

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY ICE HOCKEY CLUB

MEN'S VARSITY: PAST MATCH REPORTS



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Men's Varsity 2009

Planet Ice Milton Keynes Varsity 07/03/2009		
	Cambridge Light Blues	2
	Oxford Dark Blues	4

Having won four of their seven games during the season, the Light Blues were convinced of their ability to defeat the division leader Oxford in the 90th Annual Varsity Match. The Light Blues, playing in front of their supporters, started the match with very high intensity. Unfortunately, the Light Blues got a few penalties giving a chance to Oxford to take a 2-0 lead at the end of the first period. The Light Blues came back strong in the second period with a quick goal from rookie winger Cole Smith. After a few key saves from Carl Mazurek, the Light Blues thought they had tied the game but unluckily the goal was disallowed by the referee who judged it to be a high stick. A few minutes later, Oxford scored their third goal on a 5 on 3 powerplay. Trailing 3-1, the Light Blues got many scoring opportunities in the third period, but Oxford were able to hold on their lead. The final score was 4-2 in favour of Oxford. Having scored the two Cambridge goals, Cole Smith deservedly received the Cawthra Trophy, awarded to the most valuable Cambridge player of the Varsity Match.


Men's Varsity 2008

Oxford Ice Rink Varsity 01/03/2008		
	Oxford Dark Blues	8
	Cambridge Light Blues	2

Despite a few close defeats during the season, the Blues remained convinced of their ability to win the 89th Annual Varsity Match hosted by Oxford, and were bolstered by the return of captain Chris Hurn, who had been sidelined with a life-threatening pulmonary embolism. The Blues took an early lead with

a power play goal, but it was short-lived as Oxford replied on the following shift. Oxford continued to press throughout the first two periods, but Barry was solid between the pipes, keeping the Blues within striking distance. Rookie forward Henry Jenks (UK) was unlucky to have a goal disallowed, as the referee had lost sight of the puck. Trailing 3-1 in the final period, the Blues pushed offensively in an effort to tie the game, but were stymied by good goaltending in the Oxford net and paid the price as Oxford netted several tallies on counter-attacks. The game ended 8-2 in favour of Oxford, with Musselman scoring his second goal of the game for the Blues. Peter Morelli deservedly received the Cawthra Trophy as the most valuable Cambridge player of the Varsity Match, having worked tirelessly and setup both Cambridge tallies.

Men's Varsity 2003

Planet Ice Peterborough Varsity 15/03/2003		
	Cambridge Light Blues	3
	Oxford Dark Blues	4

The Ides of March - a historic date in itself - coincided at the end of last term with another titanic chapter in the classic sporting rivalry that has been nurtured between the two Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Colossal hits, nail-biting tension and a high-pressure overtime golden goal ensured that the 84th instalment of the Varsity ice hockey match lived up to every possible expectation.

More than 600 Cambridge fans were present in force early at their home-from-home at Peterborough's Planet Ice to soak up the pre-match atmosphere, looking to their team to complete a hat-trick streak of victories over their Dark Blue rivals. With a heavyweight North American presence in both teams, the formalities included an emotional face-off to the Canadian national anthem - tears on the ice perhaps an indicator of the passion about to be witnessed by the spectators from behind the relative shelter of the bulletproof safety glass.

The referee's first whistle brought an end to official ceremony and allowed the true business of the evening to get underway, unleashing a fury of sticks, men and - somewhere in the midst of the melee - a puck. Cambridge got the better of the initial exchanges, upping the tempo on a powerplay for captain Andrew Ashcroft to open the scoring from astute play by defence-man John Rutter. When Ashcroft returned the compliment to allow Rutter to blast past Oxford goaltender and captain David Watt - despite Cambridge being short-handed - it looked like Oxford's vaunted new team might be lacking the stomach for a fight.



However, the Dark Blues came out all guns blazing in the 2nd period when Place and Regimbald leveled the scores. As the hits got bigger and bigger, something had to give - that something was

Oxford's defence, pierced by François Côté to nudge the Light Blues ahead once again. However, continued pressure was soaked up as chances were missed, allowing Oxford to claw their way back into contention once again as Pettengel scored on a power play to make it 3-3 at full-time.

