

= The Boat Race 1990 =

The 136th Boat Race took place on 31 March 1990 . 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 . Oxford won by two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ quarter lengths . The race featured the heaviest oarsman ever to have rowed in the event in Oxford 's Chris Heathcote , and the lightest Cambridge crew for nearly 30 years .

In the reserve race , Cambridge 's Goldie won as Oxford 's Isis was disqualified . 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 . Oxford went into the race as reigning champions , having won the 1989 race by two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half lengths , with Cambridge leading overall with 69 victories to Oxford 's 65 (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 . 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 .

The race was umpired by former Cambridge Blue Mike Sweeney , his fourth appearance in the role . He had advised the coxes that he would not be afraid to disqualify either crew should he need to : " If I warn them , it 's irrelevant what their opinion is . If they respond , fine . If not , they 're in trouble . " The race was sponsored by Beefeater Gin who , prior to the race , had signed a three @-@ year contract to continue their involvement in the race , worth £ 250 @, @ 000 . The BBC also extended their deal with a new five @-@ year contract to broadcast the race in the United Kingdom .

= = Crews = =

The Oxford crew weighed an average of 14 st 12 lb (94 @. @ 1 kg) per rower , 2 stone 1 @. @ 5 lb (13 @. @ 3 kg) more than Cambridge whose crew was the lightest since 1963 . The race featured the heaviest oarsman ever to have rowed in the event , with Oxford 's Chris Heathcote weighing 17 st 5 lb (114 @. @ 5 kg) . Oxford 's crew were also older and more experienced , with three world championship bronze medal winners in Jonathan Searle , Matthew Pinsent and Rupert Obholzer . Three of Oxford 's crew had won two Boat Races each , while Cambridge featured two former Blues who had won none . Cambridge 's cox Lisa Ross @-@ Magenty had won with both the women 's lightweight race in 1987 and Goldie in 1988 , her counterpart Martin Watts was educated at Westminster School and " spent hours on the Tideway " .

= = Races = =

Cambridge were underdogs for the race , having lost all but one of the previous fourteen Boat Races . Cambridge president Paddy Mant won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station . A minute into the race , Cambridge held a third @-@ of @-@ a @-@ length advantage , but as the crews approached the Fulham bend , Oxford drew alongside . Intelligent coxing from Oxford 's Watts gained Oxford a lead of a length after three minutes . With clear water at Harrods Furniture Depository , Watts attempted to steer in front of Cambridge but was warned off by umpire Sweeney . Oxford passed below Hammersmith Bridge holding a four @-@ second advantage and made a

push , taking the lead out to six seconds by Chiswick Steps . Settling for a lower rating , Oxford were eight seconds clear by Barnes Railway Bridge , and despite a late surge by Cambridge , Oxford passed the finishing post seven seconds and two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ quarter lengths ahead . The crews recorded the fourth- and fifth @-@ fastest times in Boat Race history .

In the reserve race , Cambridge 's Goldie won as Oxford 's Isis were disqualified . After Isis had taken a three @-@ quarter @-@ length lead , a clash of blades resulted in irreparable damage to the Cambridge boat and a red flag from umpire John Garrett . Cambridge won the 45th Women 's Boat Race by three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ quarter lengths in a time of 7 minutes and 17 seconds , their third victory in four years .

= = Reaction = =

Lord Jenkins presented the Beefeater Trophy to winning president Searle . Cambridge coach Mark Lees said of his crew " It was the best they could do . " and of Adam Wright , his stroke , who " relentlessly drove Cambridge " , he commented : " It was one of the most courageous things I have ever seen " . Lees ' counterpart , Steve Royle , acknowledged " Cambridge raced very well . "