

= The Boat Race 1846 =

The 8th Boat Race between crews from the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge took place on the River Thames on 3 April 1846 . Umpired by Charles Jasper Selwyn , Cambridge won in a time of 21 minutes 5 seconds , with a winning margin of three lengths . The race was held on the ebb tide , starting in Mortlake and ending in Putney . For the first time , outriggers were used by both crews .

= 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 .

Following their ten @-@ length defeat in the previous year 's race , Oxford sent their challenge to Cambridge in February 1846 , proposing that the race should take place at Easter . The umpire for the race was Charles Jasper Selwyn . Cambridge went into the race leading the contest overall , with five wins to Oxford 's two since the inaugural race in 1829 . On one of only a handful of occasions , the race was rowed on the ebb tide , from Mortlake to Putney .

For the first time in the history of the race , both boats used outriggers . Cambridge " rowed in an outrigger built by Searle , 60 ft in length , 2 ft 8 in in breadth " , while Oxford 's boat was " expressly built for this match by King of Oxford " and 58 ft 6 in long . Both crews had professional coaches : Oxford used John Noulton while Cambridge were trained by Robert Coombes , a champion sculler . It marked the start of the debate over the use of professional coaches which was not resolved until the 1852 race .

= Crews =

The Cambridge crew weighed an average of 11 st 8 @. @ 375 lb (73 @. @ 5 kg) , 3 @. @ 25 pounds (1 @. @ 5 kg) more per rower than their opponents . Oxford saw three Blues return from the 1845 race in Royds , Stapylton and Milman ; Harkness and Hill returned for Cambridge .

= Race =

Conditions for the race were described by MacMichael as " very fine , and the little wind there was with the tide . " The race commenced shortly after 11.10am , started by Edward Searle . Oxford won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station , handing Cambridge the Middlesex side of the river . Despite taking an early lead , Oxford were soon caught and Cambridge drew away , holding a third @-@ of @-@ a @-@ length lead by Chiswick . As the long bend began to favour Oxford , Cambridge slowed in shallow water allowing the Dark Blues to close some of the discrepancy , but by Hammersmith Bridge , Cambridge were back to a half @-@ length lead . A final surge from Oxford once again closed the gap , but Cambridge pulled away to take the victory in a record time of 21 minutes 5 seconds and by a margin of three lengths .