

The Varsity Match 2025

The Varsity Match is an annual competition between the karate clubs of Cambridge and Oxford Universities. In the match, which is usually held in February, two men's teams and a women's team from each university compete in kata, team kata and kumite for the three team titles and the overall trophy, the Enoeda Cup.

Competition Report



image credit: Emma Shen

On Sunday, 23rd March, the Cambridge University Karate Club faced off against the Oxford University Karate Club in the much-anticipated 2025 Varsity competition, held at the University of Cambridge Sports Centre.

With an impressive 18-year winning streak behind them, the Cambridge team entered this year's contest carrying the weight of high expectations. Although victory was not ours this time, every single Cambridge competitor delivered an impressive performance, demonstrating remarkable skill, determination, and team spirit.

The competition began at 1:30 PM with the Men's Individual Kata. The team consisted of Callum, Lukas, Li Sen and Will with strong performances all round.

Next came the Women's Individual Kata, featuring Rose, Ayako, Amelie, and Erin. Rose delivered a particularly outstanding performance of *Anan*. Despite Oxford securing a

14-point victory, the event was fiercely contested, with two competitors tying for first place and another two tying for fourth, showing just how close the standard was.

The Mixed Individual Kata followed, where Cambridge claimed a decisive victory with a score of 25–17. A special mention goes to Yusuf for his impressive performance of *Kosokun Sho*. The team, as a whole, performed very strongly with Nirmay, Angela and Taaliyah all coming joint third place.

Individual kata was followed by team kata. Whilst all teams performed well, Oxford's team katas were much stronger than last year. Special mention goes to the Cambridge mixed kata who initially tied with Oxford.

The competition moved on to Team Kumite with a number of exciting matches! Men's kumite consisted of Li Sen, Will, Lukas and Yusuf. Particular mention goes to Yusuf for his victory against Noah as well as his valiant effort against Rasmus, a BUCS medallist in the heaviest men's senior kumite category, 84kg+.

The Women's Kumite Team delivered a particularly impressive performance, securing victory over Oxford with a score of 27–21. Ayako, Deepthi, Rose, and Angela all fought with tremendous strength and resilience. Special mention goes to Ayako and Rose, who both won one fight and drew another.

Building on the momentum, the Mixed Team Kumite put on impressive fights, securing a dominant 36–12 victory against Oxford. Erin, Liz, and Nirmay won their matches with remarkable conviction, while Callum fought valiantly despite an unfortunate and highly contested decision from the judges.

Overall, Cambridge dominated against Oxford in kumite, and we are super proud of the great fighting spirit and superb technique that was displayed in every fight!

While Oxford managed to reclaim the Men's and Women's Trophies this year, we remain immensely proud of our entire squad. Facing what was arguably the strongest Oxford team in recent years was both a valuable challenge and an opportunity for growth. This experience has only fuelled our determination to return stronger next year, reclaiming both trophies and continuing the legacy of Cambridge Karate.

The overall points were:

Men's:

- Cambridge: 18
- Oxford: 84

Women's:

- Cambridge: 41
- Oxford: 61

Mixed:

- Cambridge: 67
- Oxford: 35

Overall

- Men's Trophy Winner: Oxford
- Women's Trophy Winner: Oxford
- Mixed Trophy Winner: Cambridge

A massive thank you to our brilliant home spectators who cheered us on, the referees and judges, our coach Sensei Ken, and our President and Captains.

Report by Ayako Frellesvig, CUKC Women's Captain 2024-25.

Overall

Winner of the Enoda Cup 2025:

Oxford