

= The Boat Race 1923 =

The 75th Boat Race took place on 24 March 1923 . 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 . Cambridge 's crew was marginally heavier than Oxford 's , the latter included an Olympic silver medallist . Cambridge 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 , Oxford won by three @-@ quarters of a length (the narrowest margin of victory since 1913) in a time of 20 minutes 54 seconds , securing their first win in five years . The victory took the overall record in the event to 40 ? 34 in their favour .

= = 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 and followed throughout the United Kingdom and worldwide . Cambridge went into the race as reigning champions , having won the 1922 race by one length , while Oxford led overall with 39 victories to Cambridge 's 34 (excluding the " dead heat " of 1877) .

Oxford were coached by G. C. Bourne who had rowed for the university in the 1882 and 1883 races , Harcourt Gilbey Gold (Dark Blue president for the 1900 race and four @-@ time Blue) and E. D. Horsfall (who had rowed in the three races prior to the First World War) . Cambridge 's coaches were Harald Peake (who had participated in the Peace Regattas of 1919) , G. L. Thomson and David Alexander Wauchope (who had rowed in the 1895 race) . For the fifteenth 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 G. C. Drinkwater , the Oxford trial eights were " of a better average than those of the preceding years " and after they arrived at Putney , the Dark Blue crew " improved rapidly up to the day of the race " . Conversely he reported that Cambridge suffered " a dearth of good heavy @-@ wrights " and that the crew " were not of very high class " .

= = Crews = =

The Cambridge crew weighed an average of 12 st 8 @. @ 875 lb (80 @. @ 0 kg) , 0 @. @ 375 pounds (0 @. @ 2 kg) per rower more than their opponents . Oxford 's crew included four rowers with Boat Race experience , including P. C. Mallam and Guy Oliver Nickalls who were both participating in their third consecutive event . Nickalls was a silver medallist in the men 's eight at the 1920 Summer Olympics . Cambridge 's crew included three rowers who had represented the university in the previous year 's race : K. N. Craig , B. G. Ivory and Theodore Collet . Two of the participants in the race were registered as non @-@ British : Cambridge 's Kane and Mellen were from the United States .

= = Race = =

Oxford won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station , handing the Middlesex side of the river to Cambridge . Umpire Pitman started the race in calm conditions at 5 : 10 p.m. Apparently disrupted by the wake of a nearby moored steamer , Oxford 's start was poor , allowing Cambridge to lead by a canvas ' length after a minute . Despite this , Oxford had drawn level a minute later , to hold a small lead by the time the crews commenced the long bend . By the Mile Post , the Dark Blues held a quarter @-@ length lead and by Hammersmith Bridge had extended this to three @-@ quarters of a length . Spurting at The Doves pub , Oxford began to draw clear of Cambridge .

By Chiswick Eyot , Oxford accelerated away from the Light Blues and were two lengths clear before

a spurt from Cambridge ahead of Barnes Bridge reduced the lead to a length and a quarter by the time the crews passed below the bridge . With the bend in the river in their favour , and pushing hard , Cambridge slowly gained on the Dark Blues but could not level terms . Oxford passed the finishing post with a lead of three @-@ quarters of a length in a time of 20 minutes 54 seconds . It was their first victory in five years , the narrowest winning margin since the 1913 race and the slowest winning time since the 1920 race . The win took the overall record in the event to 40 ? 34 in their favour .