

= The Boat Race 2009 =

The 155th Boat Race took place on 29 March 2009 . Oxford 's crew was the heaviest in the event 's history and which featured five Olympic rowers , including silver medallist Colin Smith and bronze medallist George Bridgewater . Cambridge took an early lead , only to be caught and overtaken by Oxford who won the race by three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half lengths .

In the reserve race , Cambridge 's Goldie defeated Oxford 's Isis , while Oxford won the Women 's Boat Race .

= = Background = =

The Boat Race is an annual competition between the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge . First held in 1829 , the competition is a 4 @.@ 2 @-@ mile (6 @.@ 8 km) race along The 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 . Oxford went into the race as reigning champions , having won the 2008 race by six lengths , while Cambridge led overall with 79 victories to Oxford 's 74 (excluding the " dead heat " of 1877) . The race was sponsored by Xchanging for the fifth consecutive year .

The first Women 's Boat Race took place in 1927 , but did not become an annual fixture until the 1960s . Up 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 .

= = Crews = =

The Oxford crew (sometimes referred to as the " Dark Blues ") weighed an average of 8 pounds (3 @.@ 6 kg) per rower more than the Cambridge crew (sometimes referred to as the " Light Blues ") , making them the heaviest in Boat Race history . Oxford fielded five rowers who had featured at the 2008 Summer Olympics : Colin Smith won silver for Great Britain , while Ante Ku?urin rowed for Croatia , New Zealander George Bridgewater won a bronze in the coxless pair , Sjoerd Hamburger rowed for The Netherlands , and Tom Solesbury for Great Britain . Cambridge 's crew contained five returning Blues to Oxford 's three .

The crews for the race were as follows :

= = Race = =

Cambridge won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station . Cambridge 's cox Dowbiggin raised her hand to indicate that she was not ready to start just as Umpire Boris Rankov started the race . This allowed Oxford the initiative and they took an early lead . Cambridge slowly edged their way back into contention , and held a half @-@ a @-@ length lead at the two @-@ mile mark . At St Paul 's School , Cambridge were two @-@ thirds of a length ahead before a series of oar clashes and umpire warnings forced the boats apart . A larger clash , between Cambridge 's Monaghan and Oxford 's Smith , took place by Chiswick Eyot before Oxford made the better recovery and quickly pushed out to secure a clear @-@ water lead . Cambridge failed to threaten , and Oxford won by three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half lengths .

In the reserve race , Isis defeated Goldie by four lengths , completing the race in a time of 17 minutes 24 seconds , for their second consecutive win . Oxford won the Women 's Boat Race by one @-@ and @-@ a @-@ quarter lengths , hosted at Henley on 22 March 2014 .

= = Reaction = =

Oxford 's boat club president Colin Smith said " it 's a great , great feeling " . He continued : " The

difference between the two crews today was our power , aggression and stickability " . Cambridge 's Australian international Cubasch said " it 's really devastating . Sometimes you 'd be happy with a silver but here it 's dead last . " His coach , Chris Nilsson , admitted " at the end of the day , the stronger crew with the more power came through " . Oxford coach Sean Bowden said " We just said ' get to halfway , and head for home ? , and they did a really good job " .