

= The Boat Race 1912 =

The 69th Boat Race took place on 30 March 1912 with a re @-@ row on 1 April . Held annually , the event is a side @-@ by @-@ side rowing race between crews from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge along the River Thames . Oxford went into the race as reigning champions , having won the previous year 's race . Umpired by former Cambridge rower Frederick I. Pitman , this year 's race ended with Cambridge sinking and Oxford waterlogged . Pitman declared the result as " No Race " and in the subsequent re @-@ row on the following Monday , the race was won by Oxford by six lengths . The Dark Blues ' fourth consecutive victory took the overall record in the event to 38 ? 30 in their 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 ; it is followed throughout the United Kingdom and , as of 2014 , broadcast worldwide . Oxford went into the race as reigning champions , having won the previous year 's race by three @-@ and @-@ three @-@ quarter lengths . Oxford , however , held the overall lead with 37 victories to Cambridge 's 30 (excluding the " dead heat " of 1877) .

Oxford 's coaches were G. C. Bourne who had rowed for the university in the 1882 and 1883 races , Harcourt Gilbey Gold (Dark Blue president for the 1900 race and four @-@ time Blue) , and W. F. C. Holland who had rowed for Oxford four times between 1887 and 1890 . Cambridge were coached by John Houghton Gibbon who rowed for the Light Blues in the 1899 and 1900 races . For the ninth year the umpire was old Etonian Frederick I. Pitman who rowed for Cambridge in the 1884 , 1885 and 1886 races .

Author and former Oxford rower George Drinkwater noted that the Dark Blue crew was " by no means so quick in the water , but they possessed greater ease of movement " . Despite being struck by influenza , the training was never really hampered . Conversely , Cambridge suffered " misfortune after misfortune " . They persisted with D. C. Collins at stroke " in spite of his inexperience " but he was replaced by Sidney Swann . F. E. Hellyer was selected to row at number seven yet was forced to depart , suffering from influenza ; his replacement in L. S. Lloyd was considered " far too light " . C. F. Burnand was also forced to leave the crew through illness . Despite this , upon arrival at Putney , the Light Blues " made astonishing improvement " , and it was " only on account of their weight " that Oxford went into the race as favourites .

= = Crews = =

The Oxford crew weighed an average of 12 st 5 @. @ 875 lb (78 @. @ 7 kg) , 7 @. @ 625 pounds (3 @. @ 5 kg) per rower more than their opponents . Cambridge saw five competitors return to the boat , including R. W. M. Arbuthnot at stroke , rowing in his fourth consecutive race . Oxford 's crew also contained five participants with Boat Race experience , including Robert Bourne who was making his fourth appearance in the event . Seven of the Oxford crew were educated at Eton College . Three participants in the race were registered as non @-@ British : Oxford 's Charles Littlejohn was Australian while Cambridge 's cox C. A. Skinner hailed from South Africa and their number two D. C. Collins came from New Zealand .

= = Race = =

Oxford won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station , handing the Middlesex side of the river to Cambridge . In very rough conditions , Pitman started the race at 11 : 43 a.m. , with both

coxes initially steering their crews away from each other . The Light Blues started better before Oxford passed them to lead after the first minute , their cox Henry Bensley @-@ Wells opposite the Cambridge stroke Swann . By the end of Fulham wall , the Dark Blues were clear of Cambridge but both crews had taken on board a large volume of water . Bensley @-@ Wells steered his boat close to the shore for shelter , moving out only to pass below the centre arch of Hammersmith Bridge before heading back towards the shore once again . Following discussion with his stroke Robert Bourne , Bensley @-@ Wells steered into the shore whereupon the crew disembarked to empty their vessel of the river water . After getting back onto the river , the Oxford boat was approached by the umpire 's launch and informed by Pitman that Cambridge had sunk off Harrods Furniture Depository and that he was declaring " No Race " . Despite this , Oxford finished the course and paddled to Mortlake . Prior to this year 's event , there had been one sinking in the history of the race : Cambridge sank in the 1859 race . Author Gordon Ross described the aborted race as " a fiasco of some magnitude " , while Drinkwater described it as " the greatest fiasco in the history of the race . " With the agreement of the Port of London Authority , it was agreed to hold a re @-@ row the following Monday .

According to Bensley @-@ Wells " the weather on the Monday was again bad ... the wind was even stronger but ... had changed direction slightly . " Oxford again won the toss and elected to start from the Middlesex station , handing the Surrey side of the river to Cambridge . Pitman got the race under way at 12 : 40 p.m. The Dark Blues made a better start and took advantage of the shelter once again provided by the Middlesex side of the river . Although out @-@ rating the Dark Blues by up to six strokes per second , Cambridge could not overhaul the deficit and when Oxford passed the Crab Tree pub , Bensley @-@ Wells made for " the shortest way home " and steered over towards the Surrey station in water that " looked to be fairly good . " Oxford passed the finishing post with a lead of six lengths in a time of 22 minutes 5 seconds . It was the largest winning margin since the 1903 race and the slowest winning time since the 1901 race . The victory took the overall record in the event to 38 ? 30 in Oxford 's favour .