

= The Boat Race 1999 =

The 145th Boat Race took place on 3 April 1999 . 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 . Featuring the tallest rower in Boat Race history , Cambridge won the race in the second @-@ fastest time ever . It was their seventh consecutive victory in the event .

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

= = 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 " ) . First held in 1829 , the race takes 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 broadcast worldwide . Cambridge went into the race as reigning champions , having won the 1998 race by three lengths , with Cambridge leading overall with 75 victories to Oxford 's 68 ( 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 . 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 .

Andrew Lindsay was confident that the Oxford crew would be more motivated than their opponents : " our advantage over Cambridge is that we are hungry for the victory . Everyone in the Oxford boat is driven to go and win this damn thing " . He was making his third and final appearance in the race having lost in both the 1997 and 1998 race . His grandfather represented Cambridge in the 1930s , and his uncle , Alexander Lindsay , rowed for the losing Oxford crew in the 1959 race before triumphing the following year . Cambridge boat club president and Canadian international rower Brad Crombie was also making his third Boat Race appearance , attempting to complete a hat @-@ trick of victories . Sean Bowden was the head coach of Oxford . His Cambridge counterpart , Robin Williams , suggested " it still feels like all or nothing to us . The fear of defeat , the aim of trying to push the limits is motivation itself " . Just as he had done in the 1993 race , umpire Mark Evans introduced modifications to the starting procedure , suggesting that he would be content to hold the crews for up to ten seconds between issuing the " set " and " go " commands . Cambridge 's Williams remarked : " I 'm happy as long as both crews abide by it " , Bowden was nonplussed " Go is when you start races . I 'm happy . "

The race was sponsored for the first time by Aberdeen Asset Management , and both crews were competing for the Aberdeen Asset Trophy . It was the fiftieth anniversary of the BBC 's coverage of the event and over the preceding five years had secured an average audience in excess of six million .

= = Crews = =

The Oxford crew weighed @-@ in at an average of 14 st 10 lb ( 93 @. @ 2 kg ) , 0 @. @ 5 pounds ( 0 @. @ 23 kg ) more per rower than Cambridge . Josh West , rowing at number four for Cambridge , became the tallest rower in Boat Race history at 6 ft 9 in ( 2 @. @ 06 m ) . The Oxford crew comprised three Britons , three Americans , a Swede , a Canadian and a German , while Cambridge were represented by five Britons , two Americans , a German and a Canadian . Three former Blues returned for Cambridge in Wallace , Crombie and Smith , while Oxford saw Humphreys and Lindsay return . Vian Sharif , the Cambridge cox , became the tenth female to steer a Boat Race crew , and was the lightest competitor at the event since the 1986 race .

## == Race ==

Bookmakers could not initially separate the crews , offering odds on for either boat to win . However , as the start of the race approached , Williams had suggested that he was worried by his crew 's " inconsistency " and Oxford were declared favourites . Cambridge won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station . Despite being warned by umpire Davis , Cambridge were soon half @-@ a @-@ length ahead , and a second clear by the Mile Post . The lead was extended to a length by Hammersmith Bridge and Sharif had steered her boat into a better angle of attack . Pushing on , Cambridge were seven seconds up by Chiswick Steps and nine seconds at Barnes Railway Bridge . They passed the finishing post three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half lengths ahead , with an eleven @-@ second advantage over the Dark Blues . The Light Blues finished in 16 minutes 41 seconds , a time only bettered once before , in 1998 . It was the first time since 1936 that Cambridge had secured seven consecutive victories .

In the reserve race , Cambridge 's Goldie beat Oxford 's Isis by one @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half lengths , their ninth victory in ten years , and in a record time of 16 minutes 58 seconds which beat the fastest time recorded in 1996 and repeated in 1998 . Cambridge won the 51st Women 's Boat Race by one length in a time of 6 minutes 1 second , their eighth consecutive victory .

## == Reaction ==

Oxford 's Bowden was dumbstruck : " I 'm really floored . I just haven 't got any answers until I talk to the crew . " His number four , Toby Ayer admitted : " my impression is that they were quicker than us and that is a very hard thing to have to say . " Cambridge 's Williams noted : " I thought it would be a bit more competitive than that . " Cambridge boat club president Crombie exclaimed " that 's the most fun I 've ever had rowing for Cambridge . "