No one enjoys a 'tie' in the New World, so the players embarked on a do-or-die ten minutes of overtime - the crowd, meanwhile, were feeling the stress as much as the players who were by now struggling to stay the frenetic on-ice pace. No quarter was being given, not least by Ashcroft who put in a clean hit on Oxford's Holzman, knocking him out cold - a case of an irresistible force meeting a very movable object. The referees took a dim view of the incident, ejecting the disbelieving and protesting Cambridge captain from the game. The Light Blues survived the resulting five minute short-handed situation with desperate defence and heroics from in-form Brian Barrett in the Cambridge goal, but at great cost: exhausted from this effort they were unable to prevent Mark Sproule from wriggling through to break Cambridge hearts and net a golden goal to secure the spoils for Oxford.

With ecstasy and pain writ large on Dark and Light Blue faces respectively, the stunned crowd made their way home, drained by a blockbuster of a match. Varsity ice hockey had yet again delivered.

Men's Varsity 1998

Oxford Ice Rink Varsity 07/03/1998		
	Oxford Dark Blues	1
	Cambridge Light Blues	8

The 79th match in the series between the long-standing enemies, started with a ceremonial dropping of the puck by Canadian High Commissioner Roy MacLaren. The rink was packed with a vociferous crowd, estimated at 1200 and the rival supporters attempted to drown each other out, even before the match proper started. It was evident from the start that ref Shuttleworth was going to let the game flow and checks started to hammer home, with bodies flying in all directions. However he drew the line at checking from behind after the whistle and sent off Oxford's Mark de Rosnay for 2+10 at 1:01. Play was fairly scrappy and Cambridge couldn't make the power play tell, however steadily increasing pressure on the Oxford net saw Scott Furey fire home a screened shot at 6:02. Play headed the other way and Chris Hunter had to make a save in the Cambridge net, followed by a shot that rebounded from the post. A goal mouth pile up at 8:51 saw matching double minors to Cambridge's James d'Ombrian and Oxford's Marten Toverud. End to end play continued, with the edge going to Cambridge and Scott Furey netted a second at 11:17. Passes were now beginning to click, but a dangerous clearance from the Cambridge zone had the fans on the edge of their seats. There was more sustained pressure on the Oxford net, but it was released by a near icing, which had to be played by the Cambridge goalie, and only a goalmouth clearance by defender James d'Ombrian

prevented a certain goal. Play raced up the other end and Cambridge put the puck in the net, but fractionally after the whistle. Cambridge won the resulting face-off and Scott Furey quickly blasted the puck home to score a straight hat-trick at 16:38. Cambridge captain John Branch was putting in a superb defensive performance and a mid ice check which levelled an Oxford attacker was perhaps the hit of the match. It allowed Cambridge to continue unhindered up the ice and Per Heilman put the puck in the net at 18:38. A bit of action round the Cambridge goal-mouth at 19:09 saw the Cambridge goalie bring down an Oxford attacker and he was called for interference. Cambridge weathered the time remaining, leaving the score at the end of the period 0-4, with 19 shots on the Oxford goal and only 6 on the Cambridge net.

Although the second period started with Oxford still on the power play, most of the action took place in their zone. No sooner had the power play expired than another Cambridge rush saw Garth Smith make a very neat deke round the sole Oxford defender and score at 21:44. Hard play continued both ways, with all checks being followed through and players strongly fore- and back-checking. A Cambridge player froze the puck in the Cambridge crease and Oxford were awarded a penalty shot, but failed to convert it. At 26:25 Oxford's Mark McGaw tripped a Cambridge player. Scott Furey won the face off, passed the puck to (John Branch) and back to the point where James d'Ombraire fired it towards the net and a slight deflection from an Oxford stick saw it into the net at 26:30. This was too much for Paul Babie in the Oxford net and Jonathan Bays replaced him for the remainder of the period. Another penalty on McGaw at 28:40, for elbows, gave Cambridge another power play opportunity and James d'Ombraire slotted home a screened shot from the point at 29:18. Another pile up in front of the Cambridge goal lead to a second pair of matching double minors for roughing at 33:51, with Neil Fenton sent off for Oxford and Brad Brooks for Cambridge. Some time later (not recorded on the game sheet) an Oxford rush from the Cambridge end, with some neat passing from Marten Toverud to Darren Marks, saw Chris Hunter's shut out broken. As the period drew to a close, Scott Furey was called for charging at 39:28, but Oxford were unable to capitalise. During the period Cambridge's Gordon Wood suffered a dislocated shoulder and was taken off to hospital, as was an Oxford player for the same injury later in the game. Babie had 3 shots before he was replaced and Bays let in one from 9, whilst Oxford managed 8 on Hunter.

