

## = The Boat Race 1929 =

The 81st Boat Race took place on 23 March 1929 . 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 . The event featured three Olympic medallists and included the first Danish rower ever to participate in the Boat Race . In a race umpired by former Oxford rower Charles Burnell , Cambridge won by seven lengths in a time of 19 minutes 24 seconds , the fastest winning time since the 1924 race . The victory , their sixth in a row and their tenth in the previous eleven years , levelled the overall record for the first time since 1863 , at 40 wins each .

## = = 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 ; it is followed throughout the United Kingdom and , as of 2014 , broadcast worldwide . Cambridge went into the race as reigning champions , having won the 1928 race by ten lengths , with Oxford leading overall with 40 victories to Cambridge 's 39 ( excluding the " dead heat " of 1877 ) .

Cambridge were coached by Francis Escombe and P. Haig @-@ Thomas ( four @-@ time Blue who had rowed between 1902 and 1905 ) . Oxford 's coaches were Harcourt Gilbey Gold ( Dark Blue president for the 1900 race and four @-@ time Blue ) , Guy Oliver Nickalls ( who had rowed three times between 1921 and 1923 ) and Arthur Wiggins ( who had rowed for Oxford in the 1912 , 1913 and 1914 races ) . For the third year the umpire was Charles Burnell who had rowed for Oxford in the 1895 , 1896 , 1897 and 1898 races . Charles Kent , who rowed for Oxford in the 1891 race , was the finishing judge for the second consecutive year .

Bad weather plagued the practice and build @-@ up to the race : Heavy fog caused the postponement of at least one outing . The Times rowing correspondent described Cambridge 's style as " so easy as to be almost sluggish " while Oxford were " lively to the point of punishing their boat " .

## = = Crews = =

The Cambridge crew weighed an average of 12 st 10 lb ( 80 @. @ 5 kg ) , 5 @. @ 5 pounds ( 2 @. @ 5 kg ) per rower more than their opponents . Oxford saw two rowers return in George Godber and H. C. Morphett . Cambridge 's boat contained five participants with Boat Race experience , including Richard Beesly who was making his third consecutive appearance . He and Michael Warriner were gold medallists in the coxless four at the 1928 Summer Olympics . Their cox Arthur Sulley won a silver medal in the men 's eight . Three of the Oxford crew were registered as non @-@ British : H. C. Morphett and J. A. Ingles were from Australia , while C. F. Juel @-@ Brockdorff was the first Danish rower in the history of the event .

## = = Race = =

Cambridge won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station , handing the Middlesex side of the river to Oxford . The umpire Burnell started the race at 12 : 12 p.m. in " gloriously fine weather " , and both boats got off to quick starts , with Oxford just ahead after the first strokes . Level past the boathouses , Cambridge edged ahead to hold a canvas @-@ length lead by Craven Steps . Taking advantage of the Dark Blues ' struggle in rough water by Craven Cottage , Cambridge slowly drew ahead and held a three @-@ quarter length lead by the time the crews passed the Mile Post . A push from the Dark Blues saw them keep in contention until Hammersmith Bridge where , according to L. Cecil Smith writing in The Observer , they " went ahead so fast and steadily as to suggest that

even had they lost the toss they would have been able safely to take the Surrey water " while Oxford " had been taken out of their stride " . The Light Blues passed below the bridge with a two @-@ length lead .

A spurt from Cambridge around the Chiswick Reach bend effectively ended the race as a contest . A final surge from Oxford was held off by Cambridge who passed below Barnes Bridge five lengths ahead . Here , some of the Dark Blues started to show signs of distress , in particular their bow P. D. Barr who , it was later noted , had been suffering from influenza . Cambridge pulled away from the Dark Blues with every stroke and rated 36 strokes per minute towards the finish , passing the finishing post with a lead of seven lengths in a time of 19 minutes 24 seconds . It was their sixth consecutive victory , the tenth in the previous eleven years and was the fastest winning time since the 1924 race , and the ninth fastest time in the history of the event . The win took the overall record to 40 ? 40 , the first time since the 1863 race that the scores had been levelled .

According to E. P. Evans , former Oxford rower in the 1904 , 1905 and 1906 races , writing in The Manchester Guardian , the Cambridge crew was " worthy to be classed with some of the best that Cambridge has turned out " , while Oxford " rowed distinctly below their practice form and were a most disappointing crew " . The rowing correspondent for The Times described it as a " crushing defeat " for Oxford , stating that they were " completely outpaced " yet while Cambridge " upheld the tradition of skill " , Oxford " upheld that of courage " .