

= The Boat Race 1873 =

The 30th Boat Race took place on the 29 March 1873 . The Boat Race is an annual side @-@ by @-@ side rowing race between crews from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge along the River Thames . In a race umpired by former Oxford rower Joseph William Chitty , Cambridge won by three lengths in a time of 19 minutes and 35 seconds , the fastest time in the history of the event . It was the first time that rowers raced on sliding seats .

= 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 . Cambridge went into the race as reigning champions , having defeated Oxford by two lengths in the previous year 's race , while Oxford led overall with sixteen wins to Cambridge 's thirteen .

Although the use of sliding seats had been considered the previous year , the then @-@ Cambridge boat club president John Goldie disallowed the Light Blue boat manufacturer Harry Clasper from fitting them . However , for the 1873 race , both boats were , for the first time , fitted with the innovation .

Cambridge were coached by John Graham Chambers (who rowed for Cambridge in the 1862 and 1863 races , and was non @-@ rowing boat club president for the 1865 race) Oxford 's coaches was Robert Lesley , the non @-@ rowing president of Oxford University Boat Club (who had rowed in the 1871 and 1872 races) .

Joseph William Chitty (who had rowed for Oxford twice in 1849 (in the March and December races) and the 1852 race) returned as umpire for the race (with Robert Lewis @-@ Lloyd having officiated the previous year) while the starter was Edward Searle .

= Crews =

The Cambridge crew weighed an average of 11 st 11 lb (74 @.@ 7 kg) , 5 @.@ 25 pounds (2 @.@ 4 kg) more than their opponents . Oxford saw four former Blues return from the 1872 crew , while Cambridge 's crew included three rowers who had participated the previous year , in James Brooks Close , Charles Stokes Read and Constantine William Benson .

= Race =

Oxford won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station , handing the Middlesex side of the river to Cambridge . The race commenced at 2.32pm. Oxford 's higher stroke rate enabled them to make " a good race of it " , and remained in contention for the first mile @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half to Hammersmith Bridge , but in doing so exhausted themselves . Cambridge eased off and won the race by three lengths . The winning time was 19 minutes and 35 seconds , the fastest time in the history of The Boat Race and 29 seconds faster than the previous record set in the 1869 .