

## = The Boat Race 1937 =

The 89th Boat Race took place on 24 March 1937 . 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 a race umpired by the former Cambridge rower and coach Harold Rickett , Oxford won by three lengths in a time of 22 minutes 39 seconds . It was their first success since the 1923 race and ended Cambridge 's record streak of 13 wins . The victory took the overall record in the event to 47 ? 41 in Cambridge 's 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 ; it is followed throughout the United Kingdom and , as of 2014 , broadcast worldwide . Cambridge went into the race as reigning champions , having won the 1936 race by five lengths , and led overall with 47 victories to Oxford 's 40 ( excluding the " dead heat " of 1877 ) . The Light Blues had won thirteen consecutive races coming into this year 's event .

Cambridge were coached by J. Beresford Jr , J. R. F. Best , F. E. Hellyer ( who had rowed for the Light Blues in the 1910 and 1911 races ) and Kenneth Payne ( who rowed for Cambridge in the 1932 and 1934 races , and had coached Oxford in the 1935 and 1936 races ) . Oxford 's coaches were P. C. Mallam ( a four @-@ time Dark Blue who had rowed in the 1921 , 1922 , 1923 and 1924 races ) , Guy Oliver Nickalls ( who had rowed three times between 1921 and 1923 ) and William Rathbone ( who rowed for Oxford in the 1926 and 1927 races ) . The umpire for the race was the former Cambridge rower Harold Rickett who had rowed for the Light Blues three times , in the 1930 , 1931 and 1932 races . He had also coached them for the 1933 race .

The special correspondent for The Observer suggested that the race would be the finest for some years , concluding that " a win for Oxford would do much good to English rowing " .

## = = Crews = =

The Oxford crew weighed an average of 12 st 13 @.@ 5 lb ( 82 @.@ 1 kg ) , 7 @.@ 75 pounds ( 3 @.@ 5 kg ) per rower more than their opponents . Cambridge saw three rowers return to the crew with Boat Race experience , including McAllister Lonnon who was taking part in his third consecutive event . Oxford 's boat contained four former Blues , including David Michael De Rueda Winsor who was also making his third appearance in the Boat Race . Oxford 's number six Jan Sturrock won a silver medal at the 1936 Summer Olympics in the Men 's coxless fours . His crew @-@ mate John Cherry , and Cambridge 's Thomas Cree , Hugh Mason and Lonnon all rowed in the Men 's eight for Great Britain in the 1936 Games , finishing fourth . Cambridge 's Cree and cox T. H. Hunter were the only non @-@ British participants registered , both of whom hailed from Australia .

## = = Race = =

Cambridge won the toss and elected to start from the Surrey station , handing the Middlesex side of the river to Oxford . In calm weather , umpire Rickett started the race at 11 : 35 a.m. A false start ensued , with Rickett failing to hear Oxford state that they were not ready to start . Rickett restarted the race and , out @-@ rating their opponents , Cambridge were half a length ahead after the first minute . They held the same advantage by Craven Steps , but a spurt from Oxford 's stroke A. B. Hodgson saw the Dark Blues draw level . Following some errant steering from Cambridge 's cox Hunter , Oxford pulled away to lead by a canvas @-@ length by the time the crews passed the Mile Post .

As they passed the Crab Tree pub , the Cambridge stroke R. J. L. Perfitt put in a spurt which made little difference as Oxford continued to lead by Harrods Furniture Depository . Steering away from the Light Blues to avoid a collision , Oxford lost their lead as the crews passed under Hammersmith Bridge level . Another spurt from Perfitt saw the Light Blues a third of a length up by the Doves pub as the crews headed into Chiswick Reach . This time it was Oxford 's turn to steer clear of a collision , losing most of their lead by Chiswick Steps , but heading over towards the Middlesex shore , they caught the best of the tide . The Dark Blues passed below Barnes Bridge three @-@ quarters of a length ahead , and although Cambridge burst to out @-@ rate Oxford by three strokes per minute , they failed to make any impression and Oxford pulled further ahead .

Oxford won by three lengths in a time of 22 minutes 39 seconds , securing their first victory since the 1923 race . It was both the slowest winning time and the narrowest margin of victory since 1877 . It was declared by former Oxford rower E. P. Evans as being " one of the most exciting races ever seen on the tideway " and " a truly magnificent victory for the Oxford crew " . The rowing correspondent in The Times stated that " not since 1921 has there been such a great race " . He went on to suggest " it was one of the greatest races " .