Babie returned to the Oxford net for the final period, which started with Oxford still on the power play, but they failed to score. End to end play continued, but Cambridge were slowing a little and taking longer to clear their zone, though they still got shots away onto Babie. Scott Furey suffered a leg injury, but returned to the ice after a spell on the bench. At 47:21 matching minors were called on Andrew Spencer (hooking) and Oxford's captain Darren Marks (roughing). Cambridge found it harder still to clear their zone, and the checks seemed to be getting softer. Oxford's Chris Simard was called for tripping Scott Furey on a breakaway at 49:30 and after a short power-play Brad Brooks let go a rocket from the point which found the net at 49:59. A handpass in the offensive zone prevented an Oxford breakaway, but brought play down into the Cambridge zone. Chris Hunter saved, another shot ricocheted off the post and another narrowly missed the goal, but eventually the puck was cleared. Oxford's Mark de Rosnay was called for holding on another Cambridge breakaway at 51.42, but Cambridge couldn't make the power play tell this time. A breakaway the other way saw Chris Hunter nearly to the blue line to make a poke check on the onrushing Oxford attacker. After holding an Oxford player for a long time in his own zone with the ref standing over him, Cambridge Craig Steeves eventually received an unsportsmanlike conduct call at 53:34, but Oxford couldn't do much with the opportunity. Play continued with chances at both ends, but an increasingly tired Cambridge side drew deep and denied Oxford any further consolation. The final period saw a further 13 shots on Babie and 9 on Hunter, giving a final tally of 44-23 and a score line of 8-1.

Roy MacLaren made presentations to the teams. Man of the match for Oxford was Marten Toverud and for Cambridge goalie Chris Hunter. The Willie Turner trophy for MVP went to Scott Furey,

competing for the fourth time. Finally the coveted trophy, won for the first time by Oxford in 1885 was presented to the Cambridge captain, John Branch.

Men's Varsity 1997

Stevenage Ice Rink Varsity 02/03/1997		
	Cambridge Light Blues	2
	Oxford Dark Blues	5

Professor Stephen Hawking dropped the ceremonial puck from a specially designed arm on his wheel chair. Other VIPs in attendance were Professor Alex Broers, the Cambridge University Vice-Chancellor and Mr Roy McLaren, the Canadian High Commissioner.

The first period got off to a very slow start, with lots of niggly penalties being called, often following late hits. Play from both sides was rather scrappy, though there were some hard hits and neat evasions, particularly from the Cambridge defenceman John Branch. The ref did a good job of control and set strict limits on the play. Slightly more of the action took place at the Oxford end of the rink.

The second period was much more free flowing. A tripping penalty on Cambridge after an Oxford breakaway led to a PPG. Midway through, the shorter bench of Cambridge seemed to be tiring a little and Oxford got a second goal after 34 minutes.

Oxford survived a 5 on 3 PP near the start of the third period, during which the Cambridge time out was called at 41:42, but then gave up a goal on a slap shot from the point. Oxford quickly restored the 2 goal lead. Cambridge had lots of chances, but the puck just wasn't going in the net. Oxford's 4th goal came after a goal-mouth scramble. Cambridge's 2nd came after the Oxford goalie fluffed a save. A defensive mix-up on an Oxford PP lead to their 5th goal. Cambridge pulled their goalie after a charging penalty against Oxford at 59:27, but a Cambridge penalty at 59:47 saw him return without further score.

Overall Cambridge had more of the action and were the stronger side, but Oxford played more as a team and used the ice better.

