

Prestaigne Charter at the helm for Oxford v Cambridge Boat Race



For the past five years the team at Prestaigne Charter have been at the helm of the annual Oxford v Cambridge Boat Race live broadcast, providing wireless camera systems for the coverage of the event televised by ITV Sport.

Project managed by Jason Naismith, Senior RF Engineer at Prestaigne Charter, the experience of the ten strong team once again proved infallible as the tried and tested deployment of technology and staff enabled seamless coverage from camera to television.

One of the most popular annual events in the sporting calendar, the Boat Race presents its own set of broadcasting challenges. Wet, windy weather combined with the water spray of the River Thames and the bends and bridges of the river itself make for a technically demanding project. However, the practical knowledge gained on the previous four years exposure to the vagaries of the course enabled the Prestaigne Charter crew to successfully handle all the complications the race could dispense.

For 2009, Prestaigne Charter supplied twelve links from various sites around the course including one from each of the mini-cams on the boats and one from the helicopter providing aerial views. Eight hand held cameras and five receive sites were also provided ensuring that the 155th Boat Race had full coverage throughout. The main receive site was built into a Prestaigne Charter vehicle situated at Putney Boathouse, with others located at Hammersmith Bridge, Chiswick Wharf Boathouse, Barn Elms and Lost Profits Dock. These sites received the links transmitted from the

mini-cameras positioned on the racing boats, the hand held camera on the Umpire's boat and the two gyro-stabilised cameras on the front of two boats all of which covered the length of the race course. There were also two hand-held cameras at both the start and finish lines, two cameras providing point to point links at Fulham and Putney Bridge in addition to the helicopter for the overhead coverage.

“Our tried and tested system and the amount of pre-planning merged with the experience of the team meant for a trouble-free project”, said Naismith. “It was a great team effort with the client deeming the coverage a success. A good job well done!”

First held in 1829, the Boat Race is raced each year between the Oxford and Cambridge university boat clubs. This year, the 6.78km distance raced between Putney and Mortlake gave favourites Oxford their 75th victory. Cambridge still lead the series 79-75.

One of the world's most innovative and respected broadcast dry hire and systems rental specialists, with a branch network covering the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Asia and Australia, Prestaigne Charter is a market-leading provider of broadcast television equipment supplying its clients with cutting edge technology. Live broadcast means no second chances and Prestaigne Charter use this philosophy to match the appropriate personnel and technology to their clients' needs.



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