

= The Boat Race 1913 =

The 70th Boat Race took place on 13 March 1913 . 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 went into the race as reigning champions , having won the previous year 's race . The two crews contained a total of five medallists from the 1912 Summer Olympics . Umpired by former Cambridge rower Frederick I. Pitman , Oxford won this year 's race by three @-@ quarters of a length in a time of 20 minutes 53 seconds . The victory took the overall record in the event to 39 ? 30 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 ; it is followed throughout the United Kingdom and , as of 2014 , broadcast worldwide . Oxford went into the race as reigning champions , having won the 1912 race by six lengths , and led overall with 38 victories to Cambridge 's 30 (excluding the " dead heat " of 1877) .

Oxford 's coaches were H. R. Barker (who rowed for the Dark Blues in the 1908 and 1909 races) , G. C. Bourne who had rowed for the university in the 1882 and 1883 races , Harcourt Gilbey Gold (Dark Blue president for the 1900 race and four @-@ time Blue) , and Alister Kirby (who rowed for Cambridge four times between 1906 and 1909) . Cambridge were coached by John Houghton Gibbon who rowed for the Light Blues in the 1899 and 1900 races . For the tenth year the umpire was old Etonian Frederick I. Pitman who rowed for Cambridge in the 1884 , 1885 and 1886 races .

To avoid Holy Week , the race was scheduled earlier than normal , on 13 March 1913 . Two old Etonians , G. E. Tower and C. E. V. Buxton joined the Cambridge crew , along with W. M. Askwith . The Light Blues ' practice was disrupted , first losing Askwith suffering from a boil , and then , late in the build @-@ up the race , losing both E. L. Showell Rogers and L. A. Pattinson to injury and " indigestion " respectively nine days before the race . Askwith was fit enough to return and according to author and former Oxford rower George Drinkwater , " the crew were well together when they came to the post " . Of the Oxford crew , Drinkwater noted that " the crew went easily and comfortably from the first day " yet " lacked essential balance " .

= = Crews = =

The Oxford crew weighed an average of 12 st 6 @.@ 375 lb (78 @.@ 9 kg) , 1 @.@ 875 pounds (0 @.@ 9 kg) per rower more than their opponents . Cambridge 's crew included two rowers with Boat Race experience in Sidney Swann and Ralph Shove , the former making his third appearance in the event . The Oxford crew saw five participants return , including Leslie Wormald and cox Henry Wells who were both taking part in their third race . Edgar Burgess , Swann , Wormald and Ewart Horsfall had all won gold medals in the men 's eight at the 1912 Summer Olympics , rowing for Leander Club . They defeated New College in the final for whom Dark Blue Arthur Wiggins rowed .

= = Race = =

Cambridge won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station , handing the Middlesex side of the river to Oxford . Umpire Pitman started the race at 4 : 38 p.m. in conditions described by former author and former Oxford rower George Drinkwater as " almost perfect " but with a " modest " tide . Despite Oxford out @-@ rating their opponents from the start , Cambridge took an early lead and were half a length ahead after the first minute . Although the bend in the river was against them , the Light Blues continued to slowly gain and were just clear by the Mile Post . A spurt from Oxford

closed the gap and by Harrods Furniture Depository the lead was down to half a length . Taking advantage of the bend in the river , the Light Blues pulled away again and were nearly clear by the time the crews passed below Hammersmith Bridge . They extended the lead to be a quarter @-@ length clear by The Doves pub , and then a half @-@ length clear by Craven Steps .

Rowing into increasing wind , Cambridge began to tire and Oxford closed the gap . The Cambridge stroke G. E. Tower spurted again just before Barnes Bridge and led by a length and a quarter at the bridge . The crews began to steer closer to one another , eventually causing each cox to give way to avoid the foul . By the time the boats passed Mortlake Brewery they were level , and despite a final push from Cambridge , Oxford drove on , passing the finishing post rating 37 strokes per minute . They won by three @-@ quarters of a length in a time of 20 minutes 53 seconds . It was the narrowest winning margin since the 1896 race , and Oxford 's fifth consecutive victory , taking the overall record in the event to 39 ? 30 in their favour .