

## = The Boat Race 1858 =

The 15th Boat Race took place on the River Thames on 27 March 1858 . Typically held annually , the event is a side @-@ by @-@ side rowing race between crews from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge . The 1858 race , disrupted by poor rowing and a collision with a barge , was won by Cambridge who defeated Oxford by seven @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half lengths in a time of 21 minutes 23 seconds .

## = 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 . Oxford went into this year 's race as reigning champions , having defeated Cambridge by eleven lengths in the previous year 's race . Cambridge however led overall with eight wins to Oxford 's six .

Cambridge were coached for the fifth time by Thomas Selby Egan , ( who had coxed the Light Blues in the 1836 , 1839 and 1840 races ) , while Oxford 's coach was Alfred Shadwell ( cox for the Dark Blues in the 1842 race and coach for the fourth time ) . The race was umpired by Joseph William Chitty who had rowed for Oxford twice in 1849 ( in the March and December races ) and the 1852 race , while the starter was Edward Searle .

## = Crews =

The Oxford crew weighed an average of 11 st 8 @. @ 875 lb ( 73 @. @ 7 kg ) , 1 pound ( 0 @. @ 5 kg ) per rower more than their opponents . Archibald Levin Smith , Robert Wharton and Robert Lewis @-@ Lloyd ( who was rowing his third Boat Race for the Light Blues ) had featured in Cambridge 's 1857 crew . Oxford 's crew included five participants who had competed in the previous race , including J. T. Thorley , who was making his third appearance in the event .

## = Race =

Cambridge won the toss and elected to start from the Middlesex station , handing the Surrey side of the river to Oxford . The race commenced at 1pm and almost immediately the Oxford boat club president and stroke J. T. Thorley " caught a crab " which " completely brought their eight to standstill . " Cambridge took the lead but were caught following a clash of their port @-@ side oars with a barge . The boats were level at the Crab Tree pub but here Cambridge began to draw ahead and passed under Hammersmith Bridge with a length @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half lead . The Light Blues continued to increase their lead and passed the flag @-@ boat at Mortlake seven @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half lengths ahead of Oxford in a time of 21 minutes 23 seconds .

It was the fastest time since the 1846 race ( which was held on the ebb tide ) , and took the overall record in the event to 9 ? 6 in Cambridge 's favour . Although it was hoped that a rematch would be conducted at the Henley Royal Regatta , Oxford failed to make up a crew , and Cambridge went on to defeat Leander Club before winning the Grand Challenge Cup against London Rowing Club .