



Fox won K1 but not C1.



K1 winner Prskavec.



Cross winner Marx.

Woods outwrestles Fiserova in kayak cross final

Praha Slalom

Reigning Olympic champion Jiri Prskavec and three time Olympic medallist Jessica Fox topped the kayak qualifying times on the opening day of the World Cup in Prague.

Fox would get the chance to make amends for a 50 second penalty which cost her a place in the previous weekend's K1 final in Augsburg after posting a qualifying time more than two seconds quicker than the next best paddler in Thursday's heats.

The Olympic silver and two time bronze medallist had an error free time of 92.21, putting her 2.24 seconds ahead of Poland's Klaudia Zwolinska, who was looking to finish on the podium this weekend after a frustrating weekend in Augsburg.

'I love Prague. I always feel like my runs here are fun,' Zwolinska said.

'I was really disappointed after last week. Too many times I finished fourth so for me I'm ambitious so I hope this was the last time that I finish fourth. I think my placing in Augsburg is a good beginning to the season.'

There were several big names who needed to rely on second runs to progress through to Friday's K1 semi finals. Olympic gold medallist Ricarda Funk, her German team mate and Augsburg gold medallist Elena Lilik and multi Olympians Ana Satila of Brazil and Corinna Kuhnle of Austria all secured Friday action with much improved second runs.

Jiri Prskavec took a bronze medal in Augsburg but in a C1, not the event in which he won in Tokyo. On Thursday the Czech showed his love for his Prague home course and his love for K1 by posting the quickest time in qualifying.

Prskavec finished in 83.31 seconds, 0.17 second ahead of 2016 Olympic gold medallist Joe Clarke of Great Britain, who posted the quickest raw time if 81.48 but attracted a two second penalty for a gate touch.

Australia's Lucien Delfour went into the semi finals as the third fastest paddler.

'Racing in Prague is always pretty special; it's always super tight. You really are not allowed to make mistakes so that run was smooth,' Delfour said.

'I've felt good on the water during the past two days. Prague is quite a different course but it feels good; the water's flowing. It's all fine.'

Two of the biggest names in modern day slalom paddling reminded everyone of their class with emphatic wins on Friday.

Olympic gold medallist Jiri Prskavec and three time world champion Jessica Fox turned on a show for a big crowd at the Troja venue to take gold in the men's and women's K1 finals. Prskavec ensured a gold and silver finish for the Czech host nation with a withering error free final run of 89.67, the only one to go under 90 seconds.

'It's awesome. I'm really happy about what I did here and about my run,' Prskavec said.

'The crowd was really cheering hard and making me really nervous about my run in the final which is always super nice. It is extra pressure and also it was raining today and so many people showed up. This is a gift for them as well, a gold and silver medal.'

Team mate and reigning world champion Vit Prindis took the silver while Italy's Giovanni De Gennaro followed up his gold medal from Augsburg one week earlier with bronze.

Fox, who has an Olympic silver and two bronzes in women's K1, showed she is in some of the best form of her career by posting a time of 98.95 to take the gold in Prague. The Australian was the only female paddler to go under 100 seconds.

'It was really special. I love racing in Prague; the atmosphere is like nowhere else and I was feeling really good this week,' Fox said.

'I won the heats. I won the semis so I thought to go out and put



down a run to be proud of, to try and attack it, and it turned out pretty well. I really challenged myself to push the limits.

'I thought I could go under 100. There are so many moves on that course that are really tricky and a lot of things had to go to plan for me to go under 100. Last week I was really frustrated not to make the final after making a silly mistake so I really wanted to put down some good paddling.'

Olympic gold medallist Ricarda Funk had a two second penalty for a gate touch but was 4.63 seconds behind Fox while Great Britain's Mallory Franklin celebrated her first outing for the international season with bronze.

For the second consecutive week unheralded Frenchman Lucas Roisin posted the fastest qualifying time in the men's C1 at a World Cup.

It was a good morning for the French team with Marjorie Delassus showing a welcome return to form with the quickest time in the women's C1.

For an incredible seventh time in her career Jessica Fox swept the gold medals at a World Cup, adding a C1 gold on Saturday to the K1 gold she took in Prague 24 hours earlier.

Olympic champion Benjamin Savsek broke the hearts of the capacity Czech crowd on hand for the men's C1 final as six nations shared the Saturday medals on offer.

Fox was in such good form she could even afford a two second penalty for a gate touch and an unscripted crash into the wall at the bottom of the course to still become the only one with a time under 110 seconds.

It was the second time she had won the K1 and C1 double in Prague and the seventh time in her career she'd achieved the feat. The first time was in Slovenia in 2013 and the last time was in La Seu in 2021.

'I held it together to the finish; there was a little bit of an issue on my last upstream gate when I crashed into the wall so I was really pleased to hold it together and finish strongly,' Fox said.

'I was quite nervous; the course is really challenging, especially in C1, but I tried to take last week's results and last week's feelings into the result and I'm really pleased to have put that down.'

'Each race you learn, you grow, you're testing things. The big goal this year is the world championships and qualifying the quota for Australia to go to Paris 2024. I haven't got clear goals in terms of what I win so I just want to show up and do my best each time.'

Monica Doria Vilarrubla took the silver for Andorra with local hope Gabriela Satkova taking the bronze.

In the men's competition Benjamin Savsek put together a fault free run to return the Slovenian to the top of the podium after he missed the medals in Augsburg one week earlier. It was his first World Cup gold in Prague since 2012 and his fifth overall gold and first since 2017.

'It was an incredible run. I enjoyed it a lot,' he said.

'There was big pressure at the start but I'm really happy to have managed that from the start to the finish and to complete a run without any mistakes. It's a great day.'

'It was great pressure (having three Czechs in the final), especially having Jiri Prskavec starting after me, so I knew I would have to put on a good run to get a good result. I was really focussed after Augsburg.'

Savsek was the only paddler to go under the 100 second mark, finishing 3.61 seconds clear of Slovakia's Matej Benus with France's Jules Bernardet holding on for the bronze despite a gate touch.

Host nation Czechia had three paddlers in the final but finished outside the medals.

Swiss paddlers Dimitri Marx and Jan Rohrer delivered a kayak cross masterclass while Great Britain's Kimberley Woods muscled her way to a gold medal on the final day.