

THE BOAT RACE 1950

Blues - be it light or dark - is dress order of the day - as along the most famous stretch of a famous river, thousands get together for the sporting world's greatest free show. It is the 96th 'Varsity boat race and with Oxford nearer the camera, they are away to a perfect start. With a cloudy sky, an uncomfortable head wind and choppy water, conditions are anything but ideal. Cambridge - winners the last three years - are again favourites and the only doubt about their ability to stay the course rests in their unusual boat - a much shorter and lighter version of the normal one. It's almost level pegging as they move down river - never more than a foot in it. It's Oxford generalship and steadiness in rough water against Cambridge strength and match-winning combination, derived from their rowing six members of the Lady Margaret crew.

Shooting Hammermith Bridge, it's light Blues in the lead - half a length ahead of Oxford - but not enough to cross over to the Surrey side. Rowing extremely well now, Cambridge suddenly find their machine-like precision. On the outside of the bend they even increase their lead, while Oxford flag behind. With three miles behind them and Barnes Bridge coming up, it's almost over as a race.

Through Barnes Bridge, and Cambridge - inside the river bend - are set for victory. Striking 31 to Oxford's 34, they are three lengths ahead - sitting back to coast home, with the Dark Blues a very tired crew. It may be April Fool's Day - but there is no feeling about the superiority of the men from Cambridge. $3\frac{1}{2}$ lengths ahead, they go on to their 52nd win. The time is no record but there is more than one first for Cambridge, for it's the first time a boat built on the Cam has won on the Thames.