

= The Boat Race 1860 =

The 17th Boat Race took place on 31 March 1860 . 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 . It was the first time in the history of the event that the race had to be restarted as a result of an obstruction . Cambridge won the event by one length , in the slowest time ever .

= = 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 . Oxford went into the race as reigning champions , having defeated Cambridge as they sank in the previous year 's race . Cambridge led overall with nine wins to Oxford 's seven .

The challenge to race was sent by the president of the Cambridge University Boat Club to the president of the Oxford University Boat Club in the October term , with subsequent agreement to compete on 30 March 1860 . However , this was soon deemed unacceptable : the Cambridge crew were required to take examinations in the days prior and the tide on that day was " inconvenient " . As such , it was agreed to hold the race the following day , on 31 March . Oxford were initially considered the favourites , but after Cambridge 's practice rows , the odds evened .

Cambridge 's boat was built specifically for the race by Edward Searle of Simmons boat yard and was 57 @.@ 5 feet (17 @.@ 5 m) in length . The Oxford vessel was the same as that used in the previous year 's race , a 54 @-@ foot (16 m) long boat built by Matthew Taylor of Newcastle . The race was umpired by Joseph William Chitty who had rowed for Oxford twice in 1849 (in the March and December races) and the 1852 race .

= = Crews = =

Both crews were downselected from pairs of trials eights . The Oxford crew weighed an average of 11 st 12 @.@ 5 lb (75 @.@ 3 kg) , 2 @.@ 75 pounds (1 @.@ 2 kg) per rower more than their Light Blue opposition . Each crew contained four members who had featured in the previous year 's race : Chaytor and Morland represented Cambridge again while Fairbairn and Hall competed in their third race . Meanwhile Morrison , Baxter and Roberts represented Oxford for the second time , with Risley making his third appearance in the event .

= = Race = =

The crowd lining the banks of the Thames was " immense " , while the weather was " drizzly and windy " . Oxford won the toss and elected to start from the Middlesex station handing the Surrey side of the river to Cambridge . Immediately after the starter , Edward Searle , had commanded the boats to commence , a wherry interrupted proceedings , blocking the boats ' passage and forcing Searle to declare a false start . It was the first time in Boat Race history that the event was required to be restarted .

Neither crew made a good start , but Cambridge took an early lead . Oxford had recovered to draw level by the " Star and Garter " pub and led by half a length by Craven Cottage . The Dark Blues were nearly clear by the " Crab Tree " pub and their cox Roberts steered across in an attempt to take clear water . Cambridge 's cox Morland called for a push to defend their course causing the crews to clash oars . They passed through the central pier of Hammersmith Bridge , with Cambridge holding a 3 @-@ foot (0 @.@ 9 m) lead , which they extended to half a length around Chiswick Reach . By Barnes Bridge the Light Blues held a length @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half lead . They passed the " Ship Tavern " at Mortlake , winning by a length in a time of 26 minutes 5 seconds . As of 2014 , this remains the slowest winning time in the history of the event .

