

= The Boat Race 1969 =

The 115th Boat Race took place on 5 April 1969 . Held annually , it is a side @-@ by @-@ side rowing race between crews from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge along the River Thames . The race featured the heaviest oarsman in the history of the event in Cambridge 's David Cruttenden . It was won by Cambridge who passed the finishing post four lengths ahead of Oxford , securing Cambridge 's second consecutive victory . The winning time of 18 minutes 4 seconds was the third fastest in modern Boat Race history .

In the reserve race , Goldie beat Isis , and in the Women 's Boat Race , Cambridge were victorious .

= = 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 , followed throughout the United Kingdom and broadcast worldwide . Cambridge went into the race as reigning champions , having beaten Oxford by three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half lengths in the previous year 's race , and held the overall lead , with 63 victories to Oxford 's 51 (excluding the " dead heat " of 1877) .

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 .

The race was umpired by Alastair Graham who had rowed for Oxford , while the timekeepers for the race were Dickie Burnell and G. G. H. Page . Oxford 's coach was Derek Drury while Cambridge were led by Lou Barry .

= = Crews = =

The Cambridge crew weighed an average of 13 st 9 lb (86 @.@ 5 kg) , 2 @.@ 5 pounds (1 @.@ 1 kg) per rower more than their opponents . At 15 st 11 lb , Cambridge 's number four David Cruttenden was the heaviest oarsman to have ever participated in the race , half a stone heavier than American rower Josh Jensen who rowed for Oxford in the 1967 race . Cambridge 's Robin Winckless and Nick Hornsby were rowing in their third Boat Race , while Chris Powell and Graeme Hall were also returning Light Blues . Peter Saltmarsh returned for Oxford , making his third appearance in the event . Australian Ashton Calvert , the Oxford cox , was the only non @-@ British competitor registered in the race .

= = Race = =

Cambridge won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station . With helicopters hovering above the start , Douglas Calder of The Times reported that it was unlikely that either the crews could hear the umpire nor the umpire hear the crews at the start ; instead just the flag dropping notified the strokes of the start . Cambridge took an early lead , and their advantage was compounded when the umpire warned Oxford at Beverley Brook to move away to avoid a clash of oars . Cambridge were two seconds ahead at the Mile Post ; through rough water , the Light Blue boat coped better and extended their lead to six seconds ahead at Hammersmith Bridge , and at least a length clear of Oxford . While the conditions improved beyond Hammersmith , Cambridge continued to extend their lead , and held an advantage of eight seconds ahead at Chiswick Steps , increasing to eleven seconds ahead at Barnes Bridge . Cambridge won by four lengths and 14

seconds , in a time of 18 minutes 4 seconds , the third fastest time in the history of the event on the Championship Course , bettered only in the 1934 and 1948 races . Oxford 's coach Derek Drury was philosophical in defeat : " That 's the way the cookie crumbles . "

In the reserve race , Cambridge 's Goldie beat Oxford 's Isis by two lengths and in a time of 18 minutes 50 seconds , in their third consecutive victory . In the 24th running of the Women 's Boat Race , Cambridge triumphed , their seventh consecutive victory .