Men of the Match: Cambridge: Regis Mathieu and Oxford: Tom Wills
Player of the Game: Paul Babie (Oxford NM)

Attendance: 700

Men's Varsity 1994

Oxford Ice Rink Varsity 05/03/1994		
	Oxford Dark Blues	13
	Cambridge Light Blues	3

This was a match that very nearly didn't happen as Cambridge had not formally agreed to holding the Varsity match on this date. However extensive negotiations mediated by the oldest player on the ice brought about a compromise that an Exhibition match would go ahead, with the Blues to be fought over at a later date.

The Cambridge goalie had a poor start, letting in two that should have been saved, but things then settled down and with Oxford taking some silly penalties Cambridge were able to apply a little pressure. However some two on 0 play gave Oxford another couple of goals, before Cambridge pulled one back to get their first past the Oxford netminder in 5 periods of trying.

The second period was more even, with Oxford again taking silly, undisciplined penalties and giving Cambridge a chance. A scrambled goal by Oxford towards the end of the period, when the Cambridge defence let up and the goalie couldn't freeze the puck, left the period even.


The third period was essentially all Oxford as Cambridge lost their legs and allowed several breakaways on their tired netminder. One of these resulted in the only major altercation of the match, with the Cambridge defence clearing some Oxford intruders off their netminder.


Periods: 2-1; 2-1; 5-0.

PIM: Oxford 16, Cambridge 10.

Attendance: 1023.

Men's Varsity 1993

Oxford Ice Rink Varsity 02/03/1992		
	Oxford Dark Blues	9

	Cambridge Light Blues	2
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The 72nd Men's Varsity Match took place on Saturday, March 2nd before a full house at the Oxpens Road ice rink in Oxford. The series between the two university teams is a long running one, having started in St Moritz, Switzerland in 1885. This was the first recorded ice hockey match in Europe and things were a little different then as the players entered the fray with "newspapers strapped to their ankles and blades laced to their boots". Oxford won that first match and have always maintained an edge, now leading the series 48-21 with two drawn matches. The last few years have seen much superior Oxford sides defeating Cambridge by ever increasing margins, culminating last year in an overwhelming 18-1 victory. Would this year be any different?

The evening's program began with Barbu Calinescu dropping the puck for the ceremonial face-off. Barbu played for Cambridge in 1943, and is the son of former Rumanian Prime Minister Armand Calinescu who was assassinated shortly after the outbreak of war in 1939. The formalities concluded it was time for action in what is always a bruising encounter with no quarter given. The first minute of play saw end to end action but much to the shock of Oxford, Derek Roche put the puck in their net, assisted by Don Lucky. Cambridge joy was short lived and just over a minute later a cross check saw Oxford on the power play. They needed just 13 seconds for Davis Roberts to get the puck past Cambridge goalie Howard Robertson, with assists from the deadly duo of Terry Fach and Brian Bohunicky.

Both sides took further penalties, but the penalty killing was effective and no more goals came until near the end of the period when Fach scored for Oxford. The second period started with Cambridge on the power play, but they were unable to take advantage. Cambridge continued to contain Oxford thanks to sterling work from netminder Robertson, however Fach put another one in after 8 minutes play. Bohunicky followed with a PPG at 33.40 after one of the Cambridge 3rd line was little too eager to get on the ice and was penalised. Just before the period closed, Cambridge defenceman Henry Huntingdon managed to fire one past Tom Lamont making the score line 4-2 to Oxford and Cambridge still in with a chance.

Ref Geoff Kelland dropped the puck for the start of the final period and action started. Oxford's Jamie Muir took an interference penalty at 41.47 giving Cambridge a chance to get one back. It was not to be: John Bataglia assisted by Paul Markovich put away a short handed goal and an increasingly tired looking Cambridge allowed Oxford to put a further four unanswered goals in the net. Cambridge captain, Andrew Stephenson, never keen to win the Lady Byng trophy and determined not to be left off the score sheet, attracted the refs attention with 13 seconds to go and was sentenced to 2 minutes in the box for tripping. The final hooter let him out, but Oxford had once again won, by a margin of 9 to 2. Man of the Match awards went to Cambridge goalie Howard Robertson with an impressive save percentage of 86.8% and to Oxford's Paul Markovich (1+2). John Bataglia won the hot shot award for the most points with 3+1.