is a major point of honour between the two universities and followed throughout the United Kingdom and worldwide . Oxford went into the race as reigning champions , having won the 1946 race by three lengths , with Cambridge leading overall with 48 victories to Oxford 's 43 (excluding the " dead heat " of 1877) .

Oxford 's coaches were R. E. Eason (who rowed for the Dark Blues in the 1924 race) , P. C. Mallam (four @-@ time Blue between 1921 and 1924) and Guy Oliver Nickalls (who rowed three times for Oxford between 1921 and 1923) . Cambridge were coached by John Houghton Gibbon (who rowed for the Light Blues in the 1899 and 1900 races) , Hugh Mason (who represented Cambridge in the 1936 and 1937 races) and Peter Haig @-@ Thomas (four @-@ time Blue between 1902 and 1905) . The umpire for the race was former Oxford rower D. T. Raikes who had represented the Dark Blues in the 1920 , 1921 and 1922 races . Among the spectators were Geoffrey Fisher , the Archbishop of Canterbury , and American actress Paulette Goddard . It was the first year that souvenir programmes were sold , the proceeds of which would help to fund the two boat clubs .

The rowing correspondent for The Times suggested that Oxford could win , claiming they had an " embarras de richesse " while Cambridge " started this year with a grievous shortage of material " . In a practice row , the rowing correspondent for The Manchester Guardian stated that " Cambridge showed much better form " while Oxford " did rather more hard work " , including practicing their start from a stakeboat . Oxford were reported as being favourites in the Dundee Courier , with the prediction that the win could be determined by who won the toss . That view was echoed in the Dundee Evening Telegraph , who also suggested that Oxford were favourites yet " abnormal flooding " would favour the crew who won the toss .

= = Crews = =

The Cambridge crew weighed an average of 12 st 5 lb (78 @. @ 3 kg) , 5 @. @ 5 pounds (2 @. @ 49 kg) per rower more than their opponents . Oxford saw four rowers with Boat Race experience return to the crew , including J. R. W. Gleave , R. M. A. Bourne , P. N. Brodie and stroke A. J. R. Purssell . Cambridge 's boat contained just one crew member who had taken part in the event before , in cox G. H. C. Fisher . The Cambridge University Boat Club president , M. A. Nicholson was declared unfit to row following a series of bouts of asthma . All participants in the race were registered as British .

= = Race = =

Oxford won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station , handing the Middlesex side of the river to Cambridge . The race was started by umpire Raikes at 6 : 15 p.m , in " rain and dismal weather " . Out @-@ rating Oxford by two strokes per minute , the Light Blues took an immediate lead and by Craven Steps they were pulling away from their opponents . As both crews passed the

Mile Post , Cambridge were almost clear by two lengths , and despite a spurt from the Dark Blues at the Harrods Furniture Depository , the Light Blues maintained their lead . Oxford trailed Cambridge by three and a half lengths as the Light Blues passed below Hammersmith Bridge and moved into Oxford 's water , effectively ending the race as a contest .

Cambridge continued to build their lead , ahead by six lengths at Chiswick Steps and eight by Barnes Bridge . They passed the finishing post ten lengths ahead in a time of 23 minutes 1 second , their first win since the 1939 race . It was the slowest winning time since the 1877 race and the winning margin was the largest since the 1928 race . The victory took the overall record in the event to 49 ? 43 in Cambridge 's favour . The rowing correspondent for The Times suggested the " Boat Race was as disappointing as the weather in which it was rowed " .