

= The Boat Race 1886 =

The 43rd Boat Race took place on 3 April 1886 . The Boat Race is an annual side @-@ by @-@ side rowing race between crews from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge along the River Thames . Repairs to Hammersmith Bridge restricted the crews to pass through a single arch . Umpired by Robert Lewis @-@ Lloyd , Cambridge won the race by two @-@ thirds of a length in a time of 22 minutes 30 seconds , becoming the first crew to come from behind at Barnes Bridge to win .

= = 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 miles (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 two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half lengths and held the overall lead , with 23 victories to Cambridge 's 18 (excluding the " dead heat " of 1877) .

Oxford 's coach was F. P. Bully . Cambridge were coached by Thomas Edmund Hockin (who rowed for the Light Blues four times in the 1876 , 1877 , 1878 and 1879 races) , Charles William Moore (who represented Cambridge in the 1881 , 1882 , 1883 and 1884 races) , and Herbert Edward Rhodes (who rowed in the 1873 , 1874 , 1875 and 1876 races) .

The umpire for the race was Robert Lewis @-@ Lloyd (who had rowed for Cambridge four times between 1856 and 1859) . Hammersmith Bridge was undergoing repair and during practice , the crews struggled to negotiate side @-@ by @-@ side rowing through the same arch without fouling . It was agreed that should such a foul occur during the race , a restart above the bridge would take place , with a new finishing line near Kew . Two sets of oars were taken on the umpire 's launch should such an eventuality arise and a clash result in irreparable damage .

= = Crews = =

The Oxford crew weighed an average of 12 st 3 @. @ 75 lb (77 @. @ 7 kg) , 4 pounds (1 @. @ 8 kg) more than their opponents . Cambridge 's crew contained three former Blues , including their boat club president Frederick Islay Pitman and Steve Fairbairn , both of whom were rowing in their third Boat Race . Oxford saw six rowers return to the crew , including the boat club president Douglas McLean who was making his fourth appearance in the event , and rowing with his brother Hector for the second consecutive year . There were two non @-@ British registered participants in the race : Australians Fairbairn (for Cambridge) and W. St L. Robertson (for Oxford) .

= = Race = =

Oxford won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station , handing the Middlesex station to Cambridge . Commencing at 1.38pm , the Light Blues made the better start and by the time the crews passed Craven Cottage , they held just less than a half @-@ length lead . Oxford began to close the gap , and by the soap works , the boats were level . On the approach to Hammersmith Bridge , the coxes " steered with such accuracy and nerve as they had never shown in practice " and both crews were able to shoot the bridge safely , with only a " few inches to spare " . Rowing into rough water , Oxford started to pull away and between Chiswick and Barnes Bridge , the lead increased to more than two lengths . At the bridge , Cambridge made a push and increased their rating to 40 strokes per minute , sustaining the drive for three minutes and overtaking Oxford , passing the finishing post by a margin of two @-@ thirds of a length . The winning time was 22 minutes 30 seconds and the win was Cambridge 's second victory in three years , taking the overall

record to 23 ? 19 in Oxford 's favour .

It was the first time the winning crew had come from behind at Barnes Bridge to win . According to author and former Oxford rower George Drinkwater , " never in the whole history of the Boatrace (sic) has there been a contest more thrilling to watch or more sensational in its result . "