

## = The Boat Race 1870 =

The 27th Boat Race between crews from the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge took place on the River Thames on the 6 April 1870 . Cambridge won by one @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half lengths in a time of 22 minutes 4 seconds , their first victory since the 1860 race .

## = = 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 by three lengths in the previous year 's race and led overall with sixteen wins to Cambridge 's ten .

Cambridge were coached by George Morrison who had also coached them in 1869 . He had rowed in the 1859 , 1860 and 1861 races and had also acted as a non @-@ rowing president for the 1862 race , yet the previous year 's decision to engage a member of the opposing university was greeted with consternation and considered by many Cantabrigians as " a disgrace to the Club " . Morrison had also coached Oxford six times previously . Oxford 's coach was Frank Willan , who had rowed in four victories for the Dark Blues between the 1866 and the 1869 race . He also rowed for Oxford against Harvard University in 1869 . 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 , while the starter was Edward Searle .

## = = Crews = =

The two sets of rowers averaged the same weight , at 11 st 13 @.@ 25 lb ( 75 @.@ 7 kg ) each . Oxford 's crew contained four Blues , two of whom ( S. D. Darbishire and W. D. Benson ) were rowing in their third consecutive race . Similarly , Cambridge saw four of the 1869 crew return including the Cambridge University Boat Club president John Goldie and John Dale .

## = = Race = =

According to Drinkwater , despite Oxford being " manifestly the weaker crew " , they were pre @-@ race favourites based on their " prestige " . A report in The Graphic noted that only two steamers were present , following the race , one carrying the umpire , the other to transport the Edward , Prince of Wales ( who later became King Edward VII ) and the Francis , Prince of Teck amongst others .

Oxford won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station , handing the Middlesex side of the river to Oxford . Cambridge took an early lead even though their stroke rate was lower than that of the Dark Blues , and led by three @-@ quarters of a length by the time the crews shot Hammersmith Bridge . Oxford stayed in touch for the next 0 @.@ 5 miles ( 0 @.@ 8 km ) but following a spurt , they almost levelled the race by Chiswick Eyot . Cambridge 's stroke John Goldie led a surge to pull back ahead of Oxford , and despite their best efforts , Oxford could not recover . Cambridge won by one @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half lengths in a time of 22 minutes 4 seconds . The victory was Cambridge 's first since the 1860 race , and brought the overall record to 16 ? 11 in Oxford 's favour .