

## = The Boat Race 2012 =

The 158th Boat Race took place on 7 April 2012 . 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 in London . Despite Cambridge having the heavier crew , Oxford were pre @-@ race favourites having had a successful preparation period , including a victory over Leander . Cambridge won the toss and chose to start on the Surrey side of the river . Partway through , with the boats level , the race was temporarily halted to avoid injury to protester Trenton Oldfield , who swam in front of the two crews . After the race was restarted , one of the Oxford crew suffered irreparable damage to his blade following a clash of oars with the Cambridge boat , ending Oxford 's chances of victory . The race was eventually won by Cambridge by four @-@ and @-@ a @-@ quarter lengths , in a consolidated time of 17 minutes 23 seconds .

Immediately after completing the race , a member of the Oxford crew collapsed , but later recovered . Oldfield was later jailed for six months for causing a public nuisance , and as a result of the disruption , security for subsequent Boat Races was increased . The reserve race was won by Oxford 's Isis in a record time , while the Women 's Boat Race was won by Cambridge .

## = = 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 , followed throughout the United Kingdom and broadcast worldwide . Oxford went into the 2012 race as reigning champions , having beaten Cambridge by four lengths in the previous year 's race . However , Cambridge held the overall lead , with 80 victories to Oxford 's 76 . Oxford were pre @-@ race favourites , having beaten Leander , Molesey Boat Club and a German national under @-@ 23 crew in the previous weeks .

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 Tideway , 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 Thames , prior to the main Boat Race .

## = = Crews = =

The trial crews competed against one another on 13 December 2011 on The Championship Course . Oxford 's boats were titled Hell and High Water , while Cambridge 's two crews rowed in Cloak and Dagger . Hell and Dagger won their respective races . The official crews were announced at the weigh @-@ in , held on 5 March 2012 at a venue nearby the London 2012 Olympic Stadium . For the first time in Cambridge 's Boat Race history , their boat featured just one British oarsman , Mike Thorp , who , along with stroke David Nelson and Oxford 's number five Karl Hudspith , were the only participants who had featured in the 2011 race . The remainder of the Cambridge crew comprised three Americans , two Australians , a German , a New Zealander and cox Ed Bosson , another Briton . The Oxford crew consisted of a British cox , four British oarsmen , two Americans , a German and a Dutch rower .

The Cambridge oarsmen weighed an average of 7 @.@ 9 kilograms ( 17 lb ) more than their Oxford counterparts , with Cambridge 's cox Ed Bosson outweighing Oxford 's Zoe de Toledo by 6 kilograms ( 13 lb ) . Despite the fact that heavier Oxbridge crews were traditionally more successful , Oxford boat club president Hudspith , himself part of the successful 2011 Dark Blue crew which defeated a heavier Cambridge crew , downplayed the disparity , " It 's a big difference but it 's a very long race and you have to have the power to carry that weight down the course " .

= = Races = =

= = = Women 's and reserves = = =

The women 's race , the 66th meeting of Cambridge University Women 's Boat Club and Oxford University Women 's Boat Club , was held at the Henley Boat Races on 25 March . In a close race , Cambridge won by a quarter of a length , in a time of 6 minutes , 38 seconds . Oxford 's Osiris won the women 's reserve race against Cambridge 's Blondie .

The reserve race , between Oxford 's Isis and Cambridge 's Goldie , was held thirty minutes before the main race , at 1 : 45pm . Goldie won the toss and elected to start on the Surrey station . Despite rating higher and taking an early lead , Goldie was caught by Isis between Fulham Football Club and Hammersmith Bridge at Barn Elms . Oxford 's reserve boat held a half @-@ length lead by the Mile Post , and extended their lead to over a length by Hammersmith Bridge . Isis continued to pull away and completed the race in a record time of 16 minutes 41 seconds , beating the previous best by seven seconds , five lengths ahead of Cambridge .

