

## = The Boat Race 1914 =

The 71st Boat Race took place on 28 March 1914 . 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 went into the race as reigning champions , having won the previous year 's race . In this year 's race , umpired by former rower Frederick I. Pitman , Cambridge won by four @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half lengths in a time of 20 minutes 23 seconds . The victory took the overall record to 39 ? 31 in Oxford 's favour . It would be the last race for six years following the outbreak of the First World War .

## = = 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 2015 , broadcast worldwide . Oxford went into the race as reigning champions , having won the 1913 race by three @-@ quarters of a length , and led overall with 39 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 , his son Robert Bourne ( who rowed four times from 1909 to 1912 ) , and Harcourt Gilbey Gold ( Dark Blue president for the 1900 race and four @-@ time Blue ) . Cambridge were coached by Stanley Bruce ( who had rowed in the 1904 race ) . For the eleventh year the umpire was old Etonian Frederick I. Pitman who rowed for Cambridge in the 1884 , 1885 and 1886 races .

According to author and former Oxford rower George Drinkwater , the Cambridge crew " rapidly developed into a crew which gave every promise of being quite sensationally fast . " Conversely , he noted that Oxford suffered " from a dearth of material " which , followed by constant changes in the crew order , resulted in a " merely eight good men in a boat ? and nothing more " .

## = = Crews = =

The Cambridge crew weighed an average of 12 st 9 @.@ 25 lb ( 80 @.@ 2 kg ) , 3 @.@ 25 pounds ( 1 @.@ 5 kg ) per rower more than their opponents . The Oxford crew saw five participants return , including cox Henry Wells who was taking part in his fourth race . Cambridge 's crew also included five participants with Boat Race experience , including Sidney Swann who was making his fourth appearance in the event . Swann and Ewart Horsfall had both won gold medals in the men 's eight at the 1912 Summer Olympics , rowing for Leander Club . They defeated New College in the final for whom Arthur Wiggins , Beaufort Burdekin and Frederick Pitman rowed .

## = = Race = =

Cambridge won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station , handing the Middlesex side of the river to Oxford . In bright sunshine , a light wind and smooth water , umpire Pitman started the race at 2 : 20 p.m. Although rating slower than Oxford , Cambridge took a lead and were three @-@ quarters of a length ahead by Craven Steps . They extended their lead to a length and a quarter by the Mile Post and continued to pull away as they passed below Hammersmith Bridge . According to Drinkwater , they took " things easy in the rough water " towards Barnes Bridge and went on to pass the finishing post four and a half lengths ahead , in a time of 20 minutes 23 seconds . It was Cambridge 's first victory since the 1908 race and took the overall record in the event to 39 ? 31 in Oxford 's favour . Drinkwater concluded that while " Oxford were a poor crew ... individually they had quite a lot of talent " . By comparison , he noted that Cambridge " were a reasonably high @-@ class crew ... but they lacked quickness " .

It was the last race until 1920 , as a result of the outbreak of the First World War , and first time since 1853 that there was a break in the annual tradition . During the conflict , at least 42 Blues were killed , including five of the 1914 participants : Dennis Ivor Day , cox L. E. Ridley , John Andrew Ritson and Gordon Garnett of the Cambridge crew , and Reginald William Fletcher from the Oxford boat .