

= The Boat Race 1926 =

The 78th Boat Race took place on 27 March 1926 . 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 . Umpired by former rower Frederick I. Pitman , Cambridge won by five lengths in a time of 19 minutes 29 seconds in the largest winning margin since 1912 . It was Cambridge 's third consecutive victory and took the overall record in the event to 40 ? 37 in Oxford 's 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 . Cambridge went into the race as reigning champions , having won the 1925 race as Oxford became waterlogged , with Oxford leading overall with 40 victories to Cambridge 's 36 (excluding the " dead heat " of 1877) .

Oxford 's coaches were H. R. Baker (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 , and A. V. Douglas (who took part in the 1922 and 1925 races) . Cambridge were coached by William Dudley Ward (who had rowed in 1897 , 1899 and 1900 races) , Francis Escombe , David Alexander Wauchope (who had rowed in the 1895 race) , and H. W. Willis . For the eighteenth and final year the umpire was Old Etonian Frederick I. Pitman who had rowed for Cambridge in the 1884 , 1885 and 1886 races . He would be replaced in the following year 's race by Charles Burnell .

Cambridge opted to arrive a fortnight later than usual at the Thames , and forewent their typical practice at Ely . According to former Oxford rower and author George Drinkwater , the Light Blues " showed great promise " only to be struck by measles , forcing a late replacement in the boat . Oxford , while " not so pleasing in appearance " were considered to be favourites for the race .

= Crews =

The Oxford crew weighed an average of 12 st 10 @. @ 5 lb (80 @. @ 8 kg) , 6 @. @ 75 pounds (3 @. @ 1 kg) per rower more than their opponents . Four of the Cambridge crew had taken part in the Boat Race previously , including W. F. Smith , G. H. Ambler , and cox J. A. Brown , all of whom were participating in their third consecutive event . The crew also included E. C. Hamilton @-@ Russell who had won three finals at the 1925 Henley Royal Regatta . Oxford saw three rowers return to the boat in J. D. W. Thomson , E. C. T. Edwards and C. E. Pitman . Cambridge 's Australian number six J. B. Bell was the only non @-@ British participant registered in the race .

= Race =

Oxford won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station , handing the Middlesex side of the river to Cambridge . In conditions described by Drinkwater as " excellent " with " smooth water but only a moderate tide " , Pitman started the race at 12 : 27 pm . Although Oxford marginally out @-@ rated their opponents , the crews were level after the first minute . As the crews passed the Mile Post , the Dark Blues held a small lead which they had extended to around half a length by Harrods Furniture Depository . Cambridge made a push and reduced the deficit to a quarter @-@ length by the time the boats passed below Hammersmith Bridge . Following a series of spurts around the outside of the bend in the river , Cambridge gained to draw level by the HMS Stork .

The Dark Blues ' rhythm faltered and their number five missed a stroke as they passed Chiswick Eyot , allowing Cambridge to move away to take a clear lead . Two lengths ahead by Chiswick Steps , the Light Blues increased their stroke rate and pulled further away to win by five lengths , the

largest winning margin since the 1912 race , in a time of 19 minutes and 29 seconds . It was their third consecutive victory and their seventh in eight races .