What piece of bad luck prevented the Cutty Sark from winning the race?

One of the most famous sailing ships of the nineteenth century, the Cutty Sark, can still be seen at Greenwich.

She stands on dry land and is visited by thousands of people each year.

She serves as an impressive reminder of the great ships of the past.

Before they were replaced by steamships, sailing vessels like the Cutty Sark were used to carry tea from China and wool from Australia.

The Cutty Sark was one of the fastest sailing ships that has ever been built.

The only other ship to match her was the Thermopylae.

Both these ships set out from Shanghai on June 18th, 1872, on an exciting race to England.

This race, which went on for exactly four months, was the last of its kind.

It marked the end of the great tradition of ships with sails and the beginning of a new era.

The first of the two ships to reach Java after the race had begun was the Thermopylae, but on the Indian Ocean, the Cutty Sark took the lead.

It seemed certain that she would be the first ship home, but during the race, she had a lot of bad luck.

In August, she was struck by a very heavy storm during which her rudder was torn away.

The Cutty Sark rolled from side to side and it became impossible to steer her.

A temporary rudder was made on board from spare planks and it was fitted with great difficulty.

This greatly reduced the speed of the ship, for there was a danger that if she travelled too quickly, this rudder would be torn away as well.

Because of this, the Cutty Sark lost her lead.

After crossing the Equator, the captain called in at a port to have a new rudder fitted, but by now the Thermopylae was over five hundred miles ahead.

Though the new rudder was fitted at tremendous speed, it was impossible for the Cutty Sark to win.

She arrived in England a week after the Thermopylae.

Even this was remarkable, considering that she had had so many delays.

There is no doubt that if she had not lost her rudder, she would have won the race easily.

The Thermopylae reached Java first, but the Cutty Sark took the lead on the Indian Ocean.

When the Cutty Sark was struck by a storm, her rudder was torn away.

A temporary rudder was made and fitted, but the ship lost the lead.

After crossing the Equator, they called in at a port to have a new rudder fitted.

Even with a new rudder, the Cutty Sark arrived in England a week after the Thermopylae, which was 500 miles ahead.

Men have always wanted to cross water.

Thousands of years ago, men made simple dug-out canoes so that they could cross rivers or go out into lakes to fish.

At first, then, man's earliest boats were small and simple and were powered and steered by paddles or oars.

When men wanted to travel greater distances, across very large lakes or small seas, for example, boats needed to be larger.

We have all seen pictures of ancient ships with rows of oars at each side and slaves to row them.

In fact, these galleys were just a larger version of the single man rowing boat, still made of wood and very much the same design as very early boats.

Early ships might have been primitive, they might have been made of wood and might have been powered through the water with oars, but they managed to cross oceans.

The Viking ships that invaded Britain hundreds of years ago also reached North America.

Later sailing ships, like those that Columbus sailed in, the galleons that formed the Spanish Armada, or those that Nelson sailed in, were an advance.

But perhaps the greatest development in the history of ships was when steam engines replaced sails.

For centuries, ships had depended on the wind to sail across the seas and oceans.

At last, with an engine to drive a propeller, seamen did not have to rely totally on the weather.

From then on, ships like the ' Great Eastern' could be larger, safer, and more maneuverable in the water.

I use my bicycle every day.

I am used to getting up early.

I used to walk to school, but now I usually cycle.

He can run very fast.

He can run faster than I can.

We set off at 7 o'clock yesterday morning.

That girl has just set up a new world record.

The engine has lost its power.

It's warmer today than it was yesterday.

I've got a lot of books.

I've got a great many books.

This will cost a great deal of money.

I arrived very late, but I caught the train.

I arrived too late to catch the train.

He is having a house built.

She had had his suit cleaned.

He won the competition.

He beat all the other competitors.

The fame of the Cutty Sark rests mainly upon her being one of the last and one of the fastest of a line of great sailing ships.

The race which took place between the Cutty Sark and the Thermopylae was a landmark in the history of shipping.

During the race, the most remarkable feat of the Cutty Sark was the speed at which she made up the gap between her and the Thermopylae.

The Cutty Sark may still be seen at Greenwich.

It seemed certain that she was going to be the first ship home.

The Thermopylae arrived in England only a week before she did.

On June 18th, 1872, both these ships set out on an exciting race from Shanghai to England.

On the Indian Ocean, the Cutty Sark went into the lead.

Even this was remarkable, in view of the numerous delays.