



French women's K1 team.



French junior C1 team.



Fiserova of the Czech Republic.



U23 Llorente in K1.

Slovakia's Monika Skachova was third fastest, just 0.16 second behind Satila. The fastest raw time on the course, though, was set by Russia's Alsu Minazova, who picked up 4 seconds in penalties but still managed to finish just 1.62 second behind Fiserova.

Llorente, the 2018 European K1 champion, was the last paddler on the course in the men's U23 K1 and, after picking up an early 2 second penalty, zipped down the course in 92.53 seconds, 1 second faster than New Zealand's Callum Gilbert.

'I had a touch at the beginning which wasn't part of my plan because I was planning to conserve my energy,' Llorente said, 'but after the touch I thought maybe if I do another touch that will be trouble. This is my last year of U23 and I would really like to finish with a win but there are a lot of good paddlers here.'

Teenager Yohann Senechault produced one of the runs of the championships on Thursday and was set to go even faster when he contested the semi finals on Friday.

Anatole Delassus was also fastest in the junior K1 to round off another good day for France while Czech Antonie Galuskova and Elana Micozzi qualified fastest in their respective events.

The 17 year old Senechault was the only paddler in the first round of the junior C1 competition to go under the 100 second barrier, his 99.38 achieved despite picking up 6 seconds in penalties.

'I am very happy for this race but it's just a qualification and tomorrow we have a semi final,' he said. 'I am surprised I could win this race with 6 seconds in penalties but I had a good feeling in the water. I have been training in Pau but I live in Paris and train there on flat water.

We don't have a stadium there for slalom but we have a new Olympic stadium which will be good.'

Senechault's raw time of 93.38 was also quicker than the fastest qualifier in the U23 C1 24 hours earlier. Great Britain's James Kettle was second fastest in Thursday's heat in 102.53, which included a 2 second penalty, and Russia's Aleksandr Kharlamtsev was third in 102.61.

Delassus posted 92.14 to go fastest in the men's junior K1, edging out Spain's Pau Echaniz on 92.37 with Etienne Chappell third in 93.90.

'I'm very happy; it felt good on the water,' Delassus said.

'I was a little bit nervous but its qualifying so, if I'm slow, that's okay.'

Antonie Galuskova arrived in Kraków determined to wrest back the 2017 junior K1 world title she lost last year and made a strong start by posting the quickest qualifying time.

Galuskova picked up a 2 second penalty on her way to posting 103.91, almost 3 full seconds ahead of team mate Lucie Nesnidalova in 106.81. Slovakia's Eva Alina Hocevar was third fastest in 107.03.

'I had an injury with my arm so it was really hard to come back,' Galuskova said.

'This course is super tricky. I didn't expect it was going to be that hard but I love it. I'm surprised I was first. My upstream gates were not super fast so I thought I would be 5th.

'This year is very different for me. Last year at the world championships I was 8th so I don't have pressure on me this week.'

The strength of women's canoeing in Italy was once again on show with the country booking three of the top ten qualifying positions in the women's C1 opening round on Thursday afternoon.

Elena Micozzi was fastest in 108.53, ahead of Gabriela Satkova in 110.69 and Great Britain's Bethan Forrow in 112.24.

Marta Bertoncelli was fourth fastest and Elena Borghi was tenth quickest.

'I'm very happy because finally I did a good run,' Borghi said.

'I was less nervous today than I was before my other runs because I've already done a C2 race in the team events.'

Bertoncelli said the Italians would continue to get stronger.

'It's improving and we are making our names now. We have a good coach and we have a good team working together,' she said.

'We are training together and challenging each other.'

Amalie Hilgertova and Antonie Galuskova won emotional gold medals in a tough day of competition on Friday.

For Hilgertova it was confirmation that she had finally overcome the nerves which had dogged her career for so long while for Galuskova

it was a return to the top of the podium after a disappointing result in 2018.

There were also gold medals for France's Nicolas Gestin in the men's U23 C1 and for Nejc Polencic in the junior C1.

Hilgertova was enjoying the best season of her career, her gold medal on Friday coming after winning the European senior title at the start of the season. She said it had been a long time coming after bursting onto the international stage in 2013 with a junior world championship gold medal.

'I've been waiting for an under 23 medal for a very long time and every time I lost it because of my head I think,' she said.

'This year I have managed to get it together and now this happens. I've started to do some focus mental exercises and that really helps me. My feeling on the water is much better. I'm more confident. I know what I'm doing and I manage to be at the right place at the right time.

'I think after my first big medal in 2013 I had big expectations, not just from others but also from myself. I created big pressure on myself and I was always nervous before the races. I couldn't perform well. I think I told myself that I had had enough of this and I really started to work on it.'

Hilgertova kept her cool on the challenging course to post a winning time of 95.22. Polish paddler Klaudia Zwolinska sizzled down the course to post 95.76, which included a 2 second penalty, but the Czech was up to the challenge.

Germany's Selina Jones was ecstatic after finishing third in 98.34, the best result of her career.

Galuskova celebrated her final year in the junior class with a win in the K1, despite a gate touch. She was lucky to scrape into the final in tenth position. She said missing the podium in 2018 may have helped her.

'I think it was good for me,' she said.

'Maybe it was a little bit painful at first but I got over it and I knew it would help me in the future. I just wanted to have fun here but it actually wasn't much fun because I nearly missed the final and in the final I thought, with my touch, I would regret it but it was fast.'

Galuskova finished with 100.91 with Slovenia's Eva Alina Hocevar second in 102.00. The 15 year old American Evy Leibfarth continued her dream year with a bronze medal in 102.35. Six seconds of penalties kept Leibfarth of the top of the podium.

The 19 year old Gestin won the men's U23 C1 title to add to the European U23 title he won earlier in the month. It was his first year in the U23 competition, after picking up a bronze medal last year at the junior world championships.

'I think to paddle at this level, two times, with the Europeans and the world championships, I like it so much to reach this level in the finals,' Gestin said. 'I didn't think I was paddling well during the heats and the semi finals; that was hard for me but in the final I knew what I had to do. I knew I could go faster.

'Every day with my coach I try and learn new things and I think next year I could learn even more with the new white water centre in Paris.'

Gestin finished with a time of 90.39 with team mate Lucas Roisin second in 91.34. Irishman Liam Jegou took the bronze in 91.97, which included a 2 second penalty that put him out of the gold medal position.

After two years of making junior finals without winning a medal, Nejc Polencic broke through to win the C1 in a time of 98.47, even with 4 seconds of penalties.

'This is my first podium. I'm really happy. I made a few mistakes but it was enough,' he said.

'I had two touches but when I crossed the line I saw the time and I was happy. I knew after me there were only three paddlers.

'After last season I got a new coach but I didn't know how fast I was. I didn't make the finals at the European championships. It's amazing to finish my junior career as champion.'

Host nation Poland picked up their second silver medal of the day with Szymon Nowobilski finishing in 99.22 while Adrien Fisher took bronze in 99.26.