

medallist, Luis Cardoso Da Silva, in the men's KL1. He edged out world champion Esteban Faria with Paralympic gold medallist Jakub Tokarz taking the bronze.

Serebryakov broke through for a win in the men's VL2 final, beating home town favourite Tokarz by just 0.056 of a second. Another Russian, Igor Korobeynikov, finished 3rd and it was a return to the winner's circle for Shaknoza Mirzaeva, who won the women's KL3 ahead of Great Britain's Laura Sugar, with Paralympic silver medallist Amanda Reynolds of Australia 3rd.

Mirzaeva was a world championship silver medallist in 2017 and won at the paracanoe World Cup in Hungary last year.

World champions Fernando Pimenta, Sebastian Brendel and Laurence Vincent-Lapointe and Katie Vincent were among the big names to impress in the preliminary rounds on Friday.

The first medals of the canoe sprint programme would be won on Saturday, with several exciting clashes lined up after a full day of racing in much calmer conditions than on the opening day.

Pimenta reminded everyone why he is the current K1 1,000 world champion with a solid heat win in choppy Poznan water.

'I think this is the most important year for us as canoe sprint athletes because it's when we start the fight for places in the Olympic Games,' he said.

'I know what I need to do to win and to get better every day. I know I am not in my best shape. I hope I will be in it at the world championships in Szeged.'

Brendel and German team mate Conrad-Robin Scheibner were heading for a showdown in the men's final of the C1 1,000, which was doubling as a selection race for the German team for this year's world championships.

Scheibner said he was ready to take the challenge up to the two time Olympic champion in the gold medal race.

'I said last year that he should be worried and for us it is selection here,' he said.

'I think we can all expect some good racing tomorrow.'

Canadians Vincent-Lapointe and Vincent have been unbeatable in the women's C2 500 and were already hot favourites to win when the discipline makes its Olympic debut in Tokyo next year.

The pair did nothing to tarnish their standing with an impressive heat win on Friday.

'It felt really quick; there were a couple of bumps but I think we controlled it pretty well,' Vincent said.

'We've had a much longer training camp so we've been training pretty much since last year. We didn't stop,' Vincent-Lapointe said.

'We don't want the others to catch up to us so we are training to stay first, not only now but also next year and maybe the year after and the year after.'

In other results, Germany pipped New Zealand in what was likely to be a hotly contested women's K4 500 race. Although only a heat, the win gave Germany direct entry into the final while New Zealand would need to contest a semi final.

Serhii Yemelianov continued his reign as the undisputed king of the men's KL3 and Scott Martlew broke through for his first major international gold on the final day of the World Cup on Saturday.

Another Ukrainian, Maryna Mazhula, repeated her world championship performance with a hard fought victory in the women's KL1.

Yemelianov has won so many titles in the men's KL3 he struggles to recall all his triumphs. The Rio 2016 gold medallist and two time world champion can now add another World Cup gold to his list, although he wasn't entirely happy with his performance.

'For me it was very bad, a bad time, but I hope by the worlds it will be my best time,' he said.

'I feel perfect but I'm training towards Tokyo.'

Great Britain's Robert Oliver came close to causing a boilover, finishing 0.7 seconds behind, with Russia's Leonid Krylov taking the bronze.

Maryna Mazhula showed her world championship win last year in the women's KL1 was not an aberration with another good win on Saturday.

Mazhula had to work hard, finishing in a time of 53.609. Italy's Eleonora De Paolis was a tight 2nd in 53.781 with Chile's Katherine Wollermann 3rd.

'It was very hard, with strong wind and waves,' she said.

'The field was strong but I knew I had won when I crossed the line. I saw the Italian pushing hard.'

'Training has been really hard. It rains every day, every month for a year. I had to train in any conditions or weather.'

26 year old Scott Martlew began his paracanoe career in 2012 and finished 8th in the KL3 at the Rio Paralympics but his form since then has improved dramatically with a 2nd behind Paralympic gold medallist Curtis McGrath at last year's world championships and then a gold on Saturday in the absence of the Australian.

'I've adapted my training over the years and we know what sort of works for me now,' he said.

'I'm absolutely stoked with the win. I didn't really know how I was going to go; it was a bit of a tough lead in last week with a bit of a cold and a sore throat.'

'It does get hard in the cold and the wet out on your own in the dark but this makes it worth it. It gives me a lot of confidence after the week I've had.'

Italy's Federico Mancarella took the silver with Markus Swoboda 3rd.

Portugal's Fernando Pimenta won a golden double and New Zealand's Lisa Carrington, Laurence Vincent-Lapointe and Great Britain's Liam Heath were a class above on the penultimate day of action.

The only major surprise in the windy conditions on Saturday was the defeat of two time Olympic champion Sebastian Brendel in the C1 1,000. Brendel finished 4th behind Cuban teenager Jose Ramon Pelier Cordova.

Pimenta made light work of a demanding schedule, winning the men's K1 1,000 and then, an hour later, taking gold in the men's K1 500.

He broke through to win the 1,000 world title in front of home fans in Portugal last year and has now established himself as a gold medal favourite for the Tokyo Olympics next year.

'It's normal. When you have one athlete who has won the world championships, the European championships and the World Cups, they will be favourite for gold in the Olympics,' Pimenta said, 'but we have a long distance to the Olympics in Tokyo and first we need to finish in the top five at the world championships so we can get a passport to the Olympics.'

'I'm happy today because I won two races in one hour and ten minutes against different athletes.'

Pimenta finished ahead of Aleh Yurenia of Belarus and Rio silver medallist Josef Dostal of the Czech Republic in the K1 1,000. In the K1 500 the minor placings were filled by Germany's Tom Liebscher and South Africa's Chrisjan Coetzee.

Another who is already a gold medal favourite for Tokyo is Laurence Vincent-Lapointe who, once again, dominated a world class C1 200 final.

Poznan was the venue where she won her first world championship in 2010.

'I surprise myself every race because being the first to win does not mean much if you don't stay the first,' she said.

'2010, here, it was my first world championship medal and the fact that I've stayed on top for this long always amazes me.'

'In a way I was the first here but I also want to be the first next year and maybe the year after that also. I want to be remembered not because I was the first but because I stayed the first.'

Her strongest challenge came from her C2 500 partner, Katie Vincent, with China's Wenjun Lin finishing 3rd.

Lisa Carrington's incredible winning run in the women's K1 200 continued with another triumph on Saturday.

She hasn't been beaten at a major event since before the 2012 London Olympics and, on her form in Poznan, won't be for some time yet.

'It's always a little bit scary getting out there for the first international race and the conditions were also a little bit tricky so that makes me a little bit nervous,' she said.

'I do still get nervous. I think it's just about wanted to do it justice, what you have been doing in training. It's always about putting it together, which is always the scary part.'

She finished ahead of Denmark's Emma Jorgensen and Poland's Rio 2016 silver medallist, Marta Walczykiewicz.

2016 Rio K1 200 gold medallist Liam Heath made a triumphant return to the distance on Saturday with a solid win. He won the K4 500 last year and admitted he did have some doubts before this weekend.

'There are always doubts but every race you do you get a bit more confidence in the work you have done,' he said.

'There is a lot of work going on behind the scenes. I didn't take a complete year out. I was still ticking over but it is reassuring to come back and still be competitive.'

In a repeat of the 2016 Olympic result, France's Maxime Beaumont took the silver behind Heath. Lithuania's Arturas Seja took the bronze.