= = = Main race = = =

The race , sponsored by Xchanging , commenced at 2 : 15pm , with conditions overcast and a light rain , and a light wind . The umpire for the race was John Garrett , who had rowed for the Light Blues three times in the 1980s . Cambridge won the toss and chose the Surrey station , leaving Oxford with the longer outside bend from the Middlesex station . The crews were level at Fulham Football Club and Hammersmith Bridge but on the approach to Chiswick Pier , assistant umpire Matthew Pinsent spotted a person in the water and alerted umpire John Garrett , who stopped the race . Trenton Oldfield , a protestor against class elitism , had swum in front of the boats as they headed into the final bend , and narrowly avoided being struck . A representative of the Metropolitan Police noted : " They almost took his head off " . It was the first time the race had been stopped since 2001 , and only the second time in the history of the event . Oldfield was pulled from the water onto the umpire 's boat , handcuffed and arrested .

The race was restarted some thirty minutes later , after Garrett had been satisfied that both crews were located as close as possible to where the disruption took place , in rough water caused by the flotilla following the race . Within a minute of the restart , the crews drifted together with Oxford being warned by Garrett , causing a clash of oars which resulted in Oxford 's number six , Hanno Wienhausen , breaking the shaft of his blade in half . This effectively ended the race as a contest , as Cambridge rowed away from Oxford to win by four @-@ and @-@ a @-@ quarter lengths . Cambridge 's winning time was recorded by finish judge Ben Kent as 17 minutes 23 seconds , the consolidation of the times that the crews actually rowed .

= = Reaction = =

= = = Post @-@ race = = =

Immediately after the race , Oxford 's bow man , Alex Woods , collapsed and lost consciousness . After receiving treatment on the bank of the river , he was taken to Charing Cross Hospital , where he made a complete recovery . Oxford 's coach Sean Bowden suggested that the loss of one of Oxford 's blades had driven Woods to push himself " beyond his limits " . As a result of the disruption and the concern for Woods ' condition , the traditional award ceremony was cancelled . Woods later apologised to the Cambridge crew and coach for his collapse that " prevented their celebrations " while thanking them for their " sportsmanlike behaviour " . Cambridge boat club president Nelson said " I feel bad . Finishing the race there was a lot of raw emotion and some of

the celebrations seem pathetic in retrospect " while his coach Steve Trapmore commented " it 's not the way anyone wants to take away the win " . Oxford cox Zoe de Toledo made a request that the race be re -@-@ rowed as a result of the broken blade , but the appeal was dismissed by umpire Garrett , who said " I listened to Oxford ' s complaint but I explained I did not see the clash as being the reason for the eventual result " .

The Observer described the race as " one of the most bizarre and dramatic in the competition 's history " , while The Daily Telegraph suggested the event had been " ruined " and described Cambridge 's victory as " hollow " . British Olympic Association chairman and former Blue Colin Moynihan claimed that the race was " effectively destroyed ... by the actions of a crazy guy who was hugely putting his life at risk " .

= = = Trenton Oldfield = = =

Oldfield , an Australian national , said he was making " a protest against inequalities in British society , government cuts , reductions in civil liberties and a culture of elitism " . Oxford number two , William Zeng , denounced Oldfield and described him as " a mockery of a man " , while Oxford boat club president Karl Hudspeth tweeted " my team went through seven months of hell , this was the culmination of our careers and [ Oldfield ] took it from us " . Educated at the Sydney Church of England Grammar School , the University of Sydney and the London School of Economics , and Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts , Oldfield tweeted the day after the race , " Having been deep within elite institutions I have a very good understanding of them . I protest their injustices ? ask anyone that knows me " . On his blog , Oldfield compared his actions to those of Emily Davison , the suffragette killed after stepping in front of the King 's horse at the Epsom Derby in 1913 . Despite later stating he had some sympathy for both the rowers and spectators , he said he had no regrets and that he " would have felt less of a man " had he not made the protest . In October 2012 , Oldfield was jailed for six months for causing a public nuisance and ordered to pay £ 750 costs . In June 2013 , he was refused leave to remain in the United Kingdom , the Home Office claiming his presence there was not " conducive to the public good " . Oldfield , whose wife is from India , appealed on the grounds that she would be threatened in Australia , and in December 2013 , the deportation order was overturned . Security for the 2013 race was increased as a result of Oldfield 's actions , with Royal Marines , additional stewards and the Metropolitan Police Marine Policing Unit in